

## **GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2011 UNITED NATIONS REPORT ON Ogoniland**

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### **Abstract**

*Nigeria is signatory to and has actively ratified numerous United Nations agreements, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Amongst the specific targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is to sustain global effort towards environmental sustainability around the world. While Nigeria's robust international diplomacy is not in doubt, the domestication of these multilateral policies has cast negativity over this robust engagement recently. This negativity has continued to manifest itself in federal government's failure towards the implementation of the United Nations environmental assessment report on Ogoniland. This study focused on Global Environmental Sustainability and the implementation of the United Nations Report on Ogoniland and was guided by the question of what is the challenge confronting the Federal government of Nigeria in the implementation of the recommendations of UNEP report? Documentary method of data collection and content were used for analysis while relying on the rentier theory as a theoretical guide. The paper argued that so long as oil remains a competitive commodity in the international market, the prospects of Ogoniland clean-up is in not attainable. Thus, the Nigerian State perception of the region as a satellite resource for the inflow of oil rents and for the consolidation of the economic interest of the ruling elites is making the implementation of the report problematic. We recommended that addressing fundamental problems of unemployment among the Ogoni people, flagrant violation of environmental regulations by the multi-national oil companies are critical to the sustenance of peace and development in the region hence, the implementation of the recommendations of 2011 UNEP report.*

**Keywords:** Environmental Sustainability, Implementation, United Nations, Ogoniland.

### **Introduction**

Besides the United Nations framework on Sustainable development goals (SDGs), Nigeria's active engagements in numerous United Nations protocols and conventions are evident (UNDP, 2012). As a signatory state to other United Nations frameworks, Nigeria's commitment has translated first in enshrining the environmental agreements in its 1999 constitution. Thus, the societal dynamics of ever increasingly changing world characterized by the forces of globalization, the increasingly need for development among countries and couples with numerous environmental challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, have made countries at different

occasions to form synergy towards reducing these environmental and other development challenges in the world (Nwosu 2017). Thus, over the years, different development pathways have been put in place by countries at global level, to be followed up at respective national levels with the priority of addressing the challenges of development facing humanity through local platforms over time (UN, 2015). The challenges and prospects of ensuring sustainable development at the level of environment have been described by scholars as one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century daunting challenges (Albert, 2017; Morelli, 2011; Okafor, 2011; Aworawo, 2013; Obi, 1999; Mensah & Castro; 2004, Basiago, 1999; Ibeanu, 1998, 2000). The development of technological advancement and the industrialization drive from both the states and multi-national oil corporations through different dimensions of exploration and exploitation, have resulted in the escalation of environmental degradation, gas flaring, climate change and oil pollution (Agbonifo, 2011; 2016; Oluduro, F.O & Oluduro, O, 2015; Amnesty International, 2014, 2015, 2016; Boele, Fabig & Wheeler, 2001; Pitkin, 2013; UNEP, 2011).

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are one of such global development pathways aimed at addressing the challenges facing humanity and was established by the head of states and governments of the member nations in 2015 to bridge the gap in development (Wayne, 2015). This global Agenda identified 17 Sustainable Development Goals with their 169 targets covering a wide range of economic, social and environmental development issues ranging from ending poverty and hunger, improving health and education, prospects of more peaceful and inclusive societies to combating climate change and protecting the environment. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are universal and form a cohesive, integrated package of global aspirations countries have committed themselves to achieve and if fully implemented by stakeholders, will help to transform the world (Nwosu,2017).

Furthermore, in transforming the world, environmental sustainability as a veritable means of achieving Sustainable Development was identified. Nigeria is a member and signatory to the United Nations sustainable development goals and since the inception of this global agenda, has ratified the agreement (This day, 15 June, 2017). While Nigeria's robust diplomacy and engagements at the global level is not in doubt, the failure in implementing the recommendations of the United Nations environment assessment report on Ogoniland has cast negativity over these robust engagements recently. This negativity has continued to manifest itself in the federal government's failure towards the implementation of the United Nations environmental assessment report on Ogoniland. The Ogoni report which was submitted to the Federal government in 2011 had since then not been implemented by the federal government of Nigeria in view to address the peculiar challenges confronting the Ogoni people. These peculiar challenges include the devastation of the socio-economic livelihood such as fishing and farming, the contamination of the soil, agricultural land, groundwater, air, among others (UNEP, 2011:8).

Six years after the submission of the United Nations environment assessment programme report on Ogoniland, numerous theoretical postulations have been

proffered as the possible reason why the implementation of the environmental assessment of Ogoniland carried out by the United Nations environment programme have not yet received the expected implementation. These standpoints includes; failure of leadership and the character of the Nigerian state (Ezirim, 2011; Chukwuemeka, 2011), corruption and mismanagement of resources (Babalola, 2014; Gonzalez, 2016), the conflict driven environment of Ogoniland arising from long years of neglect by the Nigerian state (Ibeanu,1998,2000; Agbonifo, 2011), the syndrome of poor culture of policy implementation, the institutional indifference that have characterized the responses to oil spills over decades (Yakubu, 2017), the failure of administering and negligence of the corporate social responsibility by the Multi-national oil corporations over their host communities (Agbonifo, 2016; Ndu & Agbonifoh, 2014), the double-standard character of major multinational oil corporations over enforcement and compliance of environmental laws and standards in Nigeria (Oluduro & Oluduro, 2015), and among others. These standpoints are not completely out of place however, to understand the problematic of implementation of Ogoni report by the federal government of Nigeria despite its active and robust diplomatic engagements in the major multilateral agreements in the world; it becomes important to ask why the federal government has not implemented the Ogoni report. Nigeria is an oil producing country and a strong member of OPEC and the exploration of oil in Ogoniland have been on in the last fifty years now (Ibeanu, 1998, 2000, Ezirim, 2011). Why has the Ogoniland not been cleaned up over these years in spite of huge oil revenue that accrued to the Nigerian state and numerous multinational oil company that have made billions of dollars from Ogoniland (Boele, etal,2001). Why is it that despite various environment policies such as the United Nations framework on Pollution and Sustainable Development, agreements, conventions and protocols which Nigeria is a signatory to, relevant literatures separately pointed out the environmental conditions and the worsening economic livelihood of Ogoni people and have continued unabated with attendant poverty and hunger (Adeola, 2001).

Based on the aforementioned development, the paper seeks to interrogate whether the domestication of the 2011 UNEP report on environmental sustainability and clean-up of Ogoniland in Nigeria, have had any impact on the implementation of Ogoni report. This is because, the long years of oil explorations in the region, have had a far-reaching impact on the socio-economic conditions and the environment of Ogoniland and its people (Pitkin, 2013; Amnesty International, 2015; UNEP, 2011).

### **Conceptual Clarification**

#### **Global Policy**

For the purposes of this study, Global Policy means the world policy outcomes put in place particularly by the United Nations for the regulation of human, private and public institutions towards promoting sustainable development amongst the member nations. This includes protocols, conventions, agreement or programmes established by world leaders at the global level.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

We used Environmental sustainability to refer to the deliberate efforts by states in international system in relation to policy formulation and implementation aimed at reducing the negative impact of human activities towards the eco-system e.g. water, land, air and the aquatic animals living inside them and human being inclusive.

### **Implementation**

Implementation means the actual ratification and domestication of the United Nations agreement by the member nations in their internal/domestic policies and programmes. The purpose has been to achieve the objectives of the said global agreement.

### **Ogoni Report**

Ogoni report is the 2011 official report of the United Nations environmental programme on Ogoniland assessment. The report contains the level of environmental degradation, water and other harmful effects of oil explorations in Ogoniland and its people.

### **Methodology**

We adopted the documentary methods of data collection which include Text books, Newspapers, government publications and journal articles that looked into the United Nations environment programmes and the report itself, the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs) and Nigeria's ratification of the agreement. The data collected were analyzed using content analysis.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical perspective adopted in this paper is the Rentier theory of the state. The concept of Rentier State is derived from the classical economic notion of rent which is described as excess value or surplus left over after the cost of production had been met, and was paid to the owners of the land for use of its natural resources (Yates, 1996). According to Mahdavy (1970), rentier States are defined as those countries that receive on a regular basis of substantial amounts of external rents. Thus, external rents are seen as rentals paid by foreign individuals, concerns or governments to individuals, concerns or governments of a given country (Mahdavy, 1970 as cited in Odigbo, 2017). The major proponents of this theory include; mahdavy (1970), Beblawi (1987), Yates (1996), Gray (2011) Klare (2001) Ross (2001), Herb (2002), Schwarz (2004), Smith (2004) among others (as cited by Odigbo, 2017). The major tenets of rentier theory of the state are:

- That oil rent is the major source of revenue for such countries.
- That the state is the major collector and distributor of revenue.
- Oil revenue/rents remains and generate a large proportion of national income in such given State.

- There are preponderance of authoritarian rule and power centralization especially, economic power.
- ✓ State-society relations in respects to collection, allocation and distribution of oil revenue are fraught with conflict arising from poor internal resource management.
- ✓ Therefore, the rentier character of the State is demonstrated not only in its capacity to generate huge rents from oil but in the failure of the State to re-invest the proceeds to promote growth and development.

The Rentier State theory was postulated and popularized by scholars such as Mahdavy (1970) and Beblawi (1987). The rentier concept is a construct used mainly in analyzing the politics of the oil producing states of the Middle-East. However, since the concept is not geographically bound, the Rentier State theory as an analytical construct has also been used to analyze and explain the internal contradictions in oil producing States in Africa that share the same characteristics with oil rich States of the Middle-East. Nigeria is an oil producing state and ninety-eight percent of its total revenues come from oil rents.

The rentier State theory received global attention during the Arabs/Israeli war which led to the increasing global demand for oil. This demand led to positive rise in the fortune and economies of oil and gas producing States in the Middle-east. The prices of oil and gas skyrocketed and the oil-rich countries in the gulf region realized huge amounts of money during this period. It would be noted that attention was focused on the Middle-East region including the North Africa since these countries dominated the energy market during this epoch. The rentier State theory is used to describe the governments of the Middle East countries since they derive a large proportion of their revenue from external rents (Yates, 1996; Ross, 2001; Schwarz, 2004; Smith, 2004; Mahdavy,1970; Beblawi,1987) and the conflicts arising from the distribution of the wealth or rents (Klare, 2001; as cited in Odigbo, 2017). Rentierism focuses on rents in government finances (Herb, 2002). Rentier theory of the State is basically State centered thus, manifests in different forms and emphasizes different casual links between resource rents and poor economic governance, as well as Authoritarian rule (Ross, 2001, 2006). Also related to this is the fact that rents not only determine the characteristics of the national economy but also the patterned functionality of the state institutions and perhaps more importantly, the government attitude towards society (how these institutions operate and what is the nature of the state-society relation). Gray (2011) explained that rentier state theory is political economy theory that seeks to explain state-society relations in states that generate large proportion of their income rents from either externally derived or unproductively-earned payments. Thus;

Rents are most commonly royalties or other payments for oil and gas exports, but other income such as fees and aid typically are considered rents as well. As its most basic assumption, rentier state theory holds that, since the state receives this external income and distributes it to society, it is relieved of

having to impose taxation, which in turn means that it does not have to offer concessions to society such as a democratic bargain or a development strategy (Gray, 2011, p. 1).

The justifications for adopting the rentier theory of the state for analyzing the nexus between Nigeria's commitment to global environmental sustainability and Nigerian state failure in implementing the Ogoni report are plausible here. The state in Nigeria is the principal collector and distributor of oil rents and oil revenue contributes ninety-eight percent of government revenue. The centrality of power (economic power) in form of unitarized fiscal federalism bequeathed to the Nigerian state after long years of military dominance at the centre. Arising from poor internal mismanagement of oil revenue which breeds corruption, the Nigerian state has been unable to proffer solution over the festering conflict between itself and the oil-bearing communities in Ogoniland in one hand, and between the oil bearing communities and the multi-national oil corporations like the Shell in the region in the other hand (Joseph, 1999; Ibeanu 1998, 2000).

After the independence in 1960, Nigeria has witnessed different governments with different leadership which have failed to promote good governance, fight corruption while ensuring that the commonwealth of the people are distributed in a manner that have direct impact in reducing the development challenges facing the common man such as good healthcare facilities, education, accessible roads, electricity, food security, information and communication technology, good housing scheme, employment generation (Chukwuemeka, 2011). The aforementioned disconnect was widened arising from the discovery of oil with its attendant revenue. This some scholars believed, marked the beginning of state-society crisis and failure of the state in Nigeria to provide the citizens with the basic needs of life. Moreso, Omar (2007), opines that corruption phenomenon have become pervasive and have gained ascendancy in Nigeria due to prevalence of two dominant factors namely; the invasion of politics by the military and the discovery of oil in the country.

Thus, the preponderance of these factors has deteriorated the nation's economic, political and social vitality. Sadly, roughly \$500 billion has been lost or stolen over the past 30 years, and despite being the world's sixth-largest oil producer, Nigeria remains one of the poorest and most corrupt countries in the world (Omar, 2007, pp. 1-2). Following from the above, the rentier character of Nigerian State is demonstrated not only in its capacity to generate huge rents from oil but in the failure of the State to re-invest the proceeds to facilitate growth, developmental priorities, critical infrastructure and sustainable development challenges in the country.

### **The 2011 United Nations Environmental Programme on Ogoniland (Ogoni Report): An Elucidation.**

The historical antecedent of oil exploration and production in Ogoniland has been greeted and documented with chequered history, and lamentations of conflict not only between the oil multi-national corporations and the host communities but among the various oil-bearing communities on one hand and the oil-bearing

communities and the federal government of Nigeria on the other hand. Thus, the conflict in the region had worsened arising from the pains of environmental degradations, water, land and air pollutions which brought monumental hardship on the people and their various sources of livelihood (Young, Ndiformache & Nakiyingi, 2005). The federal government of Nigeria under the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2006 engaged the services of experts at the United Nations environment programme to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the impact of long years of oil explorations in Ogoniland. The scope and the feasibility of the assessment which was scientific and evidence based have its unique challenge that includes: lack of trust between actors, political tensions between communities, regional and national government, gaining access to Ogoniland, security considerations, technical and logistical challenges (NDPI, 2017). The UNEP report details how the assessment team carried out their work, where samples were taken and the findings that they made. Over a 14-month period, the UNEP team examined more than 200 locations, surveyed 122 km of pipeline rights of way, reviewed more than 5,000 medical records and engaged over 23,000 people at local community meetings. Detailed soil contamination investigations were conducted at 69 sites. Altogether more than 4,000 samples were analyzed, including water taken from 142 groundwater monitoring wells drilled specifically for the study and soil extracted from 780 boreholes (UNEP, 2011, p. 5). The report was a child of necessity to remedy the multiplicity of health, environmental and sustainable development challenges facing millions of people in Ogoniland (UNEP, 2011, pp. 6-8). Key actors in the petroleum industry beared the financial cost of the assessment and this was spelt out in the project document. The following are the various aspects of the report and its recommendations.

Full assessment report of the UNEP report released to the public on August 4, 2011 on environmental injustices in Ogoniland and the Niger Delta revealed the following:

- Serious contamination of land and underground water tends to be localized; air pollution related to oil industry operations is pervasive and affects the quality of life of about one million people.
- Contamination of drinking water with concentrations of benzene, carcinogen and other multiplicity of pollutants at level over 900 times above World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.
- Contamination of soil over five meters deep in many area studies.
- Spill sites oil companies claimed to have cleaned up were still highly contaminated by pollutants.
- Oil companies failed to meet minimum Nigerian standards, let alone international oil industry standards.
- Water coated with hydrocarbon was more than 1,000 times the level allowed by Nigerian drinking water standards.
- Evidence of oil companies dumping contaminated soil in unlined pits.
- The impact of oil spills on mangrove vegetation is disastrous. (see, Agbonifo, 2016, pp.26-27)

As with many oil companies operating in Nigeria, the UNEP report indicated that Shell does not abide with the Nigerian environmental laws as well as the oil industry standards (Amnesty International, 2014). Nevertheless, Shell promised to take immediate action, working with communities, government and other stakeholders, unfortunately no serious action has been taken by Shell and the government, and has continually blamed sabotage and theft as a major contribution to the problem of oil spills in the region (Agbonifo, 2011 & 2016). Moreover, the United Nations environmental assessment impact reveals that, the challenge of weak regulatory institutional failures was responsible for the long years of oil spills in the region. Separately, oil spills disaster with other environmental degradation in Ogoniland had gone almost certainly unnoticed over several decades, because of the appalling state of environmental management in Nigeria. Some scholars such as Barry 2010; Ordinioha & Brisibe 2013; Obenade & Amangabara 2014; in their studies have separately agreed that the pathetic conditions of Ogoniland are frustrating to the people however, noted that nothing living moves in a black and brown water across the Ogoniland which was once regarded as teeming with fish, shrimps and crabs.

### **Ogoniland and the History of Oil Exploration**

From historical antecedent, Ogoniland and its people are synonymous with the picture of the struggle against environmental degradation and injustice of which the region have been exposed and subjected to from long years of oil exploration. Thus, Ogoni struggles and agitations for environmental justice both from the operating multi-national oil corporations and the federal government of Nigeria, have continued unabated until the environmental assessment report carried out by the United Nations programme on Ogoniland which was submitted on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August, 2011.

Ogoniland is a region covering some 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Southeast of the Niger Delta basin. The area is divided administratively into four local government areas that include; Khana, Gokana, Tai, and Eleme respectively. Ogoniland boasts of a total of 226 communities and harbors majorly six kingdoms. They are, Babbe, Eleme, Gokana, Ken-Khana, Nyo-Khana and Tai (NDPI, 2017). From 1958 when exploration of petroleum commenced in Ogoniland, oil-related activities resulted in the pollution of land and air until community protests led to the stoppage of oil-drilling in 1993. Pollution from oil wells and pipelines continued after Shell removed their personnel from Ogoniland (Social Action, 2014, pp.1). In 1990, KAGOTE means communities and kingdoms such as Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme respectively under the auspices of Ogoni elder's forum which dates back to the 1970s, formed the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People was used and still being used as the rallying platform for campaigning for the greater control over oil and gas resources being extracted from Ogoniland and agitation for economic development, and autonomy of Ogoni people over their affairs. It was the formation of MOSOP that gave birth to a document called "Ogoni Bill of Rights", which contained the demands of the people

and which was presented to the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1991 under the military administration of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (Yakubu, 2017, pp.4-5).

Amidst the continued despoliation of Ogonis natural resources, anthropological environmental degradation, persistent poverty due to deprivation of livelihood means, and utter disregard for culture and tribal language, the Ogonis presented the “Ogoni Bill of Rights” (OBR) to the government and people of Nigeria in 1990. The Ogoniland and its people came into international limelight in the early 1990’s with the vehement struggle against the environment injustice. The struggle of Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni activists eventually led to the cessation of oil production activities in the area in 1993 and were later condemned to death through firing squad by the then Military head of the state, General Sani Abacha on November the 8<sup>th</sup>, 1995.

Similarly, in 1999, upon the return of democratically elected government in Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo commissioned the United Nations environmental impact assessment in 2006 through his reconciliation process. The commission released its report in 2011 with wide range of informed issues on different damages the region has been exposed to as a result of long years of oil exploration. The report ranges from soil, land, water and air contaminations. Besides the various contaminations and pollution the region is beset with, Ogoniland has been enveloped by many of the same conflict dynamics that affect the wider Niger Delta; including cultism, militancy, the proliferation of weapons, intra- and inter communal conflict, chieftaincy tussles, and widespread youth unemployment. The region has become highly polarized during recent election cycles, with politicians, militants and security figures recruiting cultists and restive youth to intimidate and coerce adversaries and opponents (NDPI, 2017, pp.2).

### **Nigeria, Sustainable Development Goals and the Implementation of UNEP Report**

After the much-vaunted euphoria of declaring the eight millennium development goals in the year 2000 with the setting up of timeline for their achievement in the year 2015, the millennium development goals objectives could not be achieved arising from the prevalence of corruption, weak state institutions, lack of political will and inadequate funding (Nwosu,2017). These fundamental factors were responsible for the setting up a new agenda in September, 25-27 of 2015 christened, the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs). The sustainable development goals (SDGs) were primarily established to tackle major global challenges collectively thereby ensuring the promotion of sustainable development around the world.

From the eight millennium development goals (MDGs) of 2015 to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of seventeen development goals and sixty-nine targets aimed at wiping out poverty, hunger, malnutrition with other development challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by 2030. The five key areas of importance to humanity in the goals are the people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership and

differ in great extent with MDGs. The Sustainable Development Goals are expected to be driven by inclusive development, universality, integrated, locally focused, technologically driven and seek to accommodate the three dimensions of sustainable development namely, the economic, social and environment dimensions. In their declaration, the world leaders indicated their resolve to: eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, which is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development (United Nations, 2015, pp.6). On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2016 the policy came into effect and is expected to form the policy baseline of member nations in the next fifteen years. Below are the seventeen Sustainable Development goals:

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- End hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Ensure healthy lives and promote the wellbeing for all at all ages.
- Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Built resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

### **Nigerian State and the Implementation of 2011 Ogoni Report**

Under this segment, attempt has been made to interrogate the question making it difficult or challenge to the federal government to implement the recommendations of the 2011 UNEP report on Ogoniland. The continued agitation for the cleanup of Ogoniland by the people of the area, were primarily based on the

long years of oil exploration by the multi-national oil companies like Shell Petroleum development company which through its explorative activities in the region has brought unprecedented damage on the socio-economic conditions of the people with farming and fishing enterprise in Ogoniland badly affected (UNEP, 2011). Obenade & Amangabara (2014) noted that indiscriminate dumping of hazardous materials, oil pollutant and spills are inimical to the immediate communities and contaminate water and air quality. Environmental degradation has been made plausible by weak environmental regulations and poor enforcement mechanisms of the Nigerian state. The UNEP reports based on two years scientific research revealed unprecedented widespread oil contamination of soil and water body with severe consequences on health, agriculture, ecology and aquatic life. The most critically affected is drinking water with adverse health risk on communities. The spills contaminated the surface water, ground water, ambient air, and crops with hydrocarbons, including known carcinogens like polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon and benzo (a) pyrene, naturally occurring radioactive materials, and trace metals that were further bio -accumulated in some food crops (Ordinioha & Brisibe, 2013). The federal government of Nigeria on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, 2016 due to domestic and international pressures over the delay of the implementation of the UNEP report since 2011 upon its submission, yielded to the pressure by flagging off the implementation of the report in Port Harcourt.

Thus, opinion varies from scholars as to why the delay of implementation by the federal government. The response of the Nigerian government has fallen far short of expectations, in view of its responsibility to safeguard the environment, as enshrined in Section 20 sub-section two of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. While the Government has set up the Hydrocarbon Pollution Restoration Project (HYPREP), the agency is under the Office of the Minister of Petroleum Resources, a complicit party in the pollution of Ogoniland. HYPREP was not backed by legislation and was also not provided with adequate operational funds needed to totally execute its mandate. The result is that, generally, neither the agency nor the government has done anything worthwhile to restore the Ogoni environment (Social Action, 2014, pp.1). More worrisome according to the report is that, even the emergency's measures like the provision of alternative sources of drinking water have not been taken seriously by the government. Ogoni community members continue to drink from badly contaminated water wells and bathe in badly polluted streams. Barely six years of the release of the United Nations environment assessment on Ogoniland, the federal government of Nigeria and the operating multi-national oil corporations in Ogoniland have not implemented and are grossly paying lip service towards the recommendations of the report (Yakubu, 2017, Agbonifo, 2016, Social Action, 2014). The following factors could be deduced as the reasons why it is proving difficult for the Nigerian State to implement the recommendations of the United Nations environment programme report on Ogoniland.

The fundamental factor that is making the implementation of Ogoni report difficult is the pervasive level of corruption (Gonzalez, 2016). Corruption and the rentier character of Nigerian State which explains both the nature and character of its leadership. Politics and control of state power is for the self-serving interest of the

elites and not for the citizens (Ake, 1996). The Nigerian state has generated billions of dollars from long years of oil explorations in Ogoniland and the entire Niger Delta region, yet this billions of oil rents have no impact on the lives of its citizens (Ibeanu, 1998, 2000, Omar, 2007). The Nigerian state and its leadership are at convenience to loot public funds, inflate budgets and contracts, spend billions of Naira in electioneering campaign, rigging an election, battling court litigations and influencing the outcome of tribunal, finance expensive medical trip abroad and other existential frivolities without the interest of the citizens who voted them into power. Nigeria earns much from the sales of crude oil but cannot boast of any meaningful developmental strides arising from reckless resource mismanagement when compared to other countries which produce oil and recently, has been compared corrupt with countries whose leadership specializes in looting public treasury like, Pakistan, Peru and Kazakhstan (Jimu, 2009). Thus, the UNEP report recommended that 1 billion dollars is expected to be used annually for the cleaning up of Ogoniland (UNEP, 2011). Interestingly, billions of naira has been stolen unaccounted for from the country's treasury since the dawn of the fourth republic till date (Ojo, 2016). From the Military to the Civilian administration, billions of naira has been stolen unaccounted for and weak institutional framework of the state has reduced the fight against corruption as a charade (Omar, 2007).

Another critical factor that appears responsible for inability of the federal government to implement the Ogoni report is the prevailing weak institution failures and the subtle hegemonic power of multi-national oil corporations in Nigeria (Anochie & Mgbemena, 2015). Most environmental regulatory laws in Nigeria especially those put in place by the federal government of Nigeria aimed at regulating the operational practices of Oil Companies are not effective and are manipulated by these oil corporations especially, in areas of gas flaring and indiscriminate dumping of industrial waste in rivers, lands that people depend on (Udok, U & Akpan, E.B, 2017, Yakubu, 2017).

The security dilemma in Ogoniland and the political will of the federal government with that of other relevant stakeholders. The security dilemma which culminates into conflict in the region have made Ogoniland to be clouded by many of the same conflict dynamics that affect the wider Niger Delta region which includes; cultism, militancy, the proliferation of weapons, intra- and inter-communal conflict, chieftaincy tussles, and widespread youth unemployment (NDPI, 2017, pp.1).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Ogoni report which was carried out and concluded by the United Nations environment programme experts that was aimed at discovering the extent of damage which the long years of oil explorations have caused the Ogoni people and their environment, have continued to generate debate among scholars and policy analyst both local and in international domain. Nigeria being a signatory state to the United Nations sustainable development goals, one would have thought that the implementations of these global environmental policies at the national level would have accelerated the implementation of Ogoni report. However, negativity has

greeted the Nigeria's government inability to implement the recommendations of Ogoni report submitted in August, 2011. In addressing the problematic, we raised fundamental questions such as, why is it proving difficult for the federal government to implement the recommendations of Ogoni report and the challenges hindering the implementation of Ogoni report. Literatures were interrogated and discovery were made that part of the difficulty on the side of the federal government towards the implementation of Ogoni report were, corruption and the character of the Nigerian state whose nature and its leadership is demonstrating rentier mentality. The weak institutions of the state have encouraged multinational oil corporations to violate environmental laws and standard in the country. We interrogated literatures and discovered that the challenges facing the implementation of Ogoni report were majorly, the security and conflict dilemma in Ogoniland which is the peculiar characteristics of wider Niger Delta region and the apparent lack of political will on the side of the federal government and the relevant stakeholders in the region. We employed the rentier theory of the state as the theoretical perspective. We concluded that so long as oil remains a competitive commodity in the international market, the prospects of Ogoniland clean up is in not attainable because of the irreconcilable interest among the stakeholders in the region which have been anti-thesis to development in the region. Thus, the Nigerian State perception of the region as a satellite resource base for the inflow of oil rents and for the consolidation of the economic interest of the ruling elites makes the implementation of the report problematic. We recommended that, for the purpose of national security and development, the Nigerian State should address the fundamental problems of unemployment among the Ogoni people, flagrant violation of environmental regulations by the Multi-national oil companies and critical to the sustenance of peace and in the region, is the implementation of the recommendations of the 2011 UNEP report.

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