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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, GOODWILL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGER DELTA: AN ANALYSIS OF SHELL AND THE OGONI CASE

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Abstract
This paper explored the politics of corporate social responsibility, goodwill management and development in the Niger Delta focusing specifically on the activities of Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC) in Ogoniland. From the plethora of literature the study discovered that the seemingly inability of corporations to look beyond profits in rendering Corporate Social Responsibility services, and above all the complicity of Multi-national National Corporations (MNCs) in corruption issues, human right abuses, environmental disregard and degradation, social and economic dislocation is prevalent. It was realized that the Slack resources theory which assumes that resources set-aside for CSR activities by MNCs is purely dictated by the extent of the availability of resources not desired for other purposes is employed in the company's CSR disposition. This paper establishes that though the CSR had become part of SPDC"s medium of giving back to host communities, especially in the early 1990s, CSR and goodwill projects are still inadequate, top-down driven and in communities where projects are bottom-top driven. Also, Corporate Social Responsibility projects are not making the desired impact in host communities because, most CSR projects are political, intended to satisfy political friends, pacify hostile communities and sometimes an unnecessary duplication. Beyond rhetoric and promises as have been noticed in the former President Goodluck Jonathan's government and that of President Mohamadu Buhari's administration, the paper advocates that government should take practical steps geared towards implementing the United Nations Environmental Protection Agency (UNEP) report of 2011 on Ogoniland. The Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC)

should pay specific attention to the factors identified by the communities as being responsible for the occurrence of conflicts and address them.

Keywords: politics, corporate social responsibility, goodwill, development and Niger Delta

Introduction

Views of the public(s) to an organization tell the level of acceptability of that organization to its numerous publics. Some organizations, aware of these, endeavour to handle their affairs to demonstrate goodwill and corporate social responsibility and in return garner acceptability. Some established public relations departments employ a public relations consultant to provide advisory services, researches and subsequent adequate and goal-directed communication to stay afloat in business and its publics. This usually is aimed at gauging actions, reactions and inactions of their publics.

Organizations also demonstrate their goodwill, corporate philanthropy and social responsibility by the level of investment in community programmes such as erection of hospitals, schools, and award of scholarships, employment of indigenes of host communities, and the like. No doubt, a lot go into building a reputation for an organization and at the same time serve as parameter for rating that organization.

Using the '**slack resources theory'**, from the lens view of scholars, this paper therefore examined the activities of Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC) in the light of demonstration of corporate social responsibility, corporate philanthropy and goodwill management in Ogoni land.

Conceptual Explanations:

Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR‖) which is also called corporate conscience, citizenship, social performance, or sustainable responsible business) is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy functions as a built-in, self-regulating mechanism whereby business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of law, ethical standards, and international norms.

The goal of CSR is to embrace responsibility for the company's actions and encourage a positive impact through its activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and all other members of the public sphere. Furthermore, CSR-focused businesses would proactively promote the public interest by encouraging community growth and development, and voluntarily eliminating practices that harm the public sphere, regardless of legality. CSR is the deliberate inclusion of public interest into corporate decision-making, and the honoring of a triple bottom line: people, planet, profit. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is about how businesses align their values and behavior with the expectations and needs of stakeholders – not just customers and investors, but also employees, suppliers, communities, regulators, special interest groups and society as a whole. CSR describes a company's commitment to be accountable to its stakeholders. CSR demands that businesses manage the economic, social and environmental impacts of their operations to maximize the benefits and minimize the downsides.

Corporate Philanthropy

This is love shown by an organization to its host community and other publics that translates to scholarships, gifts, sponsorships, etc. Corporate philanthropy is generally considered to be a type of CSR activity. Literature on CSR often uses a four-part definition of the term, which identifies four categories of corporate responsibility: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Companies' economic and legal responsibilities are required, their ethical responsibilities are expected, and their philanthropic responsibilities are desired. While the economic and legal responsibilities reflect the old, classical social contract between businesses and society, the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities are relatively new and reflect companies' broader social contract with the society.

Corporate philanthropic activities are not a one-way road. Corporate philanthropy, accompanied by long-term commitment to targeted social problems, may not yield direct, tangible results to the companies, but are strategic investments yielding significant returns in the long run.

The underlying context is the interdependency of business and society. Companies, in order to thrive, need a healthy society. Therefore, they need to invest in the society, to develop the environment within it they do business, for the sake of their own survival.

Corporate philanthropic activities may be in the form of donation of cash or products, of the use of facilities, property, or services. Companies may also have employees doing voluntary work on company time. Companies may handle corporate giving directly, or through a company foundation. They may or may not collaborate with external partners such as NGOs or local governments to reach optimal social outcomes for their giving.

According to researchers Bruch and Walter, philanthropy can be classified into four types6: (i) Dispersed philanthropy, which is mostly uncoordinated, consisting of disjointed activities without clear criteria for decision-making. (ii) Peripheral philanthropy, which is driven by external demand and expectations, and not linking to company's core competencies. (iii) Constricted philanthropy, which is based on company's core competencies, but neglecting the needs and expectation of stake holders, and finally (iv) Strategic philanthropy, the most effective kind, which integrates company's core competencies with concern of external stake holders and social impact.

Goodwill Management

Goodwill management is a conscious or an unconscious programme or activity that continuously endears an organization to its publics. This involves considerable subtleties of attitudes and opinions an organization creates at the end of the day. As part of an organization's goodwill Enyia (2000) has made the following specific propositions to organizations, especially those in the oil-bearing sector.

a. Manage the settlement of compensation for land acquired for company operations and damages in a demonstrably fair, accountable and transparent manner and in accordance with statutory provisions and approved procedures.

b. Sensitive to the needs of the host communities if it has to operate safely and remain welcome in the oil-bearing communities.

c. Continually asses environmental degradation and reduce it to a level as low as practicable.

d. Establish a community development programme, which applies world standards of practices to serve its host community.

e. …work in partnership with host communities …government donors, non-governmental organizations, and community-based groups…

f. Pay special attention to the most economically disadvantaged social groups.

Ajala (2000) outlines some guidelines for effective community relations thus:

1. Know your community
2. Development an organizational community relations policy. Spell out specific objectives, base the policy on assessment or organizational needs, resources and expertise, and a community needs and expectations.
3. Review your organization’s policies, practices, and procedures.
4. Consider especially, the following areas: waste disposal, employee recruitment, employment policies, noise or traffic problems, maintenances of organizational facilities and grounds, advertising signs, marketing, energy, resources and energy waste all should be attended to within the community relations philosophy.
5. Utilize all means to communicate with the community. These may include employees, local media, open houses, local clubs and organization’s newsletter, annual report, and exhibits.
6. Distribute corporate donations according to community relations policies and objectives. Philanthropy is an important aspect of community relations.
7. Involve your organization in local programmes by sponsoring employees who wish to join civic and professional groups…
8. Use local merchants, contractors, banks, insurance agencies, lawyers and other professionals for goods and services.
9. Offer aid to local government. Make organization’s resources available to government by lending employees and materials.
10. Evaluate the community relations efforts to determine the extent to which objectives have been achieved.

Seitel (1998) sees organizations’ goodwill from the perspective of issues management when he says:

> *Issues management is the capacity to understand, mobilizes, co-ordinate, and direct all strategic and policy planning functions, and all public affairs/public relations skills, toward achievement of one objective, meaningful participation in creation of public policy that affects personal and institutional destiny.*

Offonry (1985) sees goodwill and social responsibility from the angle of sponsorship of schemes. He says an organization could engage in one more sponsorship schemes in the following ways:

a. Sponsoring the publication of a book of special cultural interest or an arts exhibition.
b. Sponsoring sports competitions, luncheon or dinner parties associated with sporting events or campaigns for funds.
c. Sponsoring environmental clean-up campaigns.
d. Establishing Foundation and Trusts for specific projects such as scholarship awards, researches of one kind or another.
e. Organization of educational lecturers, seminars and workshops on subjects of special interest for the community.
f. Participation in trade exhibitions, trade regulations and international conferences…
g. Regular seminars on the wider horizons of business for all categories of employees.

Cutlip and Center (1971) argue that: "a positive effort to build favourable community relationship is not 'do-goodism' but it is a profitable investment of the money and time it takes. A Community relation activity is a 'something-for-something proposition', a calculated casting of bread upon the waters". He continued that "project and programmes to improve and strengthen institutional-community relationships must be mutually beneficial".

Benson-Eluwa (1998) says if human relations can be used as a yardstick to measure the success of an organization, it should depend to a large extent, on the employees' relationship.

Realizing that goodwill is part of human relations some experts say, "an organization that has an employee with human relations knowledge and experience is made and the employee is usually in high demand by every organization. Simon (1980) collates some schools of thought covering social responsibility as explanations for an organization's goodwill.

Friedman's view on social responsibility is to conduct the business in accordance with their desires, which generally will be to make as much money as possible while conforming to the basic rules of society. Another view on social responsibility was set forth in the seventies in a 74 page statement by the research and policy committee of the Committee for Economic Development (CDE), titled "Social Responsibilities of Business Corporation" summaries the power of good will thus:

> *There is increasing understanding that the corporation is dependent on the good will of society, which can sustain or impair its existence through public pressures on government.*

Harood Childs sees it form public interest perspective. He says: "it is my thesis that the public interest, so far as the United States is concerned, is and can only be what the public, what mass opinion says it is. By mass opinion, I mean the collective opinions of the American people.

Hill, Ross and other public researches veterans suggest among others that organizations should explain why your policy or action is in the public interest. The public is interested in more likely to support you if you explain why your organization's position, proposals, or action is the public interest.

Howard (1982) says, "For goodwill that is invisible acceptable asset in the most highly valued public relations prize from which all else follows in seeking to change attitudes and opinions as the only satisfactory means of achieving a company's corporate objectives. Howard added that "a negligent or different public relations attitude at such a distance could jeopardize future investment, sour relationship with political and business leaders and crate unfavorable legal employee relations--by positing that "goodwill is necessary for the company's computations and survival".

Black (1970) views goodwill from the perspective of hospitality. He says true hospitality does not seek to buy friendship, but it is the background to the establishment of cordial and lasting relationship. From the above analysis it could be seen that goodwill, corporate philanthropy and social responsibility are a veritable and sustainable part of public relations in particular.

The Slack Resources Theory

The resource-based view of slack resources proposes that unique resources, including tangible and intangible, influence the rate and direction of a firm's global expansion, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Penrose, 1959; Wernerfelt, 1984). For example, Calof and Beamish (1995) pointed out that a change in a firm's resources may critically alter internationalization patterns. Evidence similarly indicates that management team's conceptualization and use of the firm's resources influence firm internationalization path and performance.

Although substantial conceptual research has focused on slack resource effect on an organization, the role slack plays is still under debate. Proponents of slack argue that slack resources have been recognized as vital for organization because of its ability to buffer firms from external environmental turbulence as well as its potential to foster innovation (Cyert and March, 1963; Thompson, 1967). According to Cyert and March slack is the disparity between the resources available to the organization and the payments required to maintain the coalition. Bourgeois (1981) added that ―organizational slack is that cushion of actual or potential resources which allows an organization to adapt successfully to internal pressures for adjustment or to external pressures for change in policy, as well as to initiate changes in strategy with respect to the external environment.

Nohria and Gulati (1997) defined slack as ―the pool of resources in an organization that is in excess of the minimum necessary to produce a given level of organizational output. Moreover, they noted that these resources vary in type, including excess inputs (e.g., surplus employees, idle capacity, and capital expenditures) and overlooked or unexploited opportunities to increase outputs (e.g., margins and revenues to be gained from customer). Most recently, George (2005) defined slack as ―potentially utilizable resources that can be diverted or redeployed for the achievement of organizational goals. The evolving literature has provided three implications. First, slack is conceptually defined as not being used to the fullest extent possible. Second, slack resource characteristics include location (e.g., absorbed versus unabsorbed) and accessibility (e.g., immediately versus deferred) (Daniel, Lohrke, & Fornaciari, 2004). Third, the central purpose of slack resources is to act as a buffering mechanism to counter threats and as a facilitator to exploit opportunities.

Bourgeois & Singh (1983) have introduced three components of slack, ranking in order of decreasing availability: (1) available slack, referring to resources not yet committed to a specific expenditure, (2) recoverable slack, referring to resources already absorbed as organization excess costs, and (3) potential slack, referring to future resources generated through debt borrowing. Singh (1986) makes a distinction between absorbed and unabsorbed slack. The former indicates excess overheads, which could be cut in organizations, and the latter indicates -excess, uncommitted liquid resources, which could be better utilized. Sharfman et al. (1988) suggests that slack resources be anchored along a managerial discretion continuum, and distinguished between high-discretion and low-discretion slack. More discretionary slack resources can be used in a wide variety of situations and less discretionary slack resources can be used only in a few specific situations.

Analyzing Shell Petroleum Development Corporation's Corporate Social Responsibility in Ogoniland Using the Slack Resources Theory

Clearly as has been established above corporations are motivated to invest in CSR by a set of hypothesis; the *Business Integrity thesis***,** and the ***Slack Resources Theory***. The business integrity thesis holds that shareholders and stakeholders desire a financially comfortable corporation, while adhering strictly to values of environmental sustainability, ethical conduct, etc. At the centre of this thesis is corporate reputation (Jackson, 2004).

Utting and Ives (2006: 11) emphatically stated that:

> The 1980s and 1990s were not good years for the reputation of Big Oil. Exposés of malpractice in relation to the environment, human rights, local communities and conflicts were rife. Against this backdrop, several North American and European oil companies embarked on a makeover in order to win friends and placate enemies. They did this not only through the proverbial use of public relations and philanthropy but also by proactively promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR).

The concept of CSR therefore became part of SPDC International's operational conduct as image/reputation laundry, following the alleged complicity in the controversial hanging of the Ogoni environmental activist and writer, Ken Saro Wiwa and nine others in Nigeria (Rowell, et al, 2005) and the controversy-laden intention of Shell to dump the Brent Spar (North Sea) oil facility into the ocean triggered-off international criticisms championed by Greenpeace International. Shell Petroleum Development Company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was followed with a major change in the company business principles translated into publications such as Shell Report (1998) *Profits and Principles-Does There Have To Te a Choice?*, The Shell Report 1999: *People, Planet and Profits: An Act of Commitment*, Shell (2001) *People Planet & Profit*, etc, summarizing how the company intends to integrate social responsibility into its overall business strategy. Unfortunately, these publications were never translated into reality, because for SPDC, CSR in the Niger Delta was purely an effort to redeem her battered image.

The ***slack resources theory,*** which is at core of this study, is used to situate a corporation's seeming intention for embarking on CSR. Slack resources are defined as "the stock of excess resources available to an organization during a given planning cycle" (Voss, et al, 2008:148). It is a kind of resources that enables the corporation to meet unforeseen circumstances in its business environment. Thus, the essence of slack resources with respect to CSR is situated on the premise that resources set-aside for CSR activities by Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) is purely dictated by the extent of the availability of resources not desired for other purposes (Jensen 1986, Bird, et al, 2006). Like the reputation postulation, the slack resources theory confirms that CSR is not an inborn desire by MNCs for developing communities but to create an enabling environment for business to strive. The SPDC"s CSR in the Niger Delta is still expected to make the desired impact vis-à-vis the social, economic and environmental devastation experienced in the region. It is such perspectives that made Nicky Oppenheimer, Chairman, De Beers, while at the Commonwealth Business Forum, November 1999 (*Diamonds Working for Africa*), bears his mind observing that *"*natural resources can be a source of great good… or dreadful ill".

DeGeorge (2000) on his part posited that MNCs in international business must observe the following guidelines:

1 .Do not direct intentional harm,

2. Produce more good than harm for the host country,

3. Respect the rights of employees and of all others affected by one's actions or policies,

4. To the extent consistent with ethical norms, respect the local culture and work with and not against it, and,

5. Multinationals should pay their fair share of taxes and cooperate with the local governments in developing equitable laws and other background institutions.

Corporate presence in the oil bearing communities of the Niger Delta is a sad sour episode of environmental and human right violations. Literatures abound as to the detrimental impacts of hosting Oil MNCs (Ikein, 1990) as a direct violation of all the guidelines prescribed by DeGeorge (2000) above. Shell has a poor environmental ethics**,** especially as the company is severally accused of *"*operating to double standards-one set for Nigeria and a higher set for its operations in the UK*"* (Rowell, et al, 2005:14).

However, the issue of environment and human rights like Siamese twins are inseparable. Late Ken Saro Wiwa while talking on the Niger Delta and SPDC observes: "You have two problems, the human rights problem and the environmental problem. You cannot talk about the environment without human rights. Shell must bear responsibility for the pipelines, the gas flaring, and environmental devastation*"* (Rowell, et al 2005:38). The presence of SPDC in a community spell doom arising from the countless oil spillages, and gas flares that renders the environment desolate with devastating consequences on the local economies (farm lands, rivers), social dislocation (prostitution, fatherless children, single motherhood, teenage pregnancies, unemployment, low morale for academics and apprenticeship, etc). These issues are both of human and environmental rights.

Shell as part of it slack initiative prepared a human rights guide, the Business and Human Rights: A Management Primer, 1998 to manage her poor reputation crisis resulting from the ken Saro Wiwa’s extra-judicial murder in Nigeria and the Brent Spar incidents. The corporate giant whole heartedly stated her unalloyed commitment to basic human rights values, observing that ‘business is part of, not separate from society’. But the Organization’s distinction between business and society seems to be artificial because no tangible steps had been taken to make good its promises. Businesses and corporations are social entities, created in the context of larger interdependent cultural, political and sociological systems”. In spite of such commitments and avalanche of committal documents, Shell’s human rights record is not good enough for a developing country like Nigeria.

There is obviously a disparity in SPDC statements of commitment and field operations in the Niger Delta. Specifically, in the year 2000, the fifth anniversary of the hanging of Ken Saro Wiwa and his compatriots was gravely commemorated and Rowell et al (2005:25) observes that at the commemoration ceremony *Saro Wiwa’s symbolic coffin was buried under the Ogoni flag, flapping defiantly in the breeze. The Ogoni still hold Shell responsible. The main sign of the funeral had a picture of Shell’s famous logo followed by “killed Saro Wiwa” It then read: “Shell is forever persona-non-grata in Ogoni”. The “S” of “Shell” had been crossed out, leaving “Hell”.*

Only recently, an SPDC sponsored UNEP (2011) report titled “*Environment Assessment of Ogoniland”* blamed SPDC for the heinous environmental devastation presently experienced in Ogoniland, stating an intensive rehabilitation efforts for a minimum of thirty years is expected to lapse for the environment to gain return to its original value. In spite of this, Shell Petroleum Development Company never had any “minimal moral requirement to aid the deprived” in the Niger Delta. Thus, CSR is seen as a mantra of MNCs accused of intensifying climate change, and exploiting poverty and being “insensitive to the misery that coincides with their profitable operations” (The New Republic, 2005). Corporate Social Responsibility projects in the Niger Delta had always been a top-down (exception is Statoil’s presence at Akassa, Bayelsa State, where community projects are initiated by the people of Akassa, approach where projects for communities are dictated by either the corporation or the government. Corporate Social Responsibility projects are not making the desired impact in host communities because, most CSR projects are political, intended to satisfy political friends, pacify hostile communities and sometimes an unnecessary duplication.

Comparing the Vietnamese Organization’s Corporate Philanthropy and the Ogoni Situation

In a study by Giang Dang and Pham Minh Tri on “Corporate Philanthropy and Corporate Perceptions of Local NGOs in Vietnam” in October 2013 began with viewing Corporate philanthropy as generally considered to be a type of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activity, one of the four categories of corporate responsibilities; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Among the more than 500 companies involved in the study, about three quarters engaged in some giving over the last year, making cash donations totaling 113 billion VND, together with in-kind contributions of 14 billion VND, as well as 19,500 hours of employee’s working hours. 81% of companies in industry and manufacturing are philanthropically active, compared to only two thirds in agriculture, forestry and aquaculture. Size is another key driving factor. The biggest businesses are the biggest givers. 96% of business with more than 500 employees made contributions, averaging 1,275 millions VND each. This compares with only 46% of businesses with 10 staff or less. Those businesses on average donated only 60 million each.

Cash donation is by far the most popular form of giving, practiced by the majority of giving businesses. This was followed in popularity by in-kind contributions. Only around 10% of businesses practiced employee volunteering, although employee volunteering is a potentially excellent form of philanthropy, offering companies benefits in employee development as well as improving company reputation. Awareness about CSR and the concept of civil society makes a difference to giving behavior. Among the businesses who had heard of CSR and civil society, only 13% and 18% respectively did not practice giving.

The rates of non-givers among those who had never heard of the terms were 26% and 35%. The short-term trend (over the last two years) in volume of giving seems to be flat. According to businesses' forecasts this trend will probably continue for the next year. For many, giving is an ad-hoc, short-term activity. One third of respondents were not able to make any comment on their plan next year's cash giving, half could not indicate their plan for next year's in-kind contributions.

In the Ogoni situation and that of the Niger Delta at large, the seeming inability of corporations to look beyond profit in rendering CSR services, and above all the recent complicity of MNCs in corruption issues, human right abuses, environmental disregard, social and economic dislocation, etc, is dehumanizing. To forestall this ugly situation, voluntary principles/guidelines should be put in place to at least checkmate the activities of MNCs in their areas of operation, especially in some developing countries where environmental laws, fiscal regulations, legal regulations, etc, are lacking.

Conclusion

The Ogoni people in the early 1990s made representations to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to the effect that giving loans and credit to the Nigerian Government on the understanding that oil money will be used to repay such loans was inadvertently to encourage the Nigerian government to continue to dehumanize the Ogoni people and to devastate their environment and ecology of the Ogoni and other delta minorities among whom oil is found.

The Ogoni people informed the United Nations and the then Organization of African Unity that the Nigerian Constitution and the actions of the power elite in Nigeria flagrantly violate the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter of Human and Peoples Rights; and that Nigeria in 1992 is no different from Apartheid South Africa and urged the organizations to prevail on the Federal Government of Nigeria to pay all royalties and mining rents collected on oil mined from Ogoni since 1958 as detailed in the 1990 'The Ogoni Bill of Rights'.

This paper has revealed the impeding dangers of unresolved conflicts in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as signposted by the Shell and Ogoni case. The present study identified things that were not known earlier about the Shell and Ogoni crises, to improve knowledge and provide a clear understanding on the causes and remediation of the deep-rooted and prolonged oil crises. The study reported the adverse impacts of oil and gas activities on individuals, families, communities and the environment of the Ogoni people and the Niger Delta at large. The paper has revealed the dangers with inappropriate decisions, regulations and actions of the government and the oil and gas industries to control the deteriorating impact of the Ogoni crises on the communities and the region at large. In order to change the adverse impacts of the crises to individuals, families, communities, the environment, organizations, and the society, the present study provided recommendations to guide the government, the oil and gas industries and the Niger Delta communities in their relations and actions to protect lives and the living environment. The approach provided has not been put to use elsewhere and provides sets of compensation to all the affected source of livelihood of the indigenous people which has been the cause of oil crises.

Recommendations

1. Beyond rhetoric and promises as have been noticed in the former President Jonathan's government and that of President Mohamadu Buhari's administration government should take practical steps geared towards implementing the United Nations Environmental Protection Agency (UNEP) report of 2011 on Ogoniland. Although, the government had taken a landmark step by flagging off the process of implementation on June 02, 2016 which had attracted several criticisms as to government sincerity.
2. The Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) should pay specific attention to the factors identified by the communities as being responsible for the occurrence of conflicts. For instance, the company should be mindful that the performance of the government in the state or country in which it operates would have immense implications on the perception they enjoy from its host communities. Hence, they should use their strategic economic position to encourage or pressurize the government into being responsible.
3. The community members (Stakeholders) should be adequately enlightened by NGOs, which are more readily accepted than the government, on their rights as individuals and their roles in national development. This will prevent them from being used by deceptive politicians as tools for winning elections other vanguards in nation building and development.
4. Both the oil company and the communities should constantly bear in mind the double edged consequences of conflicts; hence, they must be avoided at all cost. The companies must not be seen to be covertly instigating communal conflicts, as had been the perception before now, so as to make more profits while the communities are busy warring.
5. The oil company using the Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMoU) should improve the strategy by including a grassroots scheme and initiative that will help ensure the desired results.
6. The oil company should engage public relations and community relations experts to work towards improving the communities' perception of their positive influence on the communities, effective communication, conflict resolution, readiness to negotiate during conflicts and keeping of promises at all times.

7. Also, Skills training and acquisition, an integral part of the company's programmes and activities, should be encouraged so as to cater for members of the communities who are not educated but are willing to be educated.
8. Above all, the government should implement the policies that regulate the activities of oil companies in the areas of pollution control, gas flaring, environmental degradation, etc. This to a very large extent will help to curb the excesses of the companies and reduce as well as make them take responsibility for weak business, human and environmental operations in its host communities and other poor business practices.

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