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**Effective Assessment Framework: Sustainability of
Post Amnesty Programme in Niger Delta Region for
National Development**

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Abstract

The Niger Delta is said to be the world's largest wetland. The oil and gas in that region represents 97% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and this accounts for a major chunk of the wealth of the country. The Niger Delta has for some years been the site of major confrontations between the people and the Nigerian government's security forces, resulting in extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and draconian restrictions on the rights to freedom of

expression, association, and assembly. To proffer solution, Federal government came up with post-amnesty program. Based on this, the study sought; (i) To determine the level of effectiveness of the implementation of the Post Amnesty Programme since its inception in 2009, (ii) determine how effective evaluation method can sustain Post Amnesty programme beyond Amnesty peace agreement in Niger Delta. The research design was descriptive survey method. The population of the study was 4,798,519 million youths [15-39years][last Census2006] in Delta state, Bayelsa state and River state. The study made use of qualitative and quantitative data analyses. The sample size was 400 using Taro Yamane formula. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents in each of the states, while hypothesis one was tested using Friedman Chi-Square test statistics, hypothesis two was tested using One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Z) test. Effective evaluation method significantly maintains the Post Amnesty Programme in Nigeria ($X^2_{(friedman)cal} = 137.098 > X^2_{calculated} = 5.9915, p < 0.05$). Amnesty program does have economic benefits in Nigeria ($Z_{cal} = 4.930 > Z_{critical} = 1.96, p < 0.05$). The study recommended that the Amnesty International and all other agencies involved in peace building and in managing conflict in Niger Delta should borrow a leaf from other countries' management techniques such as in Canada and USA.

Introduction

Niger Delta is a region that spreads out to cover the South-eastern part of Nigeria in West Africa. It is also referred to as the South-South geopolitical zone in the current six geo-political structure of the country. Niger Delta is an area of dense mangrove rainforest in the southern tip of Nigeria comprising nine states out of the thirty six, including the FCT that made up the entity called Nigeria. The present day Niger Delta was estimated from the result of the last census having total population of about 20 million people, living in 1600 communities that spread over about 70,000 square kilometres that made up 7.5% of Nigeria's land mass [Wikipedia 2010].Historically, it was made up of Bayelsa, Delta and River state. In 2000, Obasanjo's

regime expanded its definition to include: Imo State, Abia state, Akwa Ibom State, Ondo State, Edo State and Cross Rive State. The region alone takes 25% of the total number of the states in Nigeria. It is the nucleus of Nigeria's wealth and one of the world's energy sources because it is rich in oil and gas resources, which directly supports the country's economy. Aliyu, [2009] asserts that the region accounts for more than 20% of Gross Domestic Product [GDP], more than 97% of total export earnings and over 70% of all government revenues, and is a region responsible for producing the country' major source of revenue in Nigeria. Ironically, the region progresses backwards due to: poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, deprivation etc, which in turn open the gate for psychological imbalance of the State and her people.

The Niger Delta has for some years been the site of major confrontations between the people and the Nigerian government's security forces, resulting in extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and draconian restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly. These violations of civil and political rights have been committed principally in response to protest about the activities of the multinational companies that produce Nigeria's oil, and the use made of the oil revenue by the Nigerian government. Kimiebe, [2010], asserts that the crux of the Niger Delta crisis has always been the concentration of power and resources in the hands of the centre through decrees and constitutions, and the people are denied access to the oil wealth, as well as the Land Use Act of 1978 inter alia: All lands and mineral belong to the Federal Government. The effect of this scenario was seen by Isaac Adaka Boro, an Ijaw revolutionist in 1966, Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1992, and Asari Dokubo in 2004 and the Jomo Gbomo-led Movement 2006 [Afinotu, 2009]. These marked the struggle, anger and frustration of the southern minorities against the Federal Government's neglect, oppression, marginalization and environmental degradation in the midst of hopelessness.

In Nigeria, the Federal government is both a key player in oil and gas leasing/mining as well as a referee. It collects all revenues generated in the country and disburses a maximum of 13%, or as it pleases, to the states from which the resources are derived. By the recent supreme court decision on offshore lands, the Federal government now takes everything while the coastal states are entitled to nothing, not to talk of ecological impact, infrastructural wear-and-tear, coastal communities development which constitutes the major causes of crises in Niger Delta.

Niger Delta crisis is anchored on the logic that despite the vast wealth produced in the area, plus the negative impacts of the oil industry, the people remain poorer than the national average. Youths who are denied meaningful education and employment now indulge in conflicts including: militancy, hostage taking, prostitution, armed-robbery, drug trafficking, etc, as strategies to escape poverty and deprivation. Substantial evidence abound that oil exploration by the multinational corporations has resulted into air, land and sea pollution. The land in many places now yields little or no harvest; plants shrink and fade away because of gas flaring.

Medical and environmental experts explain that gas flaring alone contains about 250 toxins. Such toxins lead to respiratory problems among other dangers to human, environmental and animal life. Unfortunately the gas flaring is carried out in some parts of the Niger Delta 24 hours daily. This constitutes serious health hazard in the region. When the social welfare of the people deteriorated to an intolerable level, they formed stronger pressure groups to take their destiny into their hands. So, the people, in turn pushed by what could be described as the instinct for self-preservation, formed violent groups to match force with force.

To proffer solution to the crises, Federal government came up with post-amnesty program. Questions are being asked as to whether the grant of amnesty is the best option for the Niger Delta considering all the violence committed in the region. Another issue is how reliable the content of the amnesty is. It is not established whether there are

mechanisms set up to evaluate and assess the amnesty programme and its contents. Also, as to whether there was adequate dialogue among the stakeholders in the crisis before granting the Amnesty.

Okoko and Peterside [2009] argued that the Amnesty lacks transparency; it is inadequately planned and has no clear cut time frame. Some militant groups were sceptical about the amnesty because Dokubo Asari was arrested in the name of the amnesty [Fact Express, 2009]. The legal constraint imposed by the United Nations [UN] on serious crimes seems to limit the boundary of offences that may be amnestied [Priscilla 2009].

Purpose of the Study

Based on this, the study sought to: determine the level of effectiveness of the implementation of the Post Amnesty programme since its inception in 2009. To determine how effective assessment framework can be used to effectively sustain the Niger Delta Peace Agreement (treaties) beyond Post amnesty in Nigeria. And to examine if the Amnesty programme has economic benefit in Nigeria. Also, to make recommendations appropriately based on how to maintain and sustain Amnesty program beyond peace agreement with the use of a well-established assessment framework.

Research Hypothesis:

- Evaluation method does not significantly maintain the Post Amnesty programme in Nigeria
- Amnesty program does not have economic benefits in Nigeria

Methodology

The population of the study comprised of all the youths in Niger Delta crisis. Youths aged 15-39 years old from the three selected states that include: Bayelsa state, Rivers state and Delta state out of nine states that made of Niger Delta Region. The population size of the youths in all the states selected was 4,798,519, based on the last census of 2006.

Population Size of each of State (15-39 YRS)

STATE	POPULATION
Bayelsa	27,375
Rivers	2,322,642
Delta	1,748,502
Total	4,798,519

Source: Population and Housing census on Federal Republic of Nigeria (2006). Priority table 1 NPC Abuja

The Descriptive survey research design method was employed. It is sometimes called non-experimental research, deals with the relationship between variables, the testing of hypotheses and the development of generalization, principles or theories that have universal validity. The sample size was 400 using Taro Yamane (1976) formula. The sampling techniques employed was stratified random sampling in order to determine the population quota of each of the states and purposive sampling for choosing the actual respondents in each state. The research instrument used was questionnaire, while, the frequency distribution tables, simple percentages and chi-square of non-parametric techniques was used as analytical tool for this study

Theoretical Framework and Empirical Related Literature

Use of Eight-Factor Model

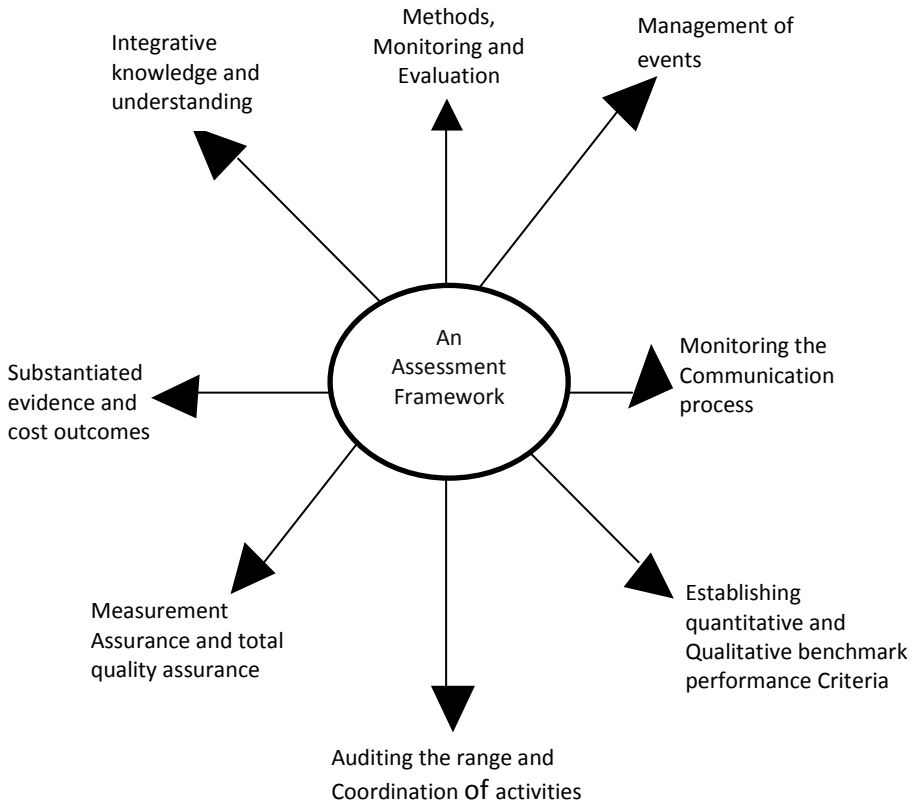


Fig 2.6: Eight-factor models (Performance Indicators)

Source: Oliver, S. [2006], *Public Relations Strategy*, 2nd ed, London: Kogan Page Ltd.

These measurable performance indicators called eight-factor model, which would assist communications and reduce misunderstanding, and provide more meaningful criteria for evaluating and sustaining the Post Amnesty program in Niger Delta. Amnesty programs should be segmented into target audiences for effective monitoring, measuring and controlling, in order to specific messages which must meet functional objectives in each of the segments, while attaining the collective objective of Amnesty program. The critical role of eight-factor model is to enable the stakeholders in operationalizing Amnesty program's mission and vision, thereby translating it into reality in the achievement of its objectives for its sustainability for national development.

Having established the need for sustainability of the Niger Delta Peace Agreement, it is vital that the right machinery is put in place to ensure that the process of sustainability is successful. Having also established the fact that a combination of the use of public initiative, third-party involvement and conference as forms of dialogue, and a well-established evaluation method can enhance and sustain the Post Amnesty programme, it leaves no doubt that it will play a vital role in the sustainability of the Post Amnesty programme. This cannot be overemphasized because its absence can lead mistrust among stakeholders and beneficiaries of the programme. For continuous and relative peace to be sustained in the Niger Delta area, the active participation of programme beneficiaries and stakeholders is of utmost important too.

Economic Benefits of Amnesty Programme to Nigeria

Peace! It is a beautiful word. Though very abstract it is a well sought feeling. There is not a single person or organization that would not want to experience peace, even warmongers. This study on the amnesty programme is synonymous with peace. That is why the study advocates for well-established evaluative mechanism to assess the Amnesty programme and its content to ensure lasting solution to Niger Delta crises. The essence of the Amnesty programme in the Niger Delta is to bring about lasting peace to the troubled region.

This tied some good benefits to Nigeria as a nation. It is only in peaceful regions that meaningful collaboration and developments can take place. Where there is investment and development, there is influx of income, thus earnings increase and socio-economic development programmes abound, which goes a long way in ensuring the safety and the reduction of societal vices. The cycle goes on. These are all as a result of the realization of peace; via the successful implementation and sustainability of the Amnesty programme.

In the realization and sustainability of the Amnesty programme, there is need to reflect on the Section 44 [3] of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and other enactments which vest the entire control and management of oil and gas in Nigeria on the Federal government. This section of the constitution should be reviewed in favour of regional ownership of petroleum as practiced in USA and Canada. Constitutional power for the management and control of petroleum must be shared with all arms of government. And also the petroleum policy should be made to reflect how Nigeria can develop its petroleum resources in such a way that all Nigerians will benefit, in order to maintain and sustain the Post Amnesty peace agreement in the region.

What is Amnesty?

Sabella [2009] contends that Amnesty, in international law, is an act of effacing [wiping off] and forgetting past offenses granted by the government to persons who have been guilty of neglect or crime. The term is applied to rebellious acts against the state. Amnesty differs from pardon in that; Amnesty causes the crime to be forgotten, whereas pardon, given after a conviction, exempts the criminal from further punishment. Amnesty is usually granted to a class of criminals or group of persons who may have committed a crime and is offered in order to restore tranquillity in the state. One of the benefits of Amnesty programme is to enhance youth development in its ramifications.

Academy Educational Development [2010], asserts that youth development is about people, programmes, institutions and systems that provide all youth “trouble” with the supports and opportunities they need to empower themselves. Pittan [2000 p.8], defines “Youth development” as the ongoing growth processes in which all youth are engaged in attempting to: To build skills and competencies that would allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives. These will ensure that the gains accrued as a result of Amnesty such as: youth empowerment, reduction of vandalisation, human resource development and socio-economic independence and stability, increased revenue in the oil and gas sector, creation of Niger Delta Affairs Ministry, high level of productivity and investment opportunities are maintained and sustained for national development in Nigeria.

Strengths of the Amnesty

- Fact Express [2009], the Amnesty promoted active listening assertive communication and affirming environment for dialogue
- It protected the nation’s referent power in the global village
- Circulation of illegal weapons was reduced, if not eliminated
- It promoted reconciliation between the militants and the offended residents who want peace to reign
- The Nigeria government reversed its previously reneged promise on power generation from 6000MW target by December 2009 to 60,000MW in 2020
- Oil production and output increased as a sharp contrast to the oil dropped in the first quarter of 2009
- The involvement of mass media is one of the major strengths of post- amnesty program.

Constraints of the Amnesty

Aside the strengths of the programme, its goes with constraints which include:

- The health problem of the President and his sudden departure for Saudi Arabia, which created a power vacuum, affected the post-amnesty plans [Nigerians in America 2010].
- The victims of the activities of the militant groups may feel cheated for granting immunity from prosecution through the amnesty to the militants and consequently have distrusting sentiment about the law, or plan illegal revenge
- There is possibility of impression that criminals may go scot free or crime goes unpunished because pardon will be eventually granted.

Analysis of data and discussion of findings

The interpretation and discussion of data gotten from responses to the questionnaires administered to the youths of three selected states of the Niger Delta, was to give intended audience and future researcher the modus operandi of arriving at results and making generalizations.

The discussion was based as:

Table 1: Amnesty's Usefulness to the Beneficiaries

Responses	Bayelsa (%)	Delta (%)	Rivers (%)	Total (%)
It stops kidnapping and killing of human being	8 (15.4)	12 (10.8)	10 (6.8)	30 (9.7)
It brought peace and security	31 (53.8)	76 (88.4)	67 (55.9)	189 (61.0)
It is useful to me based on educational benefits	12 (23.1)	10 (9.0)	19 (12.9)	41 (13.2)
Empowerment	1 (1.9)	13 (11.7)	36 (24.5)	50 (16.1)
Total	52 (100.0)	111 (100.0)	147 (100.0)	310 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2014

In Table 1, when asked how Amnesty was useful to them as beneficiaries, reveals that majority of the respondents (61%) said it brought peace and security. Other benefits pointed out by the respondents included empowerment (16.1% responses), educational benefits (13.2% responses) and eradication of kidnapping and killings of human beings (9.7%).

Table 2: Relative Peace in the Niger-Delta Region as a Result of the Amnesty

State	Agree (%)	Strong Agree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Total (%)
Bayelsa	16 (30.8)	18 (34.6)	4 (7.7)	6 (11.5)	8(15.4)	52 (100.0)
Delta	74 (66.7)	12 (10.8)	10 (9.0)	12 (10.8)	7(6.3)	111 (100.0)
Rivers	52 (35.4)	32 (21.8)	21 (14.3)	28 (19)	14(9.5)	147 (100.0)
Total	142 (45.8)	62 (20.0)	35 (11.3)	42 (13.5)	29(9.4)	310 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2014

In response to table 2 reveals that 142 respondents (45.8%) and 62 respondents (20%) were of the opinion that Amnesty brought about relative peace in Niger Delta. 35 respondents representing (11.3%) were indifferent on the issue. While, 42 respondents (13.5%), and 29 respondents (9.4%) were disagreed and strongly disagreed that there is relative peace in the Niger-Delta region as a result of the Amnesty. This is the view of the respondents from the various sampled Niger-Delta states. Therefore, the study proves that there is relative peace in the Niger Delta region as a result of the Amnesty

Table 3 Amnesty has Economic Benefits in Nigeria

State	Agree (%)	Strong Agree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Total (%)
Bayelsa	21 (40.4)	17 (32.7)	5 (9.6)	9 (17.3)	5	52 (100.0)
Delta	54 (48.6)	34 (30.6)	10 (9.0)	13 (11.7)	7(6.3)	111 (100.0)
Rivers	76 (51.7)	52 (35.4)	5 (3.4)	14 (9.5)	6(4.1)	147 (100.0)
Total	151 (48.7)	103 (33.2)	20 (6.5)	36 (11.6)	18(5.8)	310 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 3 reveals that from the responses of the sampled respondents, amnesty has economic benefits to the country. The view is from the frequency in the responses of 151 respondents (48.7%) who agreed and 103 respondents (33.2%) who strongly agreed, 20 respondents (6.5%) were indifferent and 36 respondents (11.6%) disagreed while 18 respondents (5.8%) strongly disagreed as well as the individual State results. Based on the study, Amnesty has economic benefits in Nigeria.

Table4 Amnesty is a Useful Tool in Solving the Niger-Delta Crisis

State	Agree (%)	Strong Agree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Disagree (%)	Strong Disagree (%)	Total (%)
Bayelsa	21 (40.4)	10 (19.2)	4 (7.7)	11 (21.2)	6(11.5)	52 (100.0)
Delta	55 (49.5)	23 (20.7)	9 (8.1)	24 (21.6)	11(9.9)	111 (100.0)
Rivers	69 (46.9)	49 (33.3)	16 (10.9)	13 (8.8)	4(2.7)	147 (100.0)
Total	145 (46.8)	82 (26.5)	29 (9.4)	54 (17.4)	21(6.8)	310 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4 reveals that 145 respondents (46.8%) and 82 respondents (26.5%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively that Amnesty is a useful tool in solving the Niger-Delta crisis. The 29 respondents [9.4%] were indifferent, while 54[17.4%] and 21[6.8%] disagreed and strongly disagreed. Therefore, the study proves that Amnesty is a useful tool in solving the Niger Delta crisis.

Table 5The Post Amnesty Programme Objective Achievable Through the Use of Evaluation and Assessment Techniques

State	Agree (%)	Strong Agree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Disagree (%)	Strong Disagree	Total (%)
Bayelsa	30 (57.7)	16 (30.8)	5 (9.6)	1 (1.9)	0	52 (100.0)
Delta	61 (55.0)	32 (28.8)	12 (10.8)	4 (3.6)	2(1.8)	111 (100.0)
Rivers	84 (57.1)	31 (21.1)	28 (19.0)	4 (2.7)	0	147 (100.0)
Total	175 (56.5)	79 (25.5)	45 (14.5)	9 (2.9)	2(0.6)	310 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 5 shows that 175 respondents (56.5%) and 79 respondents (25.5%), were of the opinion that effective evaluation and assessment techniques can sustain Amnesty program. The 45 respondents (14.5%) were indifferent. While 9 respondents of (2.9%) and 2 respondents (0.6%) agreed and strongly agreed that the objective of the Post Amnesty programme can be achieved through the use of evaluation and assessment techniques. This is the view of the respondents from the individual sampled states. Therefore, in regards to the study, Post Amnesty programme objective can be achieved with the use of effective evaluation and assessment techniques.

Table 6 Evaluation Technique not the Best Management Tool to Sustain the Post Amnesty Programmes

State	Agree (%)	Strong Agree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Disagree (%)	Strong Disagree (%)	Total (%)
Bayelsa	10 (19.2)	4 (7.7)	8 (15.4)	27 (51.9)	3(5.8)	52 (100.0)
Delta	33 (29.7)	8 (7.2)	17 (15.3)	31(27.9)	22(19.8)	111 (100.0)
Rivers	46 (31.3)	19 (12.9)	30 (20.4)	33 (22.4)	19(12.9)	147 (100.0)
Total	89 (28.7)	31 (10.0)		91 (29.4)	44(14.2)	310 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 6 reveals that 89 respondents representing 28.7% of the sampled respondents agreed and (10%) strongly agreed, while, 31 respondents representing 17.7% were indifferent. The 55 respondents representing 14.2% of the respondents disagreed, and 44 respondents representing 14.2% strongly disagreed that evaluation technique is not the best management tool to sustain the post amnesty programmes. Thus, it can be concluded that a higher percentage of the respondents are of the opinion that evaluation technique is the best management tool to sustain the Post Amnesty programmes.

Test of Hypothesis One

Effective evaluation method does not significantly maintain the Post Amnesty programme in Nigeria. In testing this hypothesis using the Friedman Chi-Square test statistics

Decision Rule

If $X^2_{\text{calculated}} > X^2_{\text{critical}}$, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Decision

The calculated Friedman chi-square value is 137.098. This is greater than the critical chi-square value of 5.9915 i.e. $X^2_{(\text{friedman})\text{calculated}}$

(137.098) > $X^2_{critical}$ (5.9915). This result is significant as p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted accordingly. Hence, effective evaluation method significantly maintains the Post Amnesty programme in Niger Delta.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Amnesty program does not have economic benefits in Nigeria

The One-Sample Kolmogorv-Smirnov (Z) test is used in testing this hypothesis.

Decision Rule

If $Z_{calculated} > Z_{critical}$ or $-Z_{calculated} < -Z_{critical}$, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Decision

The calculated Z-value is 4.930. This is less than the critical Z-value of 1.96 (at 95% level of significance) i.e. $Z_{calculated}$ (4.930) > $Z_{critical}$ (1.96). This result is significant as p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted accordingly. Hence, Amnesty program does have economic benefits in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the study, the root cause of the Niger Delta Crisis is the collective failure of the Nigerian state, the Niger Delta government and the multinational oil corporations to bring out rapid socio-economic development to the region. Therefore, there is need to address these problems and challenges that triggered violence, insecurity and economic loss in the Niger Delta, through the Amnesty program and use of effective assessment and evaluative framework, in order to effectively sustain the Post Amnesty programme beyond the Amnesty peace agreement.

Recommendations

Petroleum extraction in the Niger Delta is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. Petroleum has since its production in the Niger

Delta been considered exclusively a State property. The right approach should be made to ensure that the conflict is stopped and the areas affected developed so as to foster peace and growth in the communities. Local and State Government and community leaders should discourage the proliferation of the use of arms in addressing grievances. The proliferation of arms in the region makes it easy for communities in the Niger delta to resort to arms at the slightest provocation. The National Assembly must address this trend by enacting law[s] with stiff penalties against communities, cult groups, and individual offenders who are found guilty in the wanton use of arms. Rural communities and ethnic nationalities should shun violence and always resort to peaceful means of settlement of disputes rather than carrying arms against each other on the slightest misunderstanding. Mostly importantly, effective evaluation and assessment framework must establish if Amnesty program and it accrued benefits should be maintained and sustained for national development.

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