

POST-AMNESTY PLAN, PEACE-BUILDING AND PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGER DELTA: A POLYCENTRIC PLANNING AND POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY (PPPRS)

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SYNOPSIS

This proposal charts a course of action that the Federal Government of Nigeria can take in order to consolidate the gains of amnesty programme by building peace and engineering people-centred development in the Niger Delta. From theoretical formulations to empirical analysis, this proposal uses the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework to diagnose the missing links in several efforts and programmes designed to addressing the crisis in the Niger Delta. While the present amnesty programme has yielded some good results, the grey area – post-amnesty plan – that can address the problems and challenges that triggered violence, insecurity and economic loss in the Niger Delta requires urgent attentions. In other words, amnesty programme needs be complemented with pragmatic post-amnesty poverty reduction and development strategies that are people-oriented. It is apposite to make hay while the sun shines. In the light of this exigency, this proposal considers it imperative to adopt a polycentric planning and poverty reduction strategy (PPPRS) to resolving the Niger Delta crisis.

The proposal is a summary of innovative problem-solving and solution-seeking ideas that area capable of addressing several challenges that are confronting the Niger Delta. It contains a well designed post-amnesty plan and programmes that can ensure economic empowerment, poverty reduction, people-centred development and peace-building in the region. The proposal designs a Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM) that derives inspirations and workability mechanisms from fifteen (15) African development models that are problem-solving and solution-seeking in several sectors of the economy in the Niger Delta. At the heart of NDPADM is African Public Sphere Restructuring Model (APSRM) designed for the setting up self-governing community assembly (SGCA) for deliberation, collegiality, mutual trust, reciprocity and shared community of understanding to enable citizens, both elite and non-elite to operate in synergy to collectively achieve socio-economic and techno-political objectives. Without a restructuring of the public space that could enable all the diverse interests in the Niger Delta to operate as colleagues with equal standing such that oil benefits are shared equitably, amnesty programme will be tantamount to fire brigade exercise, a waste of resources and a cycle of reinforced violence.

Under the proposed new institutional arrangement, amnestied persons will be involved in the activities of community assembly where they can function as agents of change in development arenas. Invariably, the amnesty programme of the federal government would enable ex-militants, freedom fighters, revolutionists and other citizens to make meaningful contributions towards development. The outcome of the restructuring is emergence of new institutional arrangements, which would reflect integrative constitutional order in socio-economic and techno-political realms. It is this joint action and synergy by the major stakeholders (public officials, scholars, oil companies and representatives of community self-governing institutions) that would eventually determine how government policies in all spheres of life in the region are to be implemented. After the institutional arrangement has been designed, operational strategy for implementation of any programme/project (e.g. employment generation, food security, road development,

poverty reduction, environmental management, security of life and property, electoral reform and democratisation, conflict detection, prevention and resolution, etc.) can then be fashioned out. It is at this stage that any of the fifteen models can be applied to any of the specific action situations. For example, the Nigerian government can kick start post-amnesty programmes by implementing food security and employment generation programmes in the Niger Delta.

Introduction

This proposal charts a course of action that the Federal Government of Nigeria can take in order to consolidate the gains of amnesty programme by building peace and engineering people-centred development in the Niger Delta. As the seventh largest producer of oil and gas in the world and the largest in Africa, the Niger Delta contributes over 40% to the Nigeria's GDP, about 90% of total annual earnings and about 80% of the national gross income (Federal Government of Nigeria [FGN] 2008:212). Despite the population of the region (about 33.5 million) accounting for about 23.0% of the national population (FGN 2008:189), the Niger Delta is characterized by accumulated problems - poverty, neglect, environmental degradation, and transport bottlenecks (Naanen 1995; Obi 2004:450; Akinola 2008b:89). In spite of its strategic economic importance, the demographic picture of the region as shown by the Human Development Index³ (HDI) is deplorable. The HDI of the region is as low as 0.564, compared with other regions and nations with the same oil and gas resources such as Saudi Arabia (0.800), United Arab Emirate (0.846), Kuwait (0.844), Libya (0.799), etc. (Human Development Index Report 2005:6 cited in Okaba 2008:30).

These problems are consequential upon the public sphere being dominated by the few

³ Human Development Index is a standard measure of well being of people, encompassing the longevity of age, knowledge and decent standard of living in terms of access to safe and clean water, quality health and education services, electricity, road, gainful employment, political participation, rule of law, etc. It is measured with 1 being the highest ranking score.

elite with "particularistic" concerns at the exclusion of the people. The affluence exhibited by many workers of the oil companies and political office holders in Nigeria sharply contrasts with the social deprivation of most residents of oil communities whose livelihoods are threatened (Akinola 1992, 1998, 2000, 2003a, 2005d, 2008b:89; Obi 2004:448). In response, the people of oil communities resisted this oppression of the federal government and oil companies in various ways (Douglas and Ola 1999:334; Obi 2000a:281). Consequently, four major groups, as identified by Akinola (2008b:90), with diverse interests have emerged strategizing for different reasons. Consequently, the challenges in the region have become complex and complicated.

The problems are largely a case of institutional dilemma which confirms the problem of "disconnect" that is caused by the absence of appropriate institutional mechanisms that could motivate the people (elite and non-elite) to work together as partners in development in the region. The stakeholders in development – governments, oil companies, other agencies and the Niger Delta people – operate on parallel lines, instead of as colleagues with equal standing within governance and development arenas. Without the citizens playing active role in decision making, governance process would continue to exclude and marginalize them. This factor has also accounted for the Niger Delta Master Plan and dialogue to resolve the problems in the region.

Using the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework developed

over the years by Vincent Ostrom and Elinor Ostrom and colleagues at the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, this proposal discusses repetitive missing links between and among the stakeholders in the governance of public affairs in the Niger Delta and also proffers possible solution to the challenges in the region. The IAD

Akinola (2008b) found that the inability of the elites leadership, governments and oil companies in the Niger Delta to respond appropriately to the needs and aspirations of the citizenry provoked opportunity for the people to carry out social responsibility that the state has effectively dodged over the years. The local people through self-governing institutions in the region have been able to respond to social challenges by exploring pre-colonial governance heritage and to certain extents have been able to address their daily needs (Akinola 2008b). The contention of this paper is that these people-centred creativities and adaptation strategies should form the basis for reconstructing governance and development in the Niger Delta. It is in this regard that polycentric planning and decision making arrangements that regard community self-governing institution as a major player in crisis resolution and development become imperative. Polycentric planning is a deliberate act of setting up multilayered and multicentred institutional mechanism that regards self-governing capabilities of local communities as foundation for reconstituting order from the bottom up. It can also be described as the process of ordering the use of physical, human and institutional resources as well as engaging the citizens in contractual relations with the public authority.

The point of departure of this paper is in problem solving and solution seeking. The paper is, therefore, concerned with how to reconfigure the public space through

believes in institutional arrangement designed by people who cooperate based on rules and constitution of their choice, and thereby able to resolve socio-economic and political problems which other people (external to their conditions) are not capable of doing for them.

appropriate institutional mechanism that could bring the Niger Delta people into the main stream of socio-economic and political decisions, thereby synergizing the efforts of the state, oil companies and community institutions through bottom-up and integrative planning. It also suggests adaptive planning strategy, using multi-layers and multi-centres institutional arrangements, to connect the stakeholders in a polycentric manner in order to resolve the hydra-headed challenges in the region. In the light of this exigency, this paper develops a Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM) that derives inspirations and workability mechanisms from fifteen (15) African development models that are problem-solving and solution-seeking in several sectors of the economy in the Niger Delta.

This proposal is, therefore, concerned with community institutions as the platform and basal point of decision making on the rational utilization and sustainability of environmental resources (natural and artificial) in meeting the yearning and aspirations of Niger Delta citizens. This is where amnestied persons can function as agents of change in development arenas. Invariably, the amnesty programme of the federal government will enable ex-militants, freedom fighters, revolutionists and other citizens in the region to make meaningful contributions towards development. This, undoubtedly, will bring lasting peace and development to the Niger Delta.

THE PROBLEMATICS OF PEACE-BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGER DELTA

The challenges in the Niger Delta arising from structurally-defective pattern of governance are summarized as: (a) A large sum of money flowing to the Niger Delta region regularly but with little or no impact on the lives of the people; (b) Party patronage, clientelism, godfatherism and winner-takes-it-all predominating the political system in the region; (c) The failure of local governments in the region to meet the aspirations of the citizenry make the political system irrelevant to the grassroots; (d) The 'disconnect' and alienation result into a widespread gulf between the leaders and the rest of the society, thus culminated into crisis and high level of insecurity; (e) The local people through self-organizing arrangements, shared strategies and problem-solving interdependencies are more effective in responding to community needs and aspirations than governments and their agencies.

The general clamour for the Niger Delta is for government to increase the percentage from federation account accruable to the region. The question is: What has happened to the 13% derivation already being released to the region since 1999 when the percentage deduction from the federation account to the development of the region was increased from 3%? The gross financial misappropriation of money meant for redressing the problems created by oil exploration has not helped the matter (see Akinola 2008b:93). The critical question is this: Is the structure that plunders most of the 13% capable of spreading the effect of higher percentage to the people in the region? The socio-economic and political events in the region within the last fifteen years confirmed that the governance structure in the Niger Delta is grossly incapable of actualizing the dreams and aspirations of the citizenry. The governance

structure is monocratically centralized, hence, the appalling performance of elite driven public sector in the region.

For example, recent indications show that the economic society, political society and the public sphere in the Niger Delta are dominated by the elites leaving the self-governing institutions as the only institutions that are people-concerned (Akinola 2010a). This situation in the Niger Delta is highly problematic as there are four major groups operating on parallel lines. The first two groups belong to the elites, while the other two are the non-elites. The elite indigenes that have captured economic society, political society and the public sphere are politicians and bureaucrats. Some of these elites are allegedly involved in oil bunkering. The other group of the elites, though very few are the likes of Ken Saro Wiwa who are passionate about the conditions of ordinary people in the region. Similarly, the non-elites "organize" themselves into two camps. The first group of non-elites adopts crude approach by using violence in making pressure to bear on the Federal Government and oil multinationals. In the second group of non-elites are the grassroots people who invest their sovereignty horizontally in one another through collective action and self-organizing arrangements to address infrastructural problems at the community level (see for details, Akinola 2008b:90).

Incidentally, these self-organizing groups are neither recognized by officialdom nor connected to the state structure of governance where their potentials and capabilities could be harnessed for development. As expected, development planning strategies were devoid of institutional mechanisms and planning frameworks that could actualize the fruits of economic growth in the lives of the citizenry; thus, perpetuating inequalities. That is why

development planning and planning models adopted so far in Africa have not worked as expected because they were state-centred and foreign driven. The ingredients of development that reside with African scholars and the local people were sidelined by the state (Akinola 2008p). In this vein, Myrdal G. cautions:

Underdeveloped countries should not accept the inherited Western economic theory uncritically but remould it to fit their own problems and interests (Myrdal 1957:99).

Similarly, Vincent Ostrom's intelligible scholarship suggests that:

Some of the previous models have not worked simply because these models were alien to the continent's ecological and cultural settings. Besides, the designers of the models were non-Africans and therefore did not understand Africa's realities. Unfortunately, after independence, African scholars and leaders adopted these models hook, line and sinker, resulting in superimposition of the models on Africans' realities, hence, policies could not respond to realities.

The argument of this paper is that since human societies are based on systems of cooperation, models that are designed to address problems in human societies cannot be effective except such models take cognizance of the underlining factors that underpin human cooperation. Unfortunately,

In the opening paragraph of *The Federalist Papers*, Hamilton ([1788] 1961:33) posed the fundamental puzzle in human societies, "whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force." If we understand society as a system of human cooperation, this Hamiltonian puzzle can be

To find a theory useful for thinking about problems does not mean that Africa should copy the Western models. That would show intellectual poverty – of doing no more than imitating the West example. The task, rather, is to use conceptions and the associated theoretical apparatus as intellectual tools to think through problems and make an independent assessment of the appropriate ways for addressing problems of contemporary Africa (Vincent Ostrom 2000).

models and programmes that were applied in Africa relegated to the background essential elements of Africans' systems of cooperation such as collectivity, mutual trust and reciprocity that existed with the diverse peoples of Africa, who are mostly non-elite. This explains why development models and strategies that Southern African countries adopted, over the last two decades, to develop their economies (in mining and industries) and create jobs and income have disappointed and failed to deliver (for details, see Wiggins, 2003:24). The disappointment led to more dependent on agriculture which also failed to yield expected results. The major involvement of the state, through parastatals in organizing production, however, made the model flawed due to high operating cost (Wiggins, 2003:24).

formulated as a question: Are human beings capable of cooperating with one another to organize a free, peaceful, and prosperous society? In relation to the Niger Delta, this puzzle can be formulated as five questions: Are the people of Niger Delta capable of cooperating with one another to organize people-oriented public sphere that will produce accountable leaders and basic goods and services of their choice? Are

there some roles citizens should play in the process of building peace and development? What are these roles? How can the public space be planned and reconstructed to allow citizens at community level to be involved in decision making, rule-monitoring and enforcement of sanction on rule infraction? The argument is that until citizens are mainstreamed into decision making, governmental system as well as goods and services will not be people-focused and democratic; tyranny of the majority will continue to predominate; and peoples of the Niger Delta, regardless of their endowment and entrepreneurial capability, will continue to suffer, while violence, insecurity and poverty will be heightened.

The argument in this section is that the structurally-defective pattern of governance in the Niger Delta makes it difficult for the region to be governed even if the governors are sincere and adept in the act of governance. The way out of this crisis is to fashion out alternative governance structure that could enable the people to engage themselves in community assembly.

Since society is a system of human cooperation, people in any society should collectively relate to and deal with their exogenous variables. Exogenous variables are those conditions that affect human livelihoods and which humans have to work upon through appropriate planning and institutional arrangements to better their conditions of existence. However, there are some fundamental imperatives of collective action within development arena. These are collegiality, mutual trust, reciprocity and shared community of understanding. It is the realization of these imperatives through constitutional reforms, effective planning and institutional arrangements that can enable leaders and the people to work together to achieve meaningful progress.

Cooperation requires deliberation. That is why deliberative democracy is considered more appropriate for the Niger Delta. The involvement and active participation of citizens in public sphere for democratic process and consolidation is highly imperative. For example, one of the proud inheritances of South Africa's democracy is public dialogue in the form of community forums, negotiations, and *imbizos*⁴. Community forums have been part of social movements in the fight against both apartheid and posts-apartheid inequalities. Negotiations proudly characterized the transition to democracy which is based on principles of nondiscrimination (Hartslief 2005:1).

According to Vincent and Elinor Ostrom (2003:12), polycentricity simply means a system where citizens are able to organize, not just one, but multiple governing authorities, as well as private arrangements, at different scales. Polycentric planning and decision making system enhance the capacity of citizens to talk, discuss, dialogue and engage in contestation in an assembly, whether at local or national level. It deals with multiple units of governments (multi-layers and multi-centers) and a way of working with one another among citizens with complementary arrangements for formulating, using, monitoring, judging, and enforcing rules (Elinor Ostrom 2005).

⁴ *Imbizo* is a word from the Zulu language in South Africa. It means a "gathering" for the purpose of discussing important matters within a group or community. Its ultimate purpose is to ensure participation of members in the process of conceptualising, making and executing decisions. "The *imbizo*, in its traditional form, has constituted an important aspect of the indigenous African political system for many centuries, especially in Southern Africa (Hartslief, 2005:1).

Though there is a growing awareness of the need to strengthen community institutions which have existed and have facilitated self-reliant development at the local level, these institutions in oil communities of Nigeria exist at grassroots without official connection with the state-based institutions. They operate on parallel line with governments, their agencies (oil commissions) and oil companies. Under normal circumstances, these people-oriented institutions, governments, NDDC and oil companies should operate in synergy

THE NIGER DELTA CRISIS AND THE CHALLENGE ON AFRICAN SCHOLARS

This section sheds some light on the role of African scholars on how they can demonstrate their intellectual capability in resolving the crisis in the Niger Delta. Ideally, political leaders and scholars should work together when there is a problem to resolve rather than apportion blame when things go wrong. In my own view, there are two options. While in some instances both scholars and governments should work together, in other cases scholars should also be concerned with how to take theories to the streets to proof and test their knowledge. It is not enough to critique the governmental system without offering an alternative workable strategy of how to solve the problems at hand. As the late Michael Manley said:

Those who have to face the challenge of action may make mistakes. Meantime, those who reside permanently in the world of ideas, alone and untested, do not help anyone when they refuse that reality is more complex than theory (Michael Manley cited in Kari Levitt 2005:302).

In essence, African leaders and African scholars as well as governments and universities should find a mix of their operations so that their threats can be

as stakeholders in development and colleagues with equal standing within socio-economic and political arenas in oil communities. This, however, has not been the case. What has been happening is that governments and oil companies dominated decision making arena and decided for the people who have a well established structure of community self-governance (see Akinola 2008b:92). This is likely to have accounted for unresolved crisis in oil producing communities.

converted to opportunities. The critical questions are: Do African scholars continue to generate knowledge for knowledge generation sake and fold their hands on application of knowledge? For how long are they going to maintain this intellectual aloofness? This paper calls the attention of African scholars to this urgent assignment of making their scholarship problem-solving, solution-seeking and relevant to their community.

On the Niger Delta, scholars should use their intellectual capacity to critically study indigenous and endogenous impulses that diverse peoples of Niger Delta are exploiting in surmounting their daily challenges (see Akinola 2007f:227). This means that Nigerian scholars and other scholars in Africa need to rethink their analytical tools, jettison failed models of development, and discreetly focus on those that can yield enduring socio-economic and political liberation for the Deltans. The fundamental questions include the following: How are the people surviving regarding basic needs like food, housing, clothing, health, education, transport, security, etc.? What lessons can be learnt from peoples' creativities and the adaptive strategies they evolved over the years in addressing problems of daily existence? These are some of the questions that scholars need to answer through empirical surveys in their various

disciplines. Findings from such studies will help come to terms with the resilience and robustness of local people in the Niger Delta as well as their vulnerability, exclusion and marginalization. At the same time, such findings would provide guides to African institutions of higher learning and research centers to develop curriculum on both the indigenous and endogenous knowledge systems, thus making African educational system relevant to their communities. In this direction, four tasks need to be performed: (i) The need to come to terms with the fact that citizens are sovereign. (ii) The need to pay close attention to the self-organizing and self-governing structures the people have built and sustained over the years. (iii) Identification of what needs to work upon or filter in order to ascertain what to modify,

Niger Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM)

The contention of this paper is that, since political factor determines the operation of other sectors of economy, the starting point is to commence with the application of strategies that can restructure the public space in the Niger Delta so that socio-economic and technological crisis in the region can be addressed on pilot scales. The pertinent question at this juncture is: How can we reconstruct the public space and decision making system in the Niger Delta to synergize the efforts of the people through their institutions and that of governments with oil companies to resolve the lingering socio-economic crisis and poverty in the region?

Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM) is conceptualized as a deliberate act of combining both the 'known' and the 'unknown' variables in the Niger Delta using the IAD framework and several pragmatic problem-solving and solution-seeking African Development Models (see Fig. 1). NDPADM derives inspirations and

adopt or reject. (iv) Designing institutional mechanism that can bridge the gap between the ruling elite and the local people. (v) Designing an interface mechanism that will bring these self-governing structures in line with modern governance.

Since the emphasis of this paper is to design plans and strategies to complement amnesty programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria in the Niger Delta, it is apposite at this juncture to demonstrate attempts made by the author, having performed the above named four tasks, to an extent, at designing a Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM) that can help in building peace and engineering people-centred development in the region.

working mechanisms from fifteen (15) African development models (Akinola 2007f,g,j; 2008f,m,p; 2010a,b). The fifteen (15) models are: (1) African Intellectual Gap Measurement Model (AGIMM) for measuring intellectual potentials and relevance of African universities as well as intellectual gap(s) among African scholars with the aim of reforming African educational curriculum and making African scholarship problem-solving and solution seeking (see Akinola 2008m for details on this model); (2) African Public Sphere Restructuring Model (APSRM) for the setting up self-governing community assembly (SGCA) for deliberation, collegiality, mutual trust, reciprocity and shared community of understanding to enable citizens, both elite and non-elite to operate in synergy to collectively achieve socio-economic and techno-political objectives (for details, see Akinola 2010a,b). (3) African Development Institutional Mechanism (ADIM) for connecting all the stakeholders in development at various levels of decision making (Akinola 2007f); (4) African Polycentric Information Networking (APIN) for creating networks between the

leaders and the people for effective information sharing and communication (Akinola 2008p:188-189); (5) African Food Security Model (AFSM) for securing food for the citizens (Akinola 2008f,p:193-195); (6) African Employment Generation Model (AGEM) for generating employment opportunities (Akinola 2008p:193-195); (7) African Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (ACPPB) for detecting and preventing conflict as well as building peace (Akinola 2008p:189); (8) African Sustainable Environment Model (ASEM) for conserving and protecting environmental resources (Akinola 2008q); (9) African Road Trilogy (ART) for building cost effective and durable roads (Akinola 1998); (10) African Community-Initiatives and Development Model (ACID) for empowering the people economically and reducing poverty (Akinola (2000:186-187); (11) African Electoral Reform and Democratisation (AERD) for inclusive democratisation (Akinola 2008p:192-193); (12) African Local Economic Development Strategy (ALEDS) for enhancing economic growth through local industrialization and sustaining development (2007f:233; 2008f,p:190-191); (13) African Polycentric Privatization Model (APPM) for distributing the benefits of economic growth among the citizenry (Akinola 2007f:233); (14) African Polycentric Security Model (APSM) for ensuring security of lives and property (Akinola 2009a:270-271); and (15) African Human Resources Development and Utilization Model (AHRDUM) for bridging the gaps between

impact, criminal activities, etc. The unknown variables and their implications call for a well designed and robust post-amnesty plan. As a matter of fact, this is the central question that observers and analysts are asking. It is in this light that NDPADM designs a system that will be self-organizing, self-governing and self-regulating through the use of the IAD. The IAD suggests that institutions are crafted by

developers and utilizers of human resources.

Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM) is diagrammatized in Fig. 1. According to the diagram, the known variables are: the number of amnestied persons, budget earmarked for amnesty programme, training and job opportunities. Assuming that the amnesty works by making life better for the disarmed militants, will that not be creating a pathway for jobless youths to go into militancy so that they can also be taken care of through future amnesty programmes? Will some 'amnestied' individuals whose lives are made better not be tutoring other youth on how to go through the process of "violence-amnesty-better life"? These are some of the questions that demand critical reflections. Without a restructuring that could enable all the diverse

interests in the Niger Delta to operate as colleagues with equal standing such that oil benefits are shared equitably, amnesty programme will be tantamount to fire brigade exercise and a waste of resources. In order to avoid this scenario, this proposal is paying close attention to post-amnesty plan and strategies to enable the gains of the amnesty programme to be properly consolidated.

On the other hand (in Fig. 1), unknown variables include: the number and likely impact of revolutionaries, the reconstitution of MEND, the dynamics of poverty and neglect, unemployment participants within action arenas in response to their particular exogenous variables. This normally starts when participants within an action arena respond to exogenous variables or context (biophysical/material conditions, cultural and other attributes of a community, and rules-in-use) and when outcomes are positive the participants will increase their commitment to maintain the structure as it is or to

another set of exogenous variables and then on and on like that. However, if outcomes are negative, participants might raise some questions on why the outcomes are negative. They might then move to a different level and change their institutions

The conditions for collective action can be fulfilled when deliberate action is taken to set up a new institutional arrangement through polycentric planning and poverty reduction strategy (PPRS) whereby the efforts of the stakeholders/participants in the public terrains – politicians, bureaucrats, technocrats, scholars, multinationals and citizens – are synergized through public sphere restructuring mechanism (see for details, Akinola 2010a,b). The restructuring process will commence, first, with the setting up of self-governing community assembly (SGCA) where participants through their institutions (governments with their agencies, oil companies, higher institutions, community institutions) can operate in synergy. The second step is a value re-orientation among African scholars, public officials and other participants. This new orientation, invariably, determines: (a) the ability of African scholars to take theories to the streets and applied them for the benefit of the citizenry; (b) the synergy between and among African scholars and public officials in executing socio-economic and techno-political projects; (c) the relevance and indispensability of community self-governing institutions in decision making; and (d) the centrality and imperativeness of community assembly for decision making and resolution of crisis.

Next, the participants would operate using rules that are crafted by members at the SGCA. Rule crafting takes place at three levels – constitutional, collective choice and operational. At the constitutional level lies the system that determines how rules are made and can be modified. At the heart of effective governance of Niger Delta is the

to produce another set of interactions and consequently, different outcomes. Thus, the model believes that the fourteen models (mentioned earlier) can work in the Niger Delta if conditions for collective action are fulfilled.

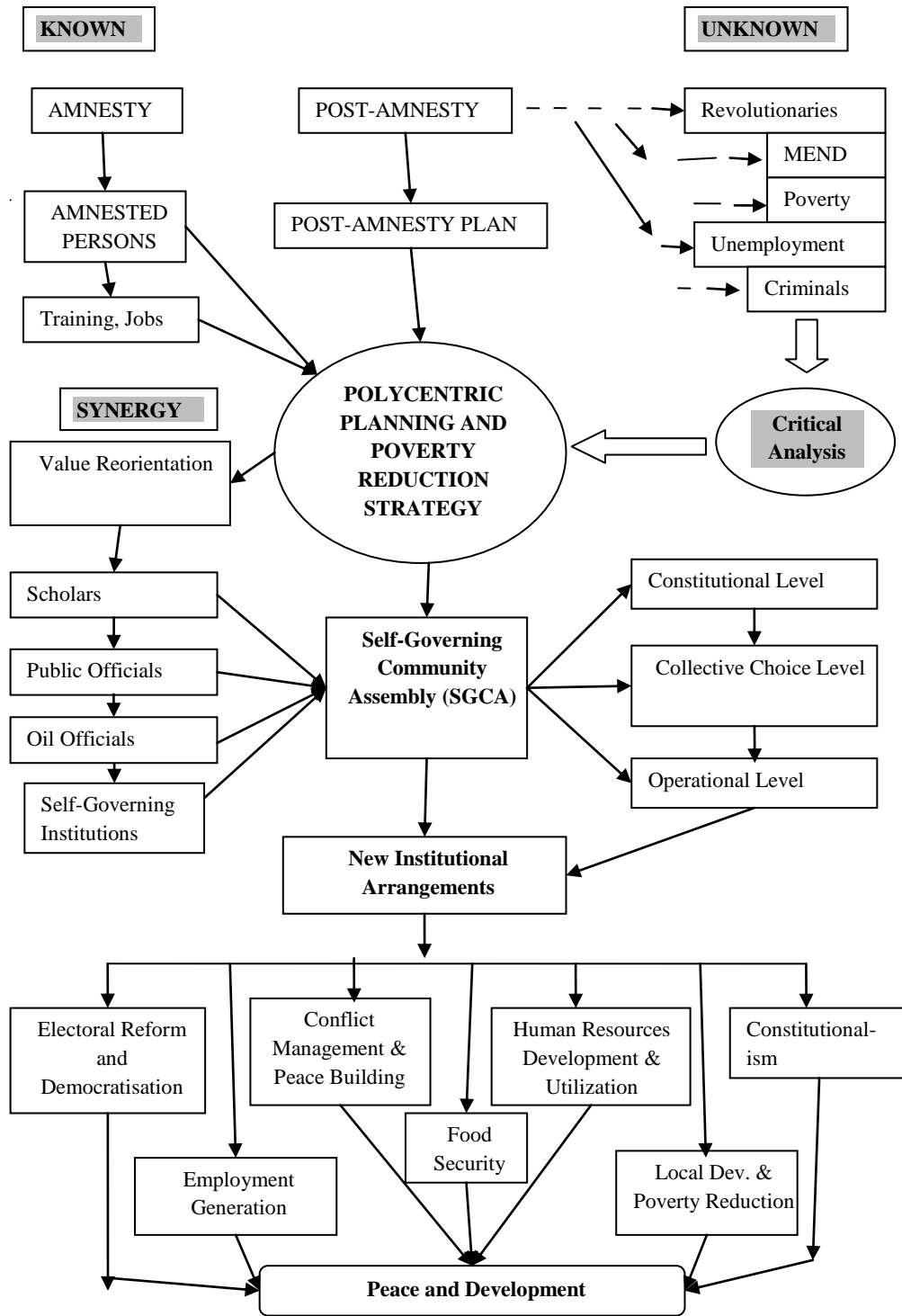
imperativeness of constitutional reform (Akinola 2006c,e) which can be accomplished through pragmatic experience, for example, polycentric privatization and local industrialization. The effectiveness of this strategy has been proved in an experiment performed in Irepodun Local Government area of Osun State, Nigeria between 2005 and 2006 by the author (Akinola 2007f:230). Based on the Irepodun experience, the adoption of polycentric privatization strategy could avail the citizens in the Niger Delta the opportunities to dialogue in community assembly and jointly take decision on how resources (financial and natural) are to be allocated and utilized. At the collective choice level, rules that define and constrain the actions of individuals and citizens have to be established. At the operational level, concrete actions have to be undertaken by those individuals most directly affected, or by public officials (McGinnis 1999a).

This is where amnesty programme of the Federal Government becomes relevant. Amnestied persons should be involved in the activities of community assembly where they can function as agents of change in development arenas. The experience of Saki initiatives in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria in transforming members of Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) from violent orientation to positive result such that there exists a symbiotic relationship between OPC and the Local Government towards community security is instructive (see Akinola 2009a:270-271). Invariably, the amnesty programme of the federal government would enable ex-militants, freedom fighters and revolutionists to make meaningful contributions towards development. The

self-governing institutions can act as checks and balances on the local government

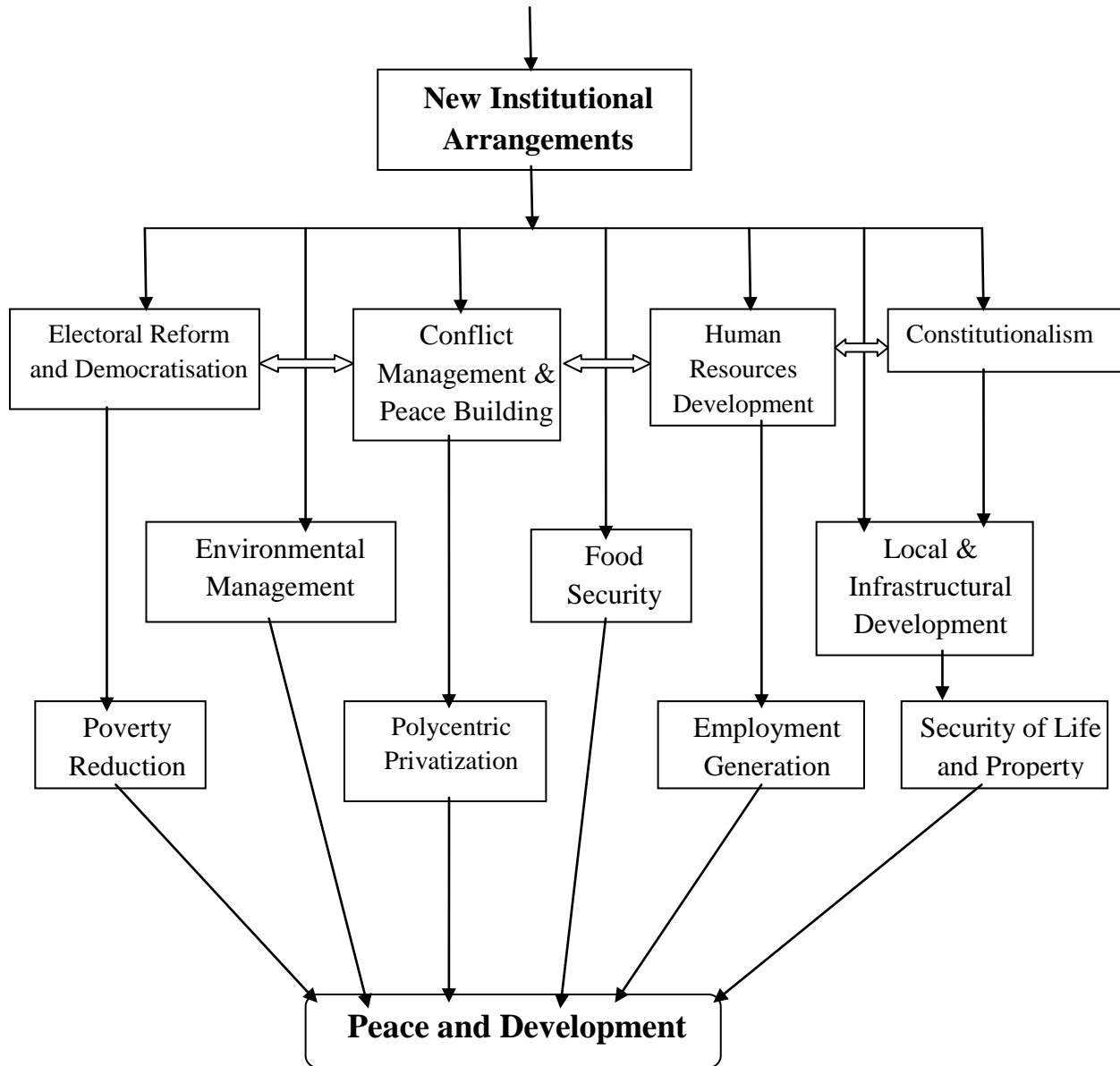
officials.

Fig. 1: Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM)



Source: Adapted from Akinola (2007f, 2010a,b).

Fig. 1b (Continuation of Fig. 1): Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM)



Source: Adapted from Akinola (2007f, 2010a,b).

The outcome of the restructuring is emergence of new institutional arrangements, which would reflect integrative constitutional order in socio-economic and techno-political realms. It is this joint action and synergy by the three groups (scholars, public officials and representatives of community self-governing institutions) that would eventually determine how government policies in all spheres of life are to be implemented. After the institutional arrangement has been designed, operational strategy for implementation of any programme/project

(e.g. employment generation, food security, road development, poverty reduction, environmental management, electoral reform and democratisation, security of life and property, conflict detection, prevention and resolution, etc.) can then be fashioned out (see Akinola 2007f; 2008b,p; 2009a,f; 2010a,b). It is at this stage that any of the fifteen models can be applied to any of the specific action situations. The result of post-amnesty polycentric development planning as shown in Figs. 1 and 1b is peace and people-centred development.

Pilot Projects: Food Security and Employment Generation

This section focuses on how pilot projects can be set up to apply several African development models at the community level. The Federal government and its agencies (MND, NDDC) with scholars of high integrity can kick start food security and employment generation programmes by applying AFSM and AGEM through the implementation of Polycentric Planning and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PPPRS) in selected communities in the Niger Delta. The proposal is designed to experiment food security project in specific food related areas and provide job opportunities for people at the community level. In doing this, the proposed new system will:

- (i) demonstrate how to develop entrepreneurial capability by combining factors of production (land, labour and capital) toward food production and employment generation in the Niger Delta;
- (ii) establish university/polytechnics/industry partnerships in translating innovative ideas into machines that are capable of enhancing agricultural productivity; and
- (iii) establish a strategic and robust corporate social responsibility by

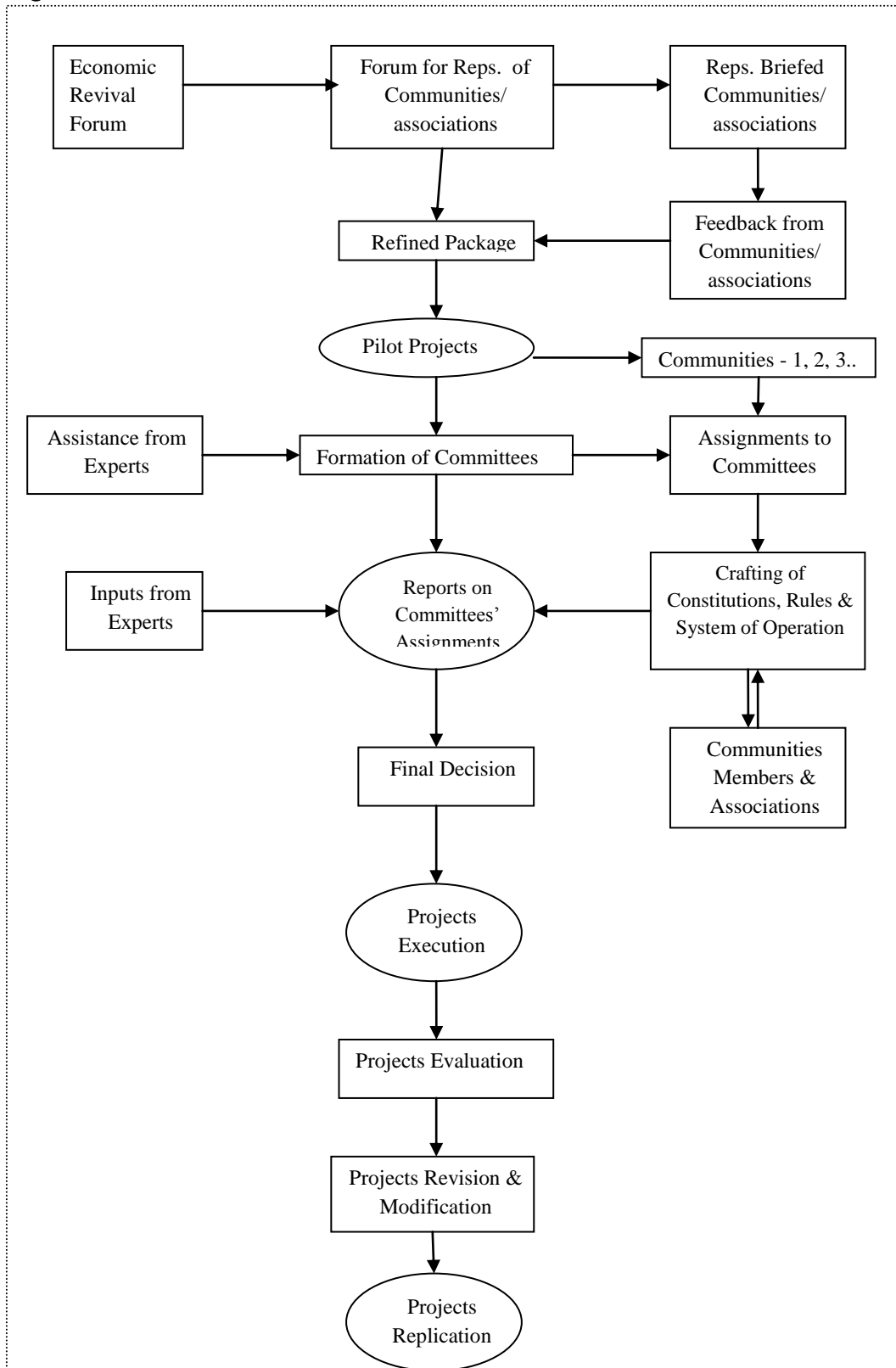
utilizing vast agricultural resources in agro-based industry to provide affordable food and generate employment for people at the community level.

Within the academia, agricultural engineers, food scientists, and food technologists would have to be involved in the design of machines⁵ for food pressing, food storage and food packages.

The implementation strategy of the proposed project is highlighted under fifteen stages (for details, see Akinola 2008p:194-195; 2009f). The first thing to do is to unfold the proposal to the Niger Delta people and get their inputs to refine the proposal. This should be followed by identification and involvement of people of integrity (scholars and intellectuals) with good track records for implementation (see Fig. 2).

⁵ Import, understudy and adapt the machines to our ecological and socio-cultural settings.

Fig. 2: The Process of Polycentric Planning and Poverty Reduction Strategy for Food Security in the Niger Delta.



Source: Adapted from Akinola (2008p:196).

Food-related activities and employment generating ventures that could be embarked upon include:

- (i) Large-scale mechanized farms in the cultivation of oil palm, yam, cassava, maize, guinea corn, fruits, etc.
- (ii) Food processing plants – yam flour,

(1) African Intellectual Gap Measurement Model (AIGMM)

It is obvious that the institutional mechanism and technical know-how of how to take theories to the streets in Africa have not been adequately explored, hence, the persistent gap between theories and realities in the continent. It is in the light of this exigency that African Intellectual Gap Measurement Model (AIGMM) is designed to measure intellectual potentials and relevance of African universities and other higher educational institutions in Africa (Akinola 2008m). The starting point is to determine what is missing in African scholarship by measuring intellectual gaps. The result of the measurement would determine the type of models that need to be designed to fill the identified gap(s). It is then imperative to test the models and refine them to ensure they fit into realities and become problem-solving. Knowledge management tools and techniques as well as effective planning and institutional framework that can make knowledge generated by African scholars relevant to the needs and aspirations of the peoples of the Niger Delta would need to be employed. Such home-grown development models developed by African scholars would need to be applied on pilot scale so that findings and experiences gathered from these pilot cases would help in refining and modifying the models for full replication across the Niger Delta. The findings and experiences gathered from these exercises would, invariably, be part of what could be used to reform African educational curriculum at university level (see Akinola 2008m for details on this model).

cassava flour, maize, fruits, etc.

- (iii) Animal husbandry section – fishery, poultry, rabbitry, pigry, goatry, cattle and other ruminants.

The fifteen models that would help in actualizing restructuring in the Niger Delta are discussed briefly below.

(2) African Public Sphere Restructuring Model

African Public Sphere Restructuring Model (APSRM) is conceptualised as a deliberate act of setting up self-governing community assembly (SGCA) for deliberation, collegiality, mutual trust, reciprocity and shared community of understanding (Akinola 2010a,b). The model contends that, since political factor determines the operation of other sectors of economy, the starting point is to commence with the application of strategies that can restructure the public sphere in the Niger Delta so that socio-economic and technological crisis in the region can be addressed on pilot scales. The model addresses reconstruction and reconfiguration of the public sphere in the Niger Delta to synergize the efforts of the people through their institutions and that of governments to resolve the lingering socio-economic crises and poverty in the region. At the same time, it charts a course of action on how citizens at community level can be mainstreamed in decision making, rule-monitoring and enforcement of sanction on rule infraction. APSRM emphasises two elements – deliberation and deliberateness/action. It derives inspirations and working mechanisms from twelve (12) African development models (see Akinola 2007f,g,j; 2008f,m,p).

(3) African Development Institutional Mechanism (ADIM)

African Development Institutional Mechanism (ADIM) could be applied to enable primary development players (scholars and public officials) in the Niger Delta to operate in synergy at regional and state levels. Applying ADIM to the Niger

Delta, scholars should view the Niger Delta realities with intellectual lenses through exogenous variables by factoring exogenous variables into their study and understanding of the Niger Delta realities; otherwise, such studies will be repeating the error of the past – illusion. Scholars should generate knowledge through relevant applied research and analysis of existing scholarship focused on overcoming the Niger Delta's problems. Then scholars should pass knowledge on to the political sector (public officials). And public officials, along with scholars, should implement policies (Akinola 2007f:230-231).

(4) African Polycentric Information Networking System (APIN).

African Polycentric Information Networking (APIN) could be applied to strengthen linkages and interactions between individuals and self-governing institutions (Akinola 2008p:188-189). The beauty of polycentricity is in its multifarious connections and interactive links that all members of a particular community have to receive information, interact and make contributions to decision making and conflict resolution. For example, decision taken or information passed in a polycentric system has the possibility of reaching every member of a community through at least four of eight channels. Each of the eight associations (occupation, religion, neighborhood, cooperatives, women, youth, unemployed, and ethnic militia) is a channel for information dissemination. Since these institutions naturally draw their members without much difficulty, the linkages and interactions can then be connected to the state structure of governance. The networks once established can be useful at various domains of human interactions in the Niger Delta, from regional to state and then to local/community levels.

(5) African Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (ACPPB).

African Conflict Prevention and Peace Building (ACPPB) is designed to detect, prevent and resolve conflict, from national

to local/community levels. It is believed that since members are from all associations that cut across the whole community, any action, information or rumor that may engender conflict would be detected earlier and necessary mechanisms at preventing crisis would be set up by the community through a committee. Appropriate steps at forestalling the crisis would easily be taken rather than fire-brigade approach that normally leaves a negative impact on communities. Regular dialogue and discussions would eventually revive shared communities of understanding that had been denigrated by Western practices across Africa. When people in a community have access to correct information, information asymmetry which usually causes misunderstanding and conflict would be minimal. Once this institutional arrangement is established, it can be useful for information flows from bottom-up and for enlightening the grassroots on governments' policies and programmes as well (Akinola 2008p:189).

(6) African Food Security Model (AFSM)

African Food Security Model (AFSM) is conceptualized as the combination of factors of production (land, labour, capital, entrepreneurship and technology) through appropriate institutional mechanisms that synergize the efforts of the key stakeholders (governments, universities, industrialists and farmers) in food production (process and storage). The model has two components. The first component displays the failure of conventional food security policies in Africa as exemplified by parallel operations of the stakeholders that has resulted into food crisis. This failure calls for a paradigm shift in food security to a new institutional arrangement whereby the efforts of the stakeholders are synergized through food security mechanism (the second component). AFSM suggests that the first step is a value re-orientation. This new orientation, invariably, determines: (1) the utilization of agricultural resources; (2) the development of adaptive technology and (3) the ownership of local food industries

through shareholding. The outcome of the proposed new institutional arrangements is in two parts: (a) processed agricultural products, consumption of products, and exports of the products; and (b) employment generation, bonus and dividends to shareholders; and wealth creation. The overall outcome of all these is food security and poverty reduction (see for details, Akinola 2008f, p:193-195; 2009f).

(7) African Employment Generation Model (AGEM)

African Employment Generation Model (AGEM) is conceptualized as the combination of factors of production (land, labour, capital, entrepreneurship and technology) through appropriate institutional mechanisms that synergize the efforts of the key stakeholders (governments, universities, industries and business sectors) in employment generation. AGEM see technology development as a practise of co-creation involving social and material aspects, social and natural sciences, and societal and technological developments (Akinola 2008p: 193-195).

(8) African Sustainable Environment Model (ASEM)

African Sustainable Environment Model (ASEM) (Akinola 2008q) could be applied to reduce environmental degradation and poverty in oil communities where exploration activities are causing ecosystemic damages. Two major tools of ASEM are Public Complaints Commission for Environment (PCCE) and Environmental Cost Internalization (ECI). The adoption of this model in the Niger Delta will ensure stakeholders (oil companies, community members, environmental related Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the environment to jointly take decisions, monitor industrial activities and ensure that oil companies comply with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) standards. It is important that polluter pays legislation passed to generate revenues from oil industries. The PCCE should also ensure

that part of revenue generated from oil industries should be used to provide health facilities and job opportunities for the affected communities. The process of implementing the strategy is in six stages as discussed elsewhere (Akinola 2008q).

(9) African Road Trilogy (ART)

African Road Trilogy (ART) (Akinola 1998) could be applied to overcome problems that are associated with lop-sided road development. This model would assist state governments and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) on road projects in the region. The trilogy of road development - survey, construction and monitoring/maintenance (SCM) - pre-conditions durable roads and serves as efficacy for master planning in providing solution to road related problems. The model establishes that road development should be placed on a tripod stand of survey, construction and monitoring/maintenance (SCM). Each spatio-political entity – state and local government – should prepare road master plan for its geo-political area in the Niger Delta. At each level of road master plan, data relating to all roads should be generated, analyzed and projected into the future. The data, should of course, be updated in the light of some socio-economic changes that are bound to occur. The adoption of this model will, in no doubt, enable road projects to be constructed on sound footing, with ability to contain pressure of population growth in the foreseeable future (see for details, Akinola 1998; 2008q).

(10) African Community-Initiatives and Development Model (ACID)

Since it has been proved that community institutions possess requisite capabilities in mobilising the people and resources at the grassroots, the Federal Government, MND and NDDC should relate directly with these people-oriented institutions. Using certain criteria such as (1) geographical location, (2) size, (3) completed projects, (4) on-going projects, and (5) future projects (in order of

priority), government should identify active communities with self-help projects and pay them directly as suggested elsewhere (Akinola 2000:186-187; 2008d). In order to solve the problems in oil communities, four things need be done (see Akinola 2000:187: (1) compensation for the affected people; (2) reclamation or renovation of derelict land; (3) control of mining operation. Financial allocation formula which will reflect/address the needs of the affected communities has been designed and can be found elsewhere (for details see Akinola, 1992:74; 2008d). The application of this model on pilot scale and its result would go a long way in enlightening decision makers on how to resolve the Niger Delta crisis. Similarly, it would help in resolving the resource control problems. This is because it is the actual amount of money needed at the community level that the federal government would be required to pay to each community. At the same time, this strategy would help in preventing pillage and plundering by state agents in the Niger Delta (Akinola and Adesopo 2009a).

(11) African Electoral Reform and Democratisation (ARED)

African Electoral Reform and Democratisation (ARED) (Akinola 2008n,p) could be applied to reshape, reconstruct and reconfigure democratic space to include diverse civil society, community institutions and interest groups at community and local level. ARED model could help to connect government structures with people-oriented institutions such that elected officials (leaders) and the electorate (the led) can engage in open discussions on their problems in their mother tongues at community forum/assembly. The application of this model in the Niger Delta would lead to the emergence of people-oriented electoral system that could constitute checks on the excessiveness of politicians. This emerging pattern of political order will invariably enable citizens and community institutions through civil society to play prominent and integral roles before, during

and after elections in the Niger Delta (Akinola 2008n,p:192-193).

(12) African Local Economic Development Strategy (ALEDS)

Food security and poverty reduction model designed by the author (Akinola 2006j; 2007f:233, 2008p:190-191) shows the relationships between the federal government, academia and industrialists. In order to eliminate all sorts of exclusions in the Niger Delta, two domains of decision making – political and economic – would need to be reconstructed and reconfigured through African Local Economic Development Strategy (ALEDS). On the political level, in order to reconstruct public space, critical attention should be directed towards indigenous and endogenous institutions (i.e. self-governing institutions) that the people have evolved, over the years, in coping with the problems of daily existence within their locality. Representatives of these institutions with public officials (politicians, bureaucrats and technocrats) will form Community Assembly, Local Government Assembly, State Assembly and Federal Assembly. Major political decisions should be taken at Community Assembly as discussed under ARED. On economic dimension, the third tier of government should assume entrepreneurial roles so that they can generate both substantial revenues as well as employment opportunities at local level. In order to implement this model right from regional to local/community levels in the Niger Delta, there are fifteen (15) stages the model needs to pass through (Akinola 2008p). The adoption of ALEDS would help in actualizing food security, employment generation, wealth creation and poverty reduction in the Niger Delta by re-orientating values.

(13) African Polycentric Privatization Model

African Polycentric Privatization Model (APPM) stems from the problems that emanate from centralized political economy which breeds exclusion and marginalization

of the citizenry from economic empowerment, wealth and prosperity. Except there is a deliberate public intervention through responsive policies and pragmatic steps to re-order the present centralized economic system, poverty and human misery will continue to loom large in Africa. In order to break this poverty trap in Africa, African Polycentric Privatization Model (APPM) is developed. APPM is conceptualized as a mechanism to reverse the present centralized privatization programme that perpetuates inequality among the peoples of Africa. In order to avoid a situation whereby the masses of Africa would end up as the private estate of the few bourgeoisies, polycentric privatization should be adopted. APPM operates at two levels. At the first level, ownership of public enterprises should be re-distributed such that elite and bourgeoisies do not dominate the ownership arenas. A new structure that would allow public and private employees to own shares is designed. At the second level, by applying part of the principles that undergird African Food Security Model, new economic enterprises should be established at various economic centres sharing ownership among the people. The outcome of this would be equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth among citizens (Akinola 2007f:233).

APPM is designed to redistribute the outcome of economic growth by reversing the present trends using polycentric privatization mechanism. APP mechanism is an institutional arrangement that restructures the relationship between the inputs – capital, labour, raw materials and skills – in terms of ownership. The application of this model to the Niger Delta will increase the sense of ownership of development projects in the region by the Niger Delta citizens. What governments should do is by buying shares for the people in industries and other economic enterprises. Through this, it is believed that the joint ownership of economic activities will restraint vandalization and economic sabotage.

(14) African Polycentric Security Model (ASM)

African Polycentric Security Model (APSM) is conceptualized as a deliberate act of setting up new institutional arrangements, which would reflect integrative constitutional order in security of life and property (Akinola 2009a). In view of the dismal performance of the formal state structures in the delivery of security services, public choice scholars have continually sought for an understanding, not only of the failure of state run institutions, but also that of the resilience and effectiveness of community institutions which have consistently succeeded in areas where state run institutions have failed, essentially in the provision of essential services required by the citizens. Communities are exploring pre-colonial security arrangements, resulting in huge investments in private security and community-based security arrangements. The people have exercised considerable entrepreneurial capabilities in designing institutional responses that address security of life and property at the community level. This, invariably, calls for a paradigm shift in security system to a new institutional arrangement whereby the efforts of the stakeholders in security – politicians, bureaucrats, technocrats, scholars, and citizens – are synergized through African polycentric security mechanism. African polycentric security mechanism integrates the community-based security institutions (CBSIs) with the state-based organs.

APSM derives inspirations and lessons from adaptation strategy of the people of Saki in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria. The people, through collective action, have been able to transform the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) in their community from violent orientation to positive result such that there exists a symbiotic relationship between OPC and the Local Government with the community development association as the facilitator between the duo. This model suggests institutional framework that could enable stakeholders in the Niger Delta to

regard themselves as participants with equal standing within security arena following the example of Saki initiatives. It is this joint action and synergy by these groups (scholars, police, public officials and representatives of community self-governing institutions, vigilantes, and investors' representatives) that would eventually determine how government policies on security matters are to be implemented. Based on the Saki Initiatives, the adoption of polycentric security strategy could avail the citizens the opportunities to dialogue in community assembly and jointly take security decisions. After the institutional arrangement has been designed, operational strategy for implementation of security agenda will be fashioned out at various domains - residential, market, industrial, commercial/business, public building and roads/highway security units in the Niger Delta (for details, see Akinola 2009a:270-271).

(15) African Human Resources Development and Utilization Model

African Polycentric Human Resources Development and Utilisation Model (APHRDUM) is designed to ensure institutional mechanisms that focus on community where both formal and informal activities converge for knowledge generation and application. For the Niger Delta people to be free from the clutch of political 'monster', heightened human misery and poverty, human resources

development that prioritizes citizens' enlightenment need to be adequately developed. This, in turn, requires that institutions that can provide effective formal and informal learning atmosphere must be established and effectively serviced. Though the need for coordination and cooperation between developers and utilizers of human resources is crucial, experience shows that the vital links between developers and utilizers are missing or not appropriately harmonized in the region. The vital links include: intellectual relevance, effective planning process and procedure, research incentives, data base and efficient communication system. Enlightened citizens pursue development agenda by drawing on their productive potentials and capabilities to achieve freedom and development. Using APHRDUM, five strategies are designed to bridge the gaps and they are: (1) Africentred problem-solving and solution-seeking scholarship, (2) Africentred polycentric development planning process and procedure, (3) Africentred research incentives, (4) Africentred data bank and (5) Africentred communication system. This model is problem-solving and solution-seeking designed to bridge the gaps between leaders and the Niger Delta citizens on the one hand, and between developers and utilizers of human resources on the other hand.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that the good steps of the Federal Government of Nigeria that commenced with amnesty programme can only yield lasting dividends in terms of peace and people-centred development if Polycentric Planning and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PPPRS) is employed in the Niger Delta. In the light of this exigency, this proposal designs post-amnesty plan and programmes that can ensure economic

empowerment, poverty reduction, people-centred development and peace-building in the region. The proposal develops a Niger-Delta Post-Amnesty Development Model (NDPADM) that derives inspirations and workability mechanisms from fifteen (15) African development models that are problem-solving and solution-seeking in several sectors of the economy in the Niger Delta. At the heart of NDPADM is African Public Sphere Restructuring Model (APSRM)

designed for the setting up self-governing community assembly (SGCA) for deliberation, collegiality, mutual trust, reciprocity and shared community of understanding to enable citizens, both elite and non-elite to operate in synergy to collectively achieve socio-economic and techno-political objectives. Without a restructuring of the public space that can enable all the diverse interests in the Niger Delta to operate as colleagues with equal standing such that oil benefits are shared equitably, amnesty programme will be tantamount to fire brigade exercise, a waste of resources and a cycle of reinforced violence.

Under the proposed new institutional arrangement, amnestied persons will be involved in the activities of community assembly where they can function as agents of change in development arenas. Invariably, the amnesty programme of the federal government would enable ex-militants, freedom fighters, revolutionists and other citizens to make meaningful contributions towards development. The

outcome of the restructuring is emergence of new institutional arrangements, which would reflect integrative constitutional order in socio-economic and techno-political realms. It is this joint action and synergy by the major stakeholders (public officials, scholars, oil companies and representatives of community self-governing institutions) that would eventually determine how government policies in all spheres of life in the region are to be implemented. After the institutional arrangement has been designed, operational strategy for implementation of any programme/project (e.g. employment generation, food security, road development, poverty reduction, environmental management, security of life and property, electoral reform and democratisation, conflict detection, prevention and resolution, etc.) can then be fashioned out. It is at this stage that any of the fifteen models can be applied to any of the specific action situations – food security, employment generation, economic empowerment, poverty reduction, etc.

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