

**REALITY TELEVISION AND PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA'S  
NIGER DELTA: *DAWN IN THE CREEKS* AS EXAMPLE**

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**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND FILM STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, NNAMDI  
AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA**

**BY**

**ARAH, ADAORA NWANDO**

**2010107001F**

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**CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this dissertation by Arah, Adaora Nwando, 2010107001F, has been read and approved of, as meeting the requirements for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Theatre and Film Studies.

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**Prof A. C. Asigbo**  
**Supervisor I**

---

**Date**

---

**Prof C. E. Nwadigwe**  
**Supervisor II**

---

**Date**

---

**Prof A. C. Asigbo**  
**HOD**

---

**Date**

---

**Prof T. C. Utoh-Ezeajugh**  
**Dean of Faculty**

---

**Date**

---

**Prof Ike Odimegwu**  
**Dean of P.G. School**

---

**Date**

---

  
**Prof. Henry Leopold Bell-Gam.**  
**External Examiner**

---

3/4/2017  
**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my loving husband, Chike Emmanuel Arah, for believing in me and to my family for their support and encouragement.

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## ABSTRACT

The use of the macro media of radio and television for communicating development may not be a nascent phenomenon but the same cannot be said for the practice of Theatre for Development via the mass media of television. Not only does this practice ensure a wider viewership, but, together with the advent of new media and the World Wide Web, a wide vista of possibilities has been opened for development agents from every field. The use of Reality Television to foster participation of locals in their development programmes has been explored with relative success in certain parts of Africa and one of such experiments has recently been concluded in Nigeria, among her Niger Delta peoples. The reality show *Dawn in the Creeks* was set in three communities of the region-Ozoro in Delta State, Nembe in Bayelsa and Erema in Rivers State. It was televised on five national television stations and the local TV stations of those states concerned. However, despite the participatory nature of the programme and the many windows of outreach on offer, courtesy of the new media, pockets of restiveness still occur within the confines of these communities. Moreover, the development project lacks the benefits of continuity and follow-up, a situation indicative of a problem. The study has been anchored on four major theories, including Paulo Freire's Theory of Conscientization and Critical Consciousness, Augusto Boal's Theory of the Oppressed, the Participatory Development Theory and the Democratic-Participant Theory. With the qualitative Content Analysis method and quantitative Interview and Questionnaire methods, data was generated for analysis, to measure the effectiveness of the programme in reducing incidences of violence among the youths of two of the three communities, namely, Ozoro and Erema. The research work underlines the need for a truly people-driven participatory development practice. It also concludes that there is need for altruism and sincere effort on the part of would-be change agents to allow the people evolve solutions for lasting and positive change in their communities.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Latest reports from international agencies on economic growth in Africa have, at best, been ambivalent. On one hand, they report advancement and on the other, there is poverty, hunger, unemployment, political instability and inequality. For instance, Peter Da Costa, Senior Adviser for Policy and Strategic Communication, Africa Progress Panel (an agency under UNDP), observed that Africa has seen rapid economic growth in the past ten years, but this growth is not reaching enough people. Inequality is growing and people are increasingly living beneath the poverty line than ever before. The 2014 Africa Progress Report warns that rising inequality is blocking the continent from unlocking its full potential and calls on political leaders to address inequality by investing in Agriculture (Africa Progress Panel).

The former UN Secretary General, Kofi Anan, again declared in a forum on Green Revolution, Addis Ababa, September 1, 2014, that malnutrition in Africa represents political failure and civil society must hold political leaders and businessmen to account measuring their actions against their promises. He declared that in the past decade, for dozens of countries on the continent, “the millennium development goal of halving hunger by the year 2015 seems more a far-off fantasy than an achievable target” (Koffi Anan).

Furthermore, statistics published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2014 estimates the continents economic growth in 2013 at 4.5% while 48.5% of sub-Saharan Africa lives in poverty. 60% of Africa’s unemployed are youths with 72 million jobs expected to be created by 2020. Again, 250 million Africans could face water shortage by

2020. Despite this dismal picture economic progress has been reported but it has only benefited a few.

To mitigate the effects of these development failures due largely to the continent's long years of mismanagement and leadership problems, many organizations - non-governmental, non-profit, civil society organizations, both foreign and local, have sprung up, each adopting its own chosen blueprint as development plan for poverty alleviation of the masses.

However, with all the interventions, Africa's economic and developmental problems still persist. Stan Burkey, in his book *People First* observe that:

We have now seen over three decades of so-called development programmes and thousands of development projects designed and implemented by hundreds of thousands of local and expatriate, governmental and non-governmental consultants, experts, administrators, trainers, volunteers, etc. Yet everyone who has any familiarity with the third world knows that poverty is well and thriving, that the numbers of poor are not only increasing but their poverty is deepening. (6)

Sadly, twenty years after, this verdict on Africa and the rest of the third world still subsists and the introduction of aid programmes have bred another form of evil - the dependency syndrome, whereby the rural poor wait and depend on the foreign agencies to bring aid in form of capital, technology, markets and even basic needs. Some of these foreign assistance pass through local governments, reaching the rural populace in form of subsidized goods, having first enriched the government bureaucrats and politicians. Burkey quotes Paulo Freire as describing these welfare programmes as "the instrument of manipulation and ultimately serve the purpose of dependency and domination"(Freire qtd in Burkey, 30). Continuing, Freire notes that "they act as an anesthetic, distracting the oppressed from the true causes of their problems and from the concrete solutions of these problems" (Burkey, 30).

Clearly, the African continent has not benefitted much from all the forms of Western intervention because certain conditions latent in the approach have been inimical to development along indigenous and individualistic lines. Development theorists and workers had, for a long time, perceived development and economic growth as being synonymous with progress and higher levels of civilization along Western paradigms. Development in the Third World was expected to be an initiative process in which the less developed countries gradually assume the qualities of the industrialized ones. They were expected to continuously increase gross levels of savings and investment (internal and external, private and state) until the economy attained a self-sustaining and developed status.

However, there have emerged other theories of development, like the Normative approach where there is focus on the “content of development rather than form ... the purpose and meaning of development rather than limiting discussion to questions relating to the mobilization of the productive forces of development such as labour, capital and trade” (Burkey, 30).

Burkey, furthermore, notes that other development theorists believe that development should be need-oriented. It should be geared towards meeting both material and non-material human needs; endogenous, stemming from the heart of each society; self reliant. In other words, each society must rely primarily on its own strength and resources.

This basic needs approach was adopted by many organizations and agencies including the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF).

Burkey, again quoting Paulo Freire, stressed the need for communities to drive their own development agenda. Hence:

In order to determine whether a society is developing, one must go beyond criteria based on indices of per capita income (which, expressed in statistical form, are misleading) as well as those which concentrate on the study of gross income. The basic, elementary criterion is whether or not the society is a “being for itself”, i.e. its political, economic and cultural decision-making power is located within. (30)

Thus, it is becoming obvious that every development programme that does not build on the self-help and self-reliance of locals and countries is in danger of degenerating into a charity programme which usefulness will last only as long as the assistance lasts. Development that would endure must emanate from a process of social change.

African leaders, Nigerians inclusive, have attested to this, at least in theory, but have not been able to translate its practice to improved standards of living for Nigerians. John Okpoko states that African leaders, in a joint forum, defined development as a process concerned with people, capacity, period to manage and induce change, that is, to predict and reduce or eliminate unwanted change, increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) improved health, housing and employment opportunities. These are just about all the development indices necessary for modern day existence, as such, these leaders also concluded that knowledge, information, technological creativity and organization are the keys to development (2).

In his essay on participation, Majid Rahnema notes that following the recommendations of their own experts, a number of major international aid organizations agreed that development projects had often floundered because people were left out. According to Rahnema, “it was found that, whenever people were locally involved, and actively participating, in the projects, much more was achieved with much less, even in sheer financial terms” (117). He opines that Participatory Action Research PAR theorists advocate participation as the only way to save development from degenerating into a bureaucratic, top-down and dependency creating institution (120).

The theatre has been identified as one of the media for engendering participatory development. Throughout the history of theatre, there have existed varying views as to its purpose and significance. Indeed, emphasis is often being placed on the entertainment value of theatre. Consequently, the value and potential of the theatre as an agent of change has been largely overlooked and relegated in some quarters. However, ever since ancient times when primitive man first attempted to use ritual and mimesis to ensure the stability and sustainability of his society, theatre has always served a purpose which is to enhance the quality of life of its society. While elaborating on man and theatrical imitation, Tunde Sotimirin explains:

In his imitative magic, he imitated animals while hunting, in order to get at his prey more easily. This resulted into what is known today as ritual drama, whereby the primitive human used mime to explain his hunting experiences to his fellow human being. Herein education ensued as these others, his nuclear and extended family learnt this artistry of initiating the same animal mimesis (sic) all in the bid for their own survival, development and the continuation of their life as well. (161)

Even the first form of formal theatre which is the ancient Greek theatre, though recognized largely for its entertainment value at a time when society craved such elaborate artistic diversion, also served a human development purpose. The theatre which was purely religious and ritualistic in worship of Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility, provided a platform for the early Greek society to fulfill their self-appointed religious obligations. Such obligations they deemed to be propitious to their survival.

Throughout the classical period of dramatic history, through the middle Ages and the Roman and Elizabethan theatre, drama and theatre continued to pander to the whims of the ruling class. The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century France, however, ushered in an interplay of forces that propelled drama and theatre from the realm of “writing to the gallery” to one in which play scripts were tailored to suit and rightfully benefit a larger part of society. The theatre, from

being largely controlled by the Confrerie de la Passion, who had turned to performance of farces, soties, and comedies under the influence of the Italian *Comedia d'ellarte*, went under the control of the French Academy. However, despite the Academy's rigid influence, under the leadership of Cardinal Richelieu, the common man still found a voice through a group known as The Serious Dramatists (Dukore, 297).

This group which emerged in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, followed the footsteps of Pierre Corneille, questioning the neo-classical leanings of previous French writers as dictated by the academy. The Serious Dramatists went beyond criticism of neo-classical ideals to adopt a totally new genre of drama - one that was culled from their present day realities and laced with the values and viewpoints, not of the aristocracy, but of the rising middle class who wanted a theater and a world based on their values. According to Bernard Dukore, the most prominent dramatist of this movement was Dennis Diderot, whose "Encyclopedia" advocated civil rights and paved the way for the Revolution of 1789 (292).

The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries' theatre in Africa and the West were marked by various movements and schools of thoughts. They also witnessed the rise of the theatre director, most of whose directorial styles bordered on the maintenance of a dynamic relationship with the audience, in other words, the society. Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre was one of the foremost theatres of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which overtly undertook the responsibility of addressing class struggle in society. Brecht had been influence by Marxism and Lenin's socialist realism. Samuel Leiter, writing on Brecht's epic theatre notes:

Brecht saw the theatre as a didactic tool in the class struggle. He sought to alert audiences to the need for social change expressed in his work by introducing devices designed to break emotional involvement that might interfere with rational thought. These "anti-Aristotelian" methods were referred to as the "estrangement effect" (Verfremdungseffekt). (40)

To achieve this, Brecht used a combination of naturalism and symbolism in his set designs. The carefully selected props and furnishings were normally “veristic and used-looking” while various background elements were shown only in impressionistic terms. In scene changes, which were incorporated into the stage lighting, which was non atmospheric, Brecht presented scenes that allowed the spectator no illusions. Leiter further reveals that Brecht allowed even the visitors to his rehearsals to proffer comments and “multiple view points were to confront the spectator, not just the “directors” (42). Through such collaborative methods, Brecht used his epic theatre as a medium of social change.

Sotimirin also describes theatre in Africa as “not stereotyped unlike what obtains in Europe. People or audience may not necessarily pay money to watch theatrical performance” (165).

Thus:

Theatre in essence, is the totality of performance of oral and gestural amalgamation of a community’s cultural systems and aspirations into a dramatic representation of their own reality... In this, it locates the community’s philosophy and ethos. The oral aspect names the issues while the physical executes them in action ... (Sotimirin, 165).

Prominent in the history of development of a revolutionary vision in African theatre are the plays of some South African writers, written during the Apartheid regime in that country. Such writers include Athol Fugard, Mbongeni Ngema and Percy Mtwa. Oscar Brockett and Robert Ball note that during the Apartheid era, themes of oppression and protest “dominated most of South African playwriting and theatrical conditions during that period (278).

If the theatre has played a significant role in engendering social change in societies down the ages, the mass media has done even more because of its ability to reach much more people. The power of the mass media is immense and available for anyone who is opportune to use it, in any form, be it in print, traditional or electronic forms. It has been known to have been a



powerful instrument in the dethroning and enthroning of rulers and governments all over the world. The media informs, educates, and entertains thereby influencing opinions. As an agent of socialization it can be a tool to unify and can also dichotomize a people.

Inherent in media presentations are information that form and shape the audiences attitudes, perceptions and beliefs. This is implicit in the claim that the media provides its audiences with “windows on the world” or with “definitions of social reality”. O’Sullivan et al notes that the media act as “powerful agencies capable of shaping and directing public and private understandings of the world and awareness of its social, economic, moral, cultural, technological and political affairs” (19).

In an earlier Study, Andrew Moemeka divided the functions of the mass media into four major areas. They include surveillance (information), correlation (interpretation), socialization (education or transmission of culture) and entertainment.

Surveillance involves the provision of a constant stream of information about events in society and about the society itself. Through this function, the mass media gives guidance to individuals within the society for daily living. Correlation has to do with the function of appropriately interpreting news and information in such a way as to avoid over-sensitization, and induce appropriate or necessary reaction. It also includes prescribing what to do, how to do it and why it is necessary. The Socialization function of the mass media helps to unify society and increase social education by upholding and teaching a broad base of common social norms, values and collective experiences. Through this activity, the mass media help transmit culture and social norms from one generation to another, while Entertainment is the function of the mass media that is directed primarily at providing some diversion and amusement, relaxation and respite (274 – 75).

A measure of the power of the media is in its capacity to create stereotypes. This in itself has tremendous effect on people's self-image just as it breeds ethnocentrism in society. In Nigeria, for example, the Igbo man is the quintessential grabber and mercenary. This stereotype is widely supported by various mass media especially through drama on electronic media and in jokes circulated on new media via user-generated content. Similarly, Alison Cooper notes that in the US and Europe, every imaginary young black thief or underachiever portrayed on television does not make life easier for real black people. As she puts it "when all that many white employees see of young black men is mug shots on crime shows, is it any wonder that three out of five black men in London are unemployed?" (9).

Media coverage of violence has been fingered for the increase in violent crimes in many societies across the globe. Cooper again tells of a peculiar incidence of the felling of sixteen children by a gunman at a primary school in Dunblane, Scotland, in 1996 which was speculated to have prompted a similar attack in Tasmania, Australia, a few weeks later. According to an FBI Chief Psychiatrist, Dr. Park Deitz, who examined the second killer, "presumably what happened was this man was sitting in Australia watching the emotional pictures from Dunblane... he realized that Thomas Hamilton (the Scottish gunman) has a tremendous impact on the whole world" (Cooper, 10).

However, if the influence of mass media on society could be said to have been substantial a few decades ago, it has now become more pervasive with the advent of new media. In Nigeria, for instance, the spate of verified and unverified news reports posted and circulated on social media have dangerously divided the country along religious, ethnic and political lines with members of each bloc hurling abuses and threats on others. Violence has escalated within the country and the ever tenuous unity of the nation has never been in greater danger of disintegrating.

Development Communication, an arm of communication studies, has flourished with the increasing knowledge of the power of the mass media. The emergence of new digital channels of communication does not only assure faster speed of information dissemination, allowing a huge increase in volume of communication, it has also altered the meaning of geographical distance and provided opportunities for interactive communication. This development has also signaled a potentially radical shift of who is in control of information, experience and resources. Journalists, producers and other media practitioners are taking advantage of the new media to involve the erstwhile audience into the programme making process, thereby involving them in charting the course of experiences that would engender change in their personal lives and in society. John Folayan believes that:

Developing countries are plagued with numerous problems, especially low level of literacy, lack of social amenities, poor health, political instability, bad governance, corruption, insecurity, natural disasters, poverty and low level of industrialization and the media is seen as the single most potent instrument to accelerate solutions to these problems. (Babalola and Azeez, 247)

Onyeka Uwakwe, expounding on the efforts of the third world to overcome its socio-political and economic problems, and thereby, catch up with the North, notes that, “linked closely to Third World’s endeavours towards socio-economic progress has been the issue of the role that mass media should play in national development efforts” (59).

Reality Television, a relatively new mode of mass communication which often utilizes web and mobile based technologies of the new media, has become very propitious in galvanizing participatory development. *Dawn in the Creeks*, is one of such programmes, produced through a collaboration between the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), the Stakeholders Democracy Network and a popular Nigerian film maker Jeta Amata, to reduce the likelihood of mass violence in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been increasingly insightful understanding of the true nature of development over the past few decades. Many scholars and development workers (such as international donor agencies, government, non-governmental and civil society organizations) have increasingly realized that development is not a question of things - schools, clinics, roads, dams, but primarily about people and social, economic and political relationships. This indicates that any form of intervention that would amount to development must involve the people for whom it is intended.

However, what still obtains with some government and donor agencies is the old and ineffectual system of “dashing” or supplying aid, infrastructure and technology to the people without proper understanding of their needs and peculiarities, thereby making no lasting change to their conditions or worse still, imbuing in the people a dependent mind-set. Ogah Abah, writing on “Drama and Participatory Learning and Action in Encountering Citizens”, notes that the test of governments concern and appropriate response to crises among the people can be judged by the extent to which it listens to the voices of ordinary Nigerians (115).

There have been efforts by the Nigerian governments (both at the federal and state levels) to involve the citizens in policies and decisions to move the country forward but such attempts can still be faulted on the premise of genuine people participation. Some of these programmes are the recent National Conference of 2014, the constituency town hall meetings by legislators for constitution amendment and the Anambra State Information Ministry’s Mobile Film Project. The efficacy of these projects, in terms of personal, economic, political and social development of Nigerians, are not worth the time or resources expended on them.

The common assumption by most development agents today is that if government and institutions would achieve credible development among the people, then governance must be participatory - an inclusive, decentralized process. This is, in part, to promote democratic ideals and in part, because local stakeholders possess valuable knowledge about the nature of their problems, the causes and their solutions. Again, the impact of efforts made to intervene in developmental issues through face-to-face arts has at best been negligible, in part because of the stunted growth of a theatre culture in the Nigerian society and in part, because of the many challenges the practitioners themselves face in growing a credible and efficacious theatre industry.

This has informed the belief among some theatre practitioners that the medium to transport such development agenda to the people needs be such that must allow for maximum participation of locals while making up for some of the shortcomings of face-to-face arts. It is also why the idea of driving development via the mass media is gaining grounds and a vehicle like reality television, with its extensive reach and scope presents fresh possibilities. The programme under scrutiny here *Dawn in the Creeks* is one of such media interventions.

However, while the show demonstrates an effort to reach and involve grassroots representation in their problem resolution, it reflects another error, in that it is still an effort to drive development from the “outside”. It is necessary to determine how far such externally initiated development process can be sustained for effectiveness purposes. It could just be another effort by the private sector to be directly involved in the development business as has been the case with many non-governmental organisations dotting the African landscape. It also remains to be ascertained whether ‘participation’ regains its much-touted status of “panacea” to problems of community development when adapted to Reality TV format.

### 1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

Julius Nyerere in “Man and Development” quotes Ross Kidds as saying that “Development is in the power of the people to solve their own problem with their own wisdom, experience and resources with a view to eliminate poverty, pestilence and starvation” (27). This is clearly seen in the ineffectiveness of the top-to-bottom approach to problem solving which has been most prevalent in government institutions and agencies, as evident in the persisting and deepening poverty, insecurity and restiveness among Nigerians.

Recent advances in technology have presented vast possibilities in connecting peoples and groups, which opportunity, if coupled with the far-reaching powers of the mass media, has the potential to enhance inclusive and participatory development, and this possibility has severally been explored with varying degrees of success by persons and groups through the nascent medium of reality television.

It is the aim of this research work to investigate the Nigerian reality show, *Dawn in the Creeks*, to determine how effective Reality TV shows can be, as a form of development communication in achieving behavioural change in local communities. For this purpose, the objectives shall include measuring the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the programme under investigation, in checking restiveness among the youths of the Niger Delta Creeks of Nigeria. Where the show fails, it shall be pertinent to identify the reasons. Again, the research shall ascertain how truly people-driven the programme was as a form of participatory development campaign.

#### 1.4 Justification for the Study

A look at some of the programmes of past governments in Nigeria will easily reveal their impotency in addressing the problem of poverty among the rural folk of the country. Ogah Steve Abah buttresses this in the following:

When Maryam, the Wife of General Ibrahim Babangida, the military leader from 1985 to 1993 introduced Better Life for Rural Women (Dwellers) it was only a re-christening of DFRRRI and a change of baton to new managers. The conduct of the alleviation programme had behind it an affirmative discriminatory bias. It focused on women initially following the argument that women were grossly disadvantaged in the access to power and economic resources in the country. It also had visibility bestowed on the programme from the panache of the first lady... But Better Life achieved no more than to enhance Maryam's entourage on both domestic and international tours... Family Support Programme (FSP) was the second coming of Better Life under a new name and new leadership... when General Abubakar took over after the death of Abacha, FSP was transformed into Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP). (120)

One well-named programme after the other was given much media coverage and millions of naira were pumped into these programmes. However, the scenario of poverty continued to worsen. Abah concludes that if PAPs (Poverty Alleviation Programmes) are conceived as a strategy to combat poverty and if poverty of different dimensions is found mostly among the poor, then the poor must be part of the exercise of defining the nature of intervention.

Sometime in 2009, the Anambra State Ministry of Information and Culture, under the Governor Peter Obi administration, Nigeria, launched the Mobile Film Project, which was meant to keep the local communities abreast of activities of government and at the same time involve the people in the process of governance. With the aid of film projectors, recorded pictures and footages of government projects and activities were beamed for villagers' approval (or otherwise, as the case may be). Clearly, the motive of such a programme which was not initiated by the people even though they were allowed to criticize and make recommendations, particularly as it concerns what they would need from government, was

purely political. It was the action of a government which was seeking endorsement of its rural folks for future campaign purposes, and driven by a team of government workers who, otherwise, would have had little or nothing else to do. Participation, in a development process as this, is clearly questionable.

A development such as the defective Mobile film project raises the leadership question, a problem that has bugged and crippled healthy social relationship in Nigeria. The same constitutional laws that bequeath a leader the power to act, give orders and delegate responsibility, also obligates him/her to take decisions in the interest of the people. However, Nigeria's history since independence presents a dismal picture of a succession of leaders who have anything but served in the best interest of the diverse peoples of the nation. Barclays Ayakoroma insists that the leadership question is "an issue that has bedeviled the Nigerian state. Ironically, the country has been faced with leaders that are not altruistic, they think of "self" alone. Thus, governance is not geared towards providing the basic necessities of life for the people..." (3).

It is an understatement that there is need for people-oriented programmes in Nigeria. Participation, as suggested, calls for sensitivity and responsiveness to the demand for those conditions and critical infrastructure that would give the people easier lives.

Peter Esuh, lending support to the call for people-oriented programmes, in his essay on "Mass Media, Democratization, Culture and Socio-Economic Development" states that poverty is most dominant in the minority areas. It is almost the notion of:

... how the majority tribes are under - developing the minorities in Nigeria ... the mass media have through commercialization and privatization sidelined the minority issue. Since only the rich, the great and the dominant have the purchasing power, the media ought to strategically make allowance for the minorities' views and aspirations. (97)



This is why Reality Television with its use of ordinary and untrained ‘actors’ and access to digital communication should present the perfect opportunity to harness inclusiveness in the developmental process, especially since the programme content is spontaneous and “unscripted”. *Dawn in the Creeks*, as a type of such development media campaign ought to be an alternative grassroots medium through which the people of the Niger Delta can collectively articulate their grievances and needs, and thereby attract the attention of requisite authorities.

With the provision of this ‘megaphone’ or a ‘voice’, there ought to have been an abating of youth restiveness, which has, for some time, characterized the region. The failure of the reality show to realize this peace and to attract help for the communities under question begs the question.

It is for this purpose that this research work critically examines the television programme against the backdrop of a participatory and people-oriented media campaign. The study also seeks to interrogate some false assumptions that surround the process of participatory development in most third world communities.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study shall, primarily revolve around the Reality show *Dawn in the Creeks*, produced and televised on several television stations in Nigeria including African Independent Television (AIT), Muri International Television (MITV), Nigeria Television Authority (NTA), Silverbird Television and some state-owned TV stations, like Delta Television and River State TV . The programme addressed the issue of youth restiveness in three communities of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, namely Ozoro in Delta State, Erema in Rivers State, and Nembe in Bayelsa State. However, the study will be conducted in only two

communities - Ozoro in Delta and Erema in Rivers States. A few other interventions through technological media would be under scrutiny, both in Nigeria and in South Africa to analyse the effect of mediated arts in development.

The research scope shall encompass the issue of development communication - who is to initiate it, and who must drive it; the role of arts in society, the practice of Theatre for Development as an arm of theatre and the quest to broaden its active base through collaboration between the various cultural media and new media realities.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

This research work, while looking into the use of Reality Television to engender participatory development, will essentially adopt a mixed method for data gathering. As a qualitative research, it seeks to “gain insight, explore the depth, richness and complexity, inherent in a phenomenon of interest” (Nze, 81). This phenomenon of interest is a case study - the Reality show *Dawn in the Creeks*.

To achieve this end, the study adopts a multi-methodical approach to data collection with the Content Analysis method as the cardinal technique. With the Content Analysis method several recorded materials (on video) shall be scrutinized. The method is also employed to collect data from books, internet, audios and journals to build a background and the theoretical framework. Again, the quantitative survey method serves as means to garner opinions from key players in the performance and audience.

### **1.6.1 Content Analyses Method**

The case study for this research work is a reality show *Dawn in the Creeks*. It was produced in 2013 through 2014 and has been running on several television stations in Nigeria since

2014. Hence, the material, produced on celluloid and containing twenty-five episodes, shall be viewed in depth to acquire a comprehensive perspective of the dramatic situation with a view to ascertaining how far the producer and dramatists realized their goal of fostering lasting peace in the Niger Delta creeks. Again, several other attempts at participatory development fostered by electronic media shall be subjected to critical appraisal. Shows such as the *Kwanda* Initiative of South Africa, and *Ruka Juu*, from Tanzania, are examples.

Reviewing materials or literature on a research topic allows for generalizations from the collective findings of a body of existing studies. Indeed, “knowledge accumulates and no single investigation is sufficient for creating a full understanding of any complex phenomena, thus, by pooling the results of a collection of investigations, we can draw more viable conclusions” (Shanahan, 133)

To pull from these collection of findings, this research project will extensively take advantage of documented works on related and relevant subjects including material that provide a background for participatory development and reality shows. Such accumulated knowledge on the subject of Theatre for Development, Development Media / Communication and the Participatory Media Theory provide a bases and theoretical frame for the research project.

### **1.6.2 Survey Method**

To gain an in-depth and contextual insight of the Reality Television serial *Dawn in the Creeks*, it is not enough to watch the episodes of the show alone. It is germane that the thoughts, feelings, perception and intention of the players are elicited and recorded, especially given the “reality” or “documentary” nature of the production. This calls for personal interviews with some participants, the producer and/or the director. Such interviews will be administered both in informal conversational style and in the general interview form

with pre-sketched questions to elicit required information. Interviews shall also be conducted where possible with other major participants connected with other participatory media development projects under review - the Kwanda Initiative and Ruka Juu. The interviews shall be in-depth, conducted in English language and recorded, where possible, for easy transcription. All interviews shall be conducted by the researcher.

Another instrument of data collection shall be administration of questionnaires. This would be invaluable to measure the effectiveness or otherwise of the reality show among the target communities of the Niger Delta area. A simple random sampling technique shall be adopted to ensure that no stratum of the community is left out of the study. This means that the sample shall be pulled from various parts of the communities, and residents of all ages shall be covered by the sample, though the youth bracket would receive the greater percentage of the sample. In terms of design, standardized open ended (constructed) questions would be employed to make for easy analysis of data. A method like this, being quantitative, will help to provide results that will be “deductive, generalized and objective” (Iwueze, 60). However, the analysis of data which shall be quantitative shall not be statistically complicated. By the means of these research instruments the study seeks to discover answers to certain questions posed by the study.

### **Research Questions**

1. How appropriate is the choice of the medium of television to foster behaviour change in the grassroots?
2. How appropriate is the language of choice for communication to local folks?
3. What is the extent of the people’s awareness and viewership of the programme *Dawn in the Creeks*?

4. To what extent did the programme sensitize the youths of the two communities in question – Ozoro and Erema, on non-violent resolution of their problems?
5. How effective is Reality Television as a tool for development communication, as exemplified by *Dawn in the Creeks*?

To ensure the validity of the research, the researcher has carefully selected such interviewees as are directly involved in the planning and production of the case study and other programmes under investigation. The views of such persons would validate the findings and make for reasonable deductions.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE.

#### 2.1 Definition of Concepts

Certain key concepts in this research work deserve closer scrutiny and explanation, particularly as they apply in this study. Such concepts include:

##### 2.1.1 Reality Television

Reality television as a form of mass media shares a vital quality with other social media which employ web and mobile based technologies. These internet-based applications support dialogue and introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities and individuals, allowing for the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

By definition, Reality TV is essentially unscripted programming that, purportedly, does not employ professional actors and focuses on footage of real events or situations. It is non-fictional programming in which portrayal is presumed to present current, historical events or circumstances, however unlike other programme types in this category, the intent is not to inform but to entertain.

*Oxford Dictionaries .com* defines Reality shows as television programming in which “ordinary people are continuously filmed, designed to be entertaining rather than informative. Unlike scripted shows like sitcoms, dramas, and newscasts, reality television does not rely on writers and actors, and much of the show is run by the producer and a team of film editors.

Again, Reality shows differ from other 'real life' programming such as documentaries, interviews, vox populi, and even talk shows in the sense that a 'situation' is created and 'ordinary' or real people (not actors) are placed in that situation to respond 'naturally' or handle the way they would. They are continuously filmed and beamed out to the public. However, the success of these shows depends largely on the ability of the producer to select a cast that the audience will respond to. They must be people who will mirror the society of the day and at the same time be stereotypical enough to cause a sensation, engender conflicts and tension to raise ratings.

Reality shows also often use a host to run the programme or a narrator to tell the story or set the stage for events that are about to unfold. It relies on the camera capturing everything as it happens, whether it is shot in a real setting with real people (much like a documentary), in front of a live studio audience that participates in the programme or uses hidden surveillance.

Micheal Pollick, writing for wisegeek.com, opines that reality shows feature "talent culled from the ranks of "ordinary" people, not professionally trained actors. Subjects may be given some rudimentary directions off-screen, but the point is to allow the performers to act and react as normally as possible"

O'Sullivan, Dutton and Rayner suggest that a growing range of media texts have emphasized that reality TV features "real life" and "real people". They opine that the term "Reality television" has been increasingly applied to all those programmes which seemingly allow people access to appear as themselves, utilizing actual or sometimes constructed scenes, often made possible by the growth in available and technical sophistication of the video camcorder (120).

There are different forms of Reality programmes. Branston and Stafford quotes Annette Hill as categorizing them into three main groups:

1. Observation programmes, often about watching people in everyday places such as *Airport*.
2. Information programmes, (using true stories to tell about something – like driving, first aid or pets, for example, *999*)
3. Created-for-TV programmes which put “real people” (and increasingly situations) in a house or an island, and filming what happens. Some obvious examples are *Big Brother* and *Survivor*. (178)

*Dawn in the Creeks*, the case study for this research work, falls into the last category of Reality shows. In the show, youth participants are taken away to a film academy and the process of coaching them in film production and the exercise of their new skills are filmed and broadcast as they happened.

The beginning of this genre of television programming has been traced to Alan Funt’s 1948 TV series *Candid Camera* in which Funt demonstrated that carefully edited clips of ordinary people reacting to contrived situations could be a ratings success. Shows like Groucho Marx’s game show *You bet Your Life* and the 1970s documentary called *An American Family*, following the real lives of the Loud family as they dealt with the parents’ impending divorce, were some other early Reality TV successes. This TV genre, however, exploded as a phenomenon around 1999/2000 with the astounding ratings achieved by shows like *Survivor*, *Big Brother* and *Temptation Island*.

Joseph R. Dominick believes that broadcasters were the first to realize the potential of user-generated content, a factor of democratization of media (236). As the internet becomes even



more ubiquitous, more services are becoming available that make it even easier to create and distribute content. Most Reality shows are taking advantages of these features.

User generated content has been characterized as “conversational media” as opposed to the “packaged goods media” of the past century. It is a two-way process in which people are encouraged to publish their own and comment on other people’s content. This marks a shift in the role of the passive audience, and an ever-growing number of participatory users are taking advantage of interactive opportunities through digital media technologies such as question-answer databases, blogging, podcasting, social networking, social media, mobile phone photography and the likes.

Some of the best examples of how interactive media has changed the face of modern television can be found in television reality shows like the earlier mentioned *Big Brother*, *Project Fame West Africa*, *American Idol* and *Nigerian Idol*.

Reality shows, with its heavy reliance on user-generated content, and facilitated by digital technology, has been gaining increasing popularity, especially in the past two decades. Roland Soong, in an online article posted in *Zona Latina*, averred reasons for the huge popularity of this programme type. According to him, three most cogent reasons include the concept of money, instant fame, and the guilty pleasure phenomenon.

Today’s Reality shows either offer huge sums of money to people who do not necessarily possess the career skills that would make them productive-enough members of society to amass such wealth through honest work or it offers instant fame. Reality TV takes ordinary people, sets them up in extraordinary situations on a world or national stage, with other similarly common place individuals, and makes them the focus of a nations/global attention for, sometimes several hours every day of the week, as long as the contest lasts. Besides, the

promise of money and the vicarious joy at someone winning lots of money, or more commonly spectacularly losing said money, draws millions of viewers.

The third reason to which Soong ascribes the popularity of Reality programmes is what he calls the “guilty pleasure syndrome” This he describes as taking delight in the misfortunes of others. “It is a guilty pleasure. You feel you shouldn’t be watching. It’s always been in good taste not to look at these things... It’s a moral envelope that’s being pushed”.

Reality Television in the context of this study would refer to an unscripted and recorded presentation, whether dramatic or documentary, which uses untrained actors (or ordinary people) in ordinary or arranged settings, responding to situations in an unrehearsed manner. Such a recorded material may also employ web and mobile based technologies which would introduce subtle and pervasive changes to communication between the actors, the producers and the audience, especially allowing for creation and exchange of user-generated content.

### **2.1.2 Development**

Development is a wide term which is much more than one can describe in few words or even sentences. It has various meanings as perceived by different scholars and individuals, however its meaning is tacitly assumed to be understood, even by a layman. This is because every individual is in the business of ‘developing’ either his/her person or others.

In simple parlance, development describes the process of growth or progress, to full potentiality, of an object or organism. It is a process of change, often natural, as the organism evolves into different stages of being, till it achieves its full potential.

Transposed from the biological to the social arena, the development of a people will always imply a change from a simpler to a more complex, from a worse to a better, from a lower to a

higher state particularly in terms of infrastructure, inter and intra communal associations and economic indices.

For many years, global institutions erroneously equated development with infrastructural increase, especially along western paradigms. Others weigh all countries on the economic scale and declare them to be “developed”, “developing” or “least developed”, based primarily, on the growth or otherwise of their respective gross national products (G N P). Nnamani, discussing this strictly economic view of development, describes it as the capacity of a national economy, which had been static for some time, to generate and sustain an annual increase in its Gross National Income (GNI) at rates of 5% to 7% or more. It can also simply be described as the ability of a nation to expand its output at a faster rate than the growth of its population (1).

Following this line of thought, Gustavo Esteva traces the contemporary concept of development back to January 20, 1949 when President Harry Truman made his inaugural speech in which he described the southern hemisphere as ‘underdeveloped areas’. With Truman’s declaration to “embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas”, (Esteva, 7) it was no wonder that the whole field of development thinking was permeated by emphasis on economic growth and industrialization. Esteva writes that for development promoters, the concept consisted simply of growth in the income per person in economically underdeveloped areas and this was the goal proposed by Lewis in 1944, also insinuated by the United Nations Charter in 1947 (12).

Kagolobyia citing Eade states:

The word development entered the lexicon of international relations in 1949... Development then, and continues to be widely perceived as synonymous with western-style modernization. Under-development, within this word-view, is thus the widespread poverty that characterizes the (mostly agriculture-based) economies of the south, hence development process is perceived as one of 'catching up' with the industrialised economies of the north. (213)

He then argues that in a bid to systematically follow the footsteps of the western development model, development planners in the south, sometimes, trample upon the indigenous or local knowledge base while implementing development projects. This is because traditional societies and their knowledge matrix have been superciliously associated with backwardness, paganism, subsistence, conservatism, lack of ambition and irrationality (214).

However, there can be a multitude of dire consequences if the value of local or indigenous knowledge were to be ignored in the planning and implementation of development programmers. Such one-sided and alien approach could lead to conflict between the local people and the project implementers. Kagolobyia, again, cites Percy Oware as stating that rural communities have always had ways of meeting their basic needs, which do not need the validation of outsiders. The knowledge of local people may appear parochial and unrefined to an outsider. Yet, it demands respect and acknowledgement in policies (218).

As such, it was in recognition of the narrowness of this Western economic paradigm that development economists broadened and redefined the concept in terms of reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy. Nnamani quotes Seers as asking the following questions:

*What has been happening to poverty?*

*What has been happening to unemployment?*

*What has been happening to inequality?*

Thus, development experts now place emphasis on health, education and empowerment and have referred to countries with high levels of income but poor health and education standards as cases of “growth without development” (Nnamani, 2).

For some critics of the general idea of the term ‘development’, like Wolfgang Sachs, Gustavo Esteva, Majid Rahnema, C Douglas Lumnis and many more, the age of development, as it is known today, and which received its life following Truman’s 1949 speech, is a disaster coming to an end. Sachs writes:

The idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusion and disappointment, failures and crimes have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story; it did not work. Moreover, the historical conditions which catapulted the idea into prominence have vanished. (1)

This derisive view of development stems from a perceived flawed premise of Western superiority encapsulated in Truman’s labeling of the Southern hemisphere as “underdeveloped” which “subsequently provided the cognitive base for both arrogant interventionism from the North and pathetic self-pity in the South” (2).

Moreover, this school views development as a misconstrued enterprise because it “cannot be separated from the idea that all peoples of the planet are moving along one single track towards some state of maturity, exemplified by the nations ‘running in front’ (Sachs, 3). Thus for them, from the start, development’s hidden agenda was nothing else than the Westernization of the world.

Esteva declares that “the metaphor of development gave global hegemony to a purely Western genealogy of history, robbing peoples of different cultures of the opportunity to define the forms of their social life. The vernacular sequence (development is possible after envelopment) was inverted with the transfer (9).

However, for Luke Uka Uche, development is a participatory process; development is centered on people; development is based on the culture, values, traditions and orientations of the people being programmed to accept a new social order; development is based on an even flow of information (13). Going further, Uche insists that development must involve a continuous process of harnessing all the available human and material resources of a society in a way that is compatible with the cultural expressions of the people (14).

Development, therefore must be seen from the perspective of the individual as he exists in society, what he sees, knows, needs; what he does, can do and needs to do; and how what he believes and does can enhance his existence in society.

Also criticizing the Infrastructural-increase Western paradigm of development, Judith Osuala opines that “this view of development perceives the growth of the economy as a means instead of the other way round. This narrow view of development has ignored many vital aspects of human well - being which lack a market value such as social cohesion, a sense of belonging and the strength of the society’s traditional values” (15).

It was only inevitable that many other approaches to development, especially for indigenous peoples of the poor south would emerge. Until recently, development theory has been dominated by theorists and models derived from the experiments of Western economic history. Burkey also notes that the emergence of capitalism and advance of the industrial revolution gave a distinctive form to western developmental thinking. “Development and economic growth became synonymous with progress and higher levels of civilization” (27).

Thus, development as applied in this study would simply imply the uplifting of the quality of lives of individuals within a society, affecting their understanding of themselves as individuals who co-exist with others in a society, with rights and responsibilities to harness

resources within them and about them, in the society, for the provision of basic needs, be they material or otherwise. This implies that development, whether initiated by external agencies or by a community itself, must involve and affect the lives of individual members of the community in question

### **2.1.3 Participatory Development**

Participatory methods are very much in vogue in development thinking and practice. Development agencies, from grassroots organizations to the World Bank, appear to have embraced the concept of participation in development planning and implementation and the major actor who is expected to participate in the process is the community.

Participatory Development, or what is sometimes referred to as popular participation, is a process by which people take an active and influential part in shaping decisions that affect their lives. This implies that development project will address those community or group needs upon which members have chosen to focus, and that all phases of the development process will be characterized by the active involvement of the community or organization members.

The words 'participation' or 'participatory', according to Majid Rahnema, appeared for the first time in development lexicon, during the late 1950s. The social activists and field workers encountered much disappointments which they came to attribute to the fact that the populations concerned were kept out of the processes related to the design, formulations and implementation of development projects. In their great majority, they started to advocate the end of 'top-down' strategies of action and the inclusion of participation and participatory methods of interaction as an essential dimension of development. It was found out that

whenever people were locally involved, and actively participating, in the projects, much more was achieved with less, even in sheer financial terms (117).

Richard S. Ondrik in an online essay on “Participatory Approaches to National development” notes that participatory development is a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves (1). Participatory development seeks to engage local populations in development projects. It is aimed at giving the poor, in particular, a part in initiatives designed for their benefit, in the hope that development will be more sustainable and successful if local populations are engaged in fostering them. As an alternative to mainstream “top-down” development pattern which prevails in many parts of the world, especially in third world countries, it can be used to provide basic services more effectively, pursue advocacy goals, monitor progress towards goals and facilitate reflection and learning among local groups in communities.

Advocates of participatory development aver that participating in “formulating the fundamental goals as well as in planning and carrying out an activity empower stakeholders and foster a sense of ownership. These facilitate effective project implementation, conscientious monitoring of activities, and sustainable outcomes” (ADB, 1). ECOSOC itself recommended to member states ‘to adopt participation as a basic policy measure in national development strategies’ (ECOSOC, 2012).

Thomas Tuft and Paolo Mefalopulos, writing for the World Bank, note that the management and decision making processes the group uses require active involvement and transparency of all members which is evident in a free and open exchange of information. As a result of participation, all members of the group or community understand not only the goals and



objectives of the project, they also understand the roles and responsibilities each member has in the implementation of the project (11).

They identified two main approaches to participation:

- A. Social movement perspective
- B. A project-based or institutional perspective.

As the name suggests, from the Institutional Perspectives, participation can be used as a tool to achieve a pre-established goal, defined by someone external to the community involved. For the Social Movement Perspective, participation itself can be a goal as an empowering process (4).

Participatory development promotes ownership, that is, a group's right to decide how and in which order it will address its development needs and to control the design and implementation of projects they intend to meet those needs. It also empowers the people when individuals in a community have access to and can manage their own development resources such as information and skills training. They develop a sense of control over their lives, which can ultimately lead to a stronger involvement in their community's health and their own growth. By encouraging local population to create and implement their own solution they empower themselves and their communities.

There are clearly identifiable stages in participatory development project. Tufte and Mefalopulos identify four key stages:

1. The Research Stage where the development problem is accurately defined. All relevant stake holders can be involved in the process. The research around the development problem can include studying previous experiences, individual and

community knowledge and attitudes, existing policies and other relevant contextual information related to socio-economic conditions, culture, spirituality, gender, and so on.

2. Design stage - Here the actual activities are defined. Active participation by local citizens and other stake holders aims to enhance both the quality and relevance of the suggested interventions.

3. Implementation stage- This is when the planned intervention is implemented. Participation at this stage increases commitment, relevance and sustainability

4. Evaluation Stage - For a meaningful evaluation, indicators and measurements should be defined in a participatory process at the very beginning of the initiative involving all relevant stake holders. (6)

However, for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, a good participatory process must involve five activity areas, including, to plan, monitor and evaluate; learn and empower; research and analyse; communicate and facilitate (OECD, 1995).

Basically, the activities remain the same and it is noteworthy that Theatre for Development, a kind of participatory theatre for change, adheres to the same operational order in its practice and both forms of interaction, and as extensions of Freirian methods of dialogical action and conscientization, adopt the method of Praxis, or action and reflection.

However, development critics like Majid Rahnema, insist that reports coming from the field of participatory development practice show that conscientization exercises have not always led, in practice, to the types of dialogical interaction persistently advocated by Paulo Freire. Alluding to Freire's statement that in dependent societies and during transitional phases, the oppressed do not yet have a 'critical consciousness', but rather a 'semi-transitive' or 'naïve

transitive’, or ‘popular’ consciousness, Rahnema claims so called ‘agents of change’ or ‘vanguards’, have tried to use conscientization or participatory methods simply as new and more subtle forms of manipulation (125).

Advancing different forms of abuse and perversions of the participatory process, Rahnema concludes that:

In its present context, to borrow from Karl Polanyi’s description of the modern economy, participation has come to be ‘disembedded’ from the socio-cultural roots which had always kept it alive. It is now simply perceived as one of the many ‘resources’ needed to keep the economy alive. (120)

One form of participatory development that has recorded success in many nations across the globe is **Participatory Budgeting**. It has been described as a process in which people decide together how a portion of the government (or organization’s) budget is spent. (Gold Frank)

Participatory budgeting, according to Benjamin Gold Frank in the Journal of Public Deliberation, was originated by the Workers’ Party in Brazil, in 1989. A World Bank online report, further explains that the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre started the first full PB process in 1989, for the municipal budget. In Porto Alegre, as many as 50,000 people have participated each year to decide as much as 20% of the city’s budget and since 1989, PB has spread to over 1,500 cities in Latin America, North America, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Still on the successes of participatory budgeting in Brazil, the World Bank reports that the process has brought substantial changes in Porto Alegre. It states:

Although difficulties arising out of a troubled economy intensified poverty and unemployment problems in all Brazilian cities, the condition of poor people in Porto Alegre improved in certain aspects. For instance, new public housing units, which sheltered only 1,700 new residents in 1986, housed an additional 27,000 in 1989. Sewer and water connections in the city of Porto Alegre went up from 75 percent of total households in 1988 to 98 percent in 1997. The number of schools quadrupled since 1986. Porto Alegre’s health and education budget increased from 13 percent in 1985 to almost 40 percent in 1996.

Participatory budgeting has been in operation even in some states in Nigeria. In Anambra state, for instance, it was pioneered by the erstwhile Commissioner for Budget and Economic Planning, Professor Stella Okunna. The Anambra Participatory Budget Forum in which civil societies, traditional rulers, associations of town unions, women groups, faith-based organizations and other non-state actors and members of the general public participated, debuted in August 2013. According to Chukwujekwu Ilozue, Professor Okunna believed the forum represented a bold effort on the part of government to make every stakeholder interested in governance and help the government in galvanizing the support of the people, while contributing to the development of the state. What remains inconclusive however, is the effect of such interventions on the standard of living of the citizens of the state.

In this research work, participatory development would refer to a development project or programme addressing a major need in the existence of a people, in which they, as major stakeholders, play the leading role in its formulation or planning and execution.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

The practice of intervening in development issues through mediated arts may not be so nascent as there are artistic inputs on radio, television and commercial popular music tailored to enlighten, inform and promote socio-cultural development, but it is one which has not been so popularly embraced as much as face to face arts. For decades development has been communicated to local and urban communities through both traditional and mass media forms but the idea of a documentary style (unwritten) artistic creation on television is one that has not been much explored. This new form often brings something extra to the spread which

other forms of mediated arts cannot lay claim to, which is, an instant feedback system, which is very important in any participatory enterprise.

Again the deployment of ‘ordinary’, untrained actors who happen to be drawn from the communities in need of the development agenda, into a ‘situation’, to act in an unrehearsed, spontaneous manner is uncommon and can only find precedence in certain theories and genres of scholastic endeavour. Some of these theories propounded by scholars both in the field of theatre, media and other studies provide a framework for this research work. They shall be briefly enunciated in the following pages.

This study adopts four theories as basis for interrogation of the research problem. The theories are:

### **2.2.1 Paulo Freire’s Theory of Conscientization and Critical Consciousness**

Paulo Freire found a direct correlation in the process of educating with political relationship in a society, which was a revolutionary approach to understanding of social systems. This engendered a movement that manifested in diverse forms, one of which is the radical grassroots community theatre in Brazil championed by Augusto Boal.

In his 1970 publication, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire champions that education should allow the oppressed to regain their sense of humanity, in turn overcoming their condition. However, he acknowledges that for this to occur, the oppressed individual must play a role in their liberation. He opines that no pedagogy which is truly liberating “can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunate and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption” (54).

Freire posits that students must be made aware of the ‘politics’ that surround education. The way students are taught and what they are taught serves a political agenda. He thus attacked the banking model of education in which the student was viewed as an empty account to be filled by the teacher noting that it transforms students into receiving objects or receptacles.

This ‘banking’ model, Freire says “attempts to control thinking and action, leads men and women to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power” He goes on to propose that the learner must develop a “critical consciousness” in order to recognize that the system of dominant social relations has created in him a “culture of silence” which instills a negative, silenced and suppressed self-image. This “culture of silence” eliminates the “paths of thought that lead to a language of critique”. The central concept of critical consciousness is developed through a process of reflection and action, known as conscientization – the process of developing a critical awareness of one’s social reality through reflection and action. Action is fundamental because it is the process of changing the reality. Freire notes that it is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their reality. They must act together upon their environment in order critically to reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection. This, according to him is praxis.

(55-77)

In his book *Cultural Action for Freedom*, Freire opines that:

Only beings who can reflect upon the fact that they are determined are capable of freeing themselves. Their reflectiveness results not just in a vague and uncommitted awareness, but in the exercise of a profoundly transforming action upon the determining reality. *Consciousness of* and *action upon* reality are, therefore, inseparable constituents of the transforming act by which men become beings of relation... On the one hand, the culturally alienated society as a whole is dependent on the society which oppresses it and whose economic and cultural interests it serves. At the same time, within the alienated society itself, a regime of oppression is imposed upon the masses by the power elites which in certain cases are the same as the external elites and in others are the external transformed by a kind of metastasis into domestic power groups. (2-3)

Freire explains the process of conscientization as a requisite part of cultural action for freedom. He also rejects the “mechanistic and behaviourist” view of consciousness as a copy of reality. Instead he insists that conscientization must produce a critical consciousness which has the power to transform reality.

Further explaining the Freirian philosophy for education, Avoseh writes:

Conscientization for Freire is a critical attempt to make man especially the marginalized illiterate see the reality of the world around him. It takes place when illiterates come together in dialogue to discuss situations affecting their existence. Conscientization is thus a dialectical process that relates critical reflection on past action to the continuing struggle for a better future. This process of consciousness awareness cannot be carried out by proxy, that is, no one conscientizes anyone. (Avoseh )

Freire’s Theory of Conscientization and Critical Consciousness underlines the direct correlation between the process of education with political relationship. This education must lead the people down paths of thought which in turn would galvanize action to change their reality. In line with this theory, the efforts of the producers of *Dawn in the Creeks* to educate and equip the youths of the three communities of the Niger Delta to reflect on their problems and express their anger in a non-violent way is expected to transform their reality in positive ways. This form of education does not belong to the “Banking Model” system, it is the kind that liberates, frees the people to seek solutions to their problems.

### **2.1.2 Augusto Boal’s Theory of the Oppressed**

Augusto Boal propounded and expounded his epic theory through the theatrical form called the Theatre of the Oppressed. It was based on Freire’s revolutionary revolt against the elitist “top-down” approach to education, and the doctrine of Critical Consciousness. The Boalian method seeks to transform audiences into active participants in the theatrical experience. He argues that traditional theatre is oppressive since spectators usually do not get a chance to

express themselves, and that collaboration between both parties, in contrast, allows spectators to perform actions that are socially liberating.

The Theatre of the Oppressed was born in 1971 in Brazil by Boal under the very young form of *Newspaper Theatre* with the specific goal of dealing with local problems. It is a participatory theatre that fosters democratic and co-operative forms of interaction among participants. Here, theatre was emphasized not as a spectacle but rather as a language accessible to all. More, specifically, Theatre of the Oppressed is a rehearsal theatre designed for people who want to learn ways of fighting back against oppression.

An online page of the Forum Project puts it this way:

Recognizing that humans have a unique ability to take action in the world while simultaneously observing themselves in action, Boal believed that the human was a self contained theatre, actor and spectator in one. Because we can observe ourselves in action, we can amend, adjust and alter our actions to have different impact and to change our world.

Expanding on the Theatre of the Oppressed Obadiegwu also notes:

This Boalian concept underscores the ethics and aesthetics of community theatre for integrated human development. It aims at stimulating a process of community awareness, problem solving and action taking, bringing the people together, building communal cohesion, raising important issues as they affect the people, creating forums for discussions of those enabling problems and stimulating collective action.  
(5)

Boal adopted various techniques and approaches to addressing different kinds of issues and problems of the people of the grassroots. They were theatre forms in their own respects, offshoots of the main tree, being the Theater of the Oppressed. Such theater forms include the Forum theatre, Direct Actions, Newspaper Theatre, Legislative Theatre, Invisible Theatre, Rainbow of Desire Theatre and Image theatre.



Drawing inspiration from Freire, Brecht and Stanislavski, Boal developed his Theatre of the Oppressed into an arsenal of theatre techniques and games to motivate people, restore true dialogue, and create space for participants to rehearse taking action. The technique begins with the idea that everyone has the capacity to act in the “theatre” of their own lives; everyone is at once an actor and a spectator. He coined the term “spec-actors”.

Following Brecht, Boal points out that when we are simply passive audience members, we transfer our desire to take action onto the characters we identify with, and then find the desire satiated as the conflict resolves itself on stage or in films. He insists that catharsis substitutes for action.

The Boalian method begins with series of games, exploration and representation of images, dialogues and debates which ultimately produce options for dealing with shared problems.

In an online article presenting the Forum Theatre Workshop plan, Griffin Theatre Arts describes Forum Theatre as the core of the Theatre of the Oppressed. It says Forum theatre is not about “finding the perfect solution or really any solution, but it is about opening up a debate, analyzing situations and exploring strategies to counter oppression”.

Writing in an international Theatre of the Oppressed 2004 Newsletter Augusto Boal himself offers:

Theatre of the Oppressed is the game of dialogue: we play and learn together. All kinds of games must have discipline – clear rules that we must follow. At the same time, games have absolute need of creativity and freedom. TO is the perfect synthesis between the antithetic Discipline and Freedom. Without Discipline, there is no social life, without Freedom, there is no life. (Boal)

Just as Augusto Boal’s Theory of the Oppressed taught the indigenous folks to use theatre to address their problems and evolve solutions, the producers of *Dawn in the Creeks* tutored the

selected youths from Ozoro, Nembe and Erema communities on how to adapt their problems into films to draw the attention of the relevant authorities. The films were supposed to lend the aggrieved youths a voice that will bring peace to the region. *Dawn in the Creeks* was a problem solving theatre, modeled after the Theatre of the Oppressed.

### **2.2.3 Participatory Development Theory**

One assumption of traditional third world development policy is that development organisations, which are mostly foreign staffed and based, are the most knowledgeable and capable development actors. This notion derives from the idea that development is a process of teaching impoverished groups the wisdom of the rich, so the successful must guide the less fortunate along the path to success that has been previously blazed. For a considerable period of time this belief remained unchallenged by most actors in the development agenda.

The people of developing nations inevitably begun to display a frustration with the foreign nature of development leadership. This indigenous discontent with the nature of development posed a challenge to traditional development theory, insomuch as this arrogant approach offers an explanation for an overall lack of success in previous projects. Developmental scholars in the decades since the sixties have begun to answer this challenge, articulating a concept known as Participatory, or People-Centred Development.

If there is a concept of development that has gained popularity among major international aid donors and development theorists, it is participation. The idea is so accepted that even many third world repressive governments have accepted and tried to implement it to varying degrees as part of their economic policies. This accounts for the increasing numbers of NGOs in developing nations since they are believed to be ‘participatory’ in their approach to

developmental interventions with less bureaucratic drawbacks, thereby meeting the needs of the people

The Participatory Development Theory challenged and displaced the foreign driven traditional development theory, allowing the people concerned to create and implement their own solutions. As a participatory programme which set out to demonstrate to the youths of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria that there are better and non-violent ways to express their displeasure with establishment, *Dawn in the Creeks* employed a participatory approach. The youths drawn from three selected communities were involved in identifying their peculiar problems and were allowed to create films to address the problems while suggesting solutions to them.

#### **. 2.2.4 Democratic–Participant Theory**

Democratic-participant theory was proposed in recognition of new media developments and of increasing criticism of the dominance of the main mass media by private or public monopolies. It is an answer to a call from the 1960's onwards for alternative, grass-roots media, expressing the needs of citizens.

The theory supports the right to relevant local information, the right to answer back and the right to use the new means of communication for interaction and social action in small-scale settings of community, interest groups or subculture. This theory challenged the necessity for and desirability of uniform, centralized, high-cost, commercialized, professionalized or state-controlled media. In their place, multiple, small-scale, local, non-institutional, committed media should be encouraged which link senders to receivers and also favor horizontal patterns of interaction.

The practical expressions of the theory are many and varied, including the underground or alternative press, community cable television, micro-media in rural settings, wall posters Media for women and ethnic minorities. The recent rise of community media houses in rural places all over the African continent and beyond owe to increasing relevance of this theory. It reflects the market as a suitable institutional form, as well as all top-down professional provision and control. Participation and interaction are key concepts.

Democratic-participant theory advocates media support for cultural pluralism at a grass-root level. Media are to be used to stimulate and empower pluralistic groups. Unlike the Social Responsibility Theory, which assumes that the mass media can perform this function, Democratic-Participant Theory calls for development of innovative, 'small' media that can be directly controlled by group members. If they cannot afford such media, then government subsidies should be provided to the existing small media. Training programs should be established to teach group members how to operate small media.

This theory argues that surviving remnants of ethnic groups be given access to media and allowed to revive or stabilize their culture. This theory has been most fully developed in Western Europe and is part of a grass-roots revival of historically significant cultural and ethnic groups.

Democratic participant theory is a reaction. The term democratic-participant expresses a sense of disillusionment with established political parties and with media system, which are seen as having broken faith with the people. There is also an element of reaction against the mass society, which is over-organized and alienating. (ZeePedia.com)

*Dawn in the Creeks* is a form of grassroots alternative media programme which was produced as a reaction to dominance of establishment. In conformity with the proposal of the

Democratic Participant Theory, the programme was designed to cater for the needs of a segment of the local populace to reach out with their demand for equity. The programme is also a response to a need for a horizontal pattern of interaction at the grassroots level. As the producers so frequently stressed, the aim of *Dawn in the Creeks* was to give the youths a voice.

## **2.3 Review of Related Concepts**

### **2.3.1 Development Communication**

As an approach to communication, development communication provides groups of people or communities with information which they can use to achieve a better quality of life. Such information provided, though applied as part of community development, must also address needs which the people themselves identified.

Onyeka Uwakwe sees development communication as the “integration of the media in the modernization process... a deliberate, systematic, planned use of the media in the process of providing a better society” (58). He further goes on to explain that the scope of media use in development communication includes the traditional or modern, or both.

Chinyere Okunna posits that Development Communication is concerned with communicating the development message and quotes Edeani as defining the concept as “the use of all forms of communication in the reporting, publicizing and promoting of development at all levels of society” (293). For Okunna, effective development communication revolves around the concept of mobilization which she defines as being majorly concerned with rallying people together and motivating them to achieve the goals that have been set in a development project (295).

It is noteworthy that the idea of development communication has remained the same over the past few decades. Frazer and Restrepo-Estrada as far back as 1998, defined Communication for Development as:

The use of communication processes, techniques and media to help people towards consensus, to help people plan actions for change and sustainable development, to help people acquire the knowledge and skills they need to improve their condition and that of society, and to improve the effectiveness of institutions. (41)

The highpoint of communication for development is behavior change. Hence, Okunna notes that the practice of development communication or 'devcom' comprises definite communication activities, which must be undertaken as carefully planned aspects of a coordinated process. This involves, starting with pre-project research, designing relevant messages, carrying out an information campaign, then "marketing" the project through advocacy. The process also involves eliciting popular participation and the end which is to achieve attitude and behavior change (295).

Anthonia Adaenyi Udeoba, however, underlines several factors that may constitute obstacles to development communication in Nigeria. Such factors as poverty, illiteracy, lack of infrastructural facilities, poor access to the channels of communication, alienation of the target audience, lack of training, inter and intra ethnic conflicts and tribal isolation may impede successful development communication if a thorough pre-project research is not conducted (83-86).

However, the approach to the practice of development communication has evolved, over decades, according to people's conception of development as a state of existence. Chronicling the process of transmutation of the concept of development, Gustavo Esteva notes that the first *Report on the World Social Situation*, published in 1952, concentrated on

and aroused interest in the 'existing social condition', turning development thinkers to other issues aside from economic growth. The ensuing controversy between the economic quantifiers and the social service specialists resulted in an attempt to introduce a 'balance' between these 'realities'. The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (Ecosoc) in 1962 recommended the integration of both aspects of development. One of the results of such a concern was the creation of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in 1963.

By the end of the 1960s decade, many factors had contributed to dampen the optimism about economic growth, engendering a generalized revolt against the straightjacket of economic definitions of development. Esteva concludes that:

While the First Decade considered the social and economic aspects of development separately, the Second Decade involved merging the two ... The International Development Strategy proclaimed on 24 October, 1970, called for global strategy based on joint and concentrated action in all spheres of economic and social life while a UN resolution established a project for the identification of a unified approach to development and planning. (14)

However, the quest for a unified approach to development analysis itself engendered controversies and disappointments. Major problems like environment, population, hunger, women related issues, habitat and employment were brought to the fore, resulting in the 1974 Declaration of Cocoyoc which emphasized that the purpose of development 'should not be to develop things, but to develop man'. It continued that 'any process of growth that does not lead to the fulfillment (of basic needs) – or, even worse, disrupts them, is a travesty of the idea of development. (Wolfgang Sachs, 14 – 15)

The Basic Needs Approach, aiming at the achievement of a certain specific minimum standard of living before the end of the century, was proposed by the ILO Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress in June 1976. The Approach proposed

the idea of dealing directly with the task of coping with the basic needs of man, instead of expecting their satisfaction as a result of the process of development.

Burkey also chronicled the emergence of certain theories of development like the Normative Approach, and the Basic Needs Approach. According to him, the Normative theory of development focuses on the content of development rather than the form, “the purpose and meaning of development rather than limiting discussions to questions relating to mobilization of the productive forces of development such as labour, capital and trade,” whereas the Basic Needs theorists believe that development should be need oriented. It should be geared towards meeting both material and non-material human needs; endogenous, stemming from the heart of each society; self-reliant. In other words, each society must rely primarily on its own strength and resources (30).

Continuing Burkey notes that the Basic Needs approach was adopted by many development agencies including the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). It was also based on the conflicting scenarios created by the imposition of the western development model on traditional societies that Percy Oware in 2005 proposed the concept of situated development as a neutralizing approach to development. Kagolobya cites him as saying that:

Development policy planning is thus couched as a macabre struggle between two different epistemological traditions: scientific knowledge and location - specific socio cultural systems. But situated development, which uses situated knowledge as a conceptual backdrop, covets neither a winner nor loser in this epistemological struggle. Instead, it pushes for a synergy of the partial or situated knowledges of the “developers” and those who are supposedly “being developed” for effective policy interventions. (215)

Oware in his work “Situating Development: A Policy Option for Ghana?”, challenges the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank’s funded agricultural sector reforms



which are anchored in 'neo-liberal ideological imperatives' as being palpably inconsistent with the sociological processes and the situated knowledge surrounding smallholder agriculture in Ghana. This proposed synergy as underscored in Oware's 'Situated Development' is possibly the basis of participatory development, a developmental approach that is fast gaining grounds, not just in the western world but also in third world countries (216).

Nederveen Pieterse offers another dimension on the evolution of development thinking and theories. While insisting that the term 'development' in its present sense dates from the post-war era of modern development thinking, he believes the immediate predecessor of modern development economics was colonial economics. Development, if the term was used at all, in effect referred mainly to colonial resource management, first to make the colonies cost effective and later to build economic resources with a view to national independence (5).

Pieterse describes the decade of the 1950s as one marked by growth, political and social modernization while the 1960s was noted for the Dependency theory, marked by accumulation and national autocraticism. The 1970s witnessed alternative development which saw individuals flourishing and the 80s was an era of human development, capacitation and enlargement. It was also a decade of Neo-liberalism, economic growth, structural reform, deregulation, and privatization. This ushered in Post-development (Pieterse, 7). Esteva, however, refers to this decade as 'the lost decade for development' because 'adjustment process' meant abandoning or dismantling most of the previous achievements of development.

The Post development of the 90s with its authoritarian engineering called for 'redevelopment, that is, to develop again what was maldeveloped or had become obsolete.

Redevelopment as a policy ultimately began to take the shape of ‘sustainable development’ as prescribed by the Brundtland Commission. Sustainable Development involved maximizing the net benefits of economic development, subject to maintaining the services and quality of natural resources over time. According to the Brundtland Commission, formerly the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainable development is “progress that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs”. (Springer Science - Business Media, 2015)

No matter how appropriate and appealing sustainable development appeared. It gave way to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the turn of the new millennium. In September 2000, eight millennium development goals were adopted by member countries of the United Nations. The MDGs were developed to address the most pressing problems in developing countries, including poverty and hunger, primary universal education, gender equality, child health, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability and global partnership. These UN member countries committed themselves to ending poverty and achieving other development goals by 2015.

The year 2015 saw the United Nation adopting a new approach to tackling poverty and development issues in her member nations. This is the Sustainable Development Goals. According to the United Nations homepage on Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, “On September 25<sup>th</sup>, countries will have the opportunity to adopt a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years”.

At her General Assembly held from 25 to 27 September 2015 in New York, the UN adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets:

to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what they did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental. (UN SDGs, 2015)

In an earlier work, Walter Rodney, posited that it did not matter whether a society is primitive or modern, provided that society is in a position to creatively harness and utilize the object of nature or improve its living conditions on a sustainable basis. Such a society, he notes, experiences development. Rodney further opined that:

Development in human society is a many sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing ... A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. (Uwakwe, 13)

However for Michael Todaro, development core values simply imply the uplift of a whole society and social system to produce a good quality of life for its citizens. According to him, three basic core values are fundamental for the understanding of the “inner” meaning of development, and they represent the requirements that guarantee the “good life” in the society. These values include:

1. Life Sustenance: This simply refers to the physical need of man without which life will be impossible. They include need for food, shelter, clothing, protection and health. Life would be threatening, uncomfortable and difficult if these needs are not met by, at least, a majority of the population of the society. Where there is a near absence of these needs, or a relative short supply, such a country is said to be in a state of severe underdevelopment.
2. Self Esteem: This refers to the psychological need of every individual to receive respect, honour and recognition as a person. What counts here is the extent to which one is dignified, respected and made to have a sense of worth. This connotes a level of development, which

as Todaro points out, varies from society to society. It may also imply escaping the exploitation of another person, group or country with greater economic advantage.

3. Freedom: Freedom is fundamental to development. There is no quantitative measurement for freedom. Freedom ensures emancipation of people from ignorance, misery, dogmatic beliefs and social servitudes. Todaro again observes that freedom is important in the range of choice of men, and minimization of external constraints in the pursuit of some social goal which we call development (12-13).

### **2.3.2 Theatre for Development**

The genesis of Theatre for Development in Africa must be traced back to the plays and theatrical activities of East-African novelist and playwright Ngugi wa Thiong'o. They mark the beginning of a movement and genre of theatre in Africa, one which was later to metamorphose into the Theatre for Development in Northern Nigeria, precisely at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in the late seventies.

The play *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, co-authored by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo, represent an imaginative reconstruction of the Kenyan people's struggle against imperialist oppression under a native leader Dedan Kimathi. His *Ngaahika Ndeenda* or *I will marry when I want* was shut down by the authoritarian Kenyan regime six weeks after its opening. The play re-enacted a struggle between the peasants of post-colonial Kenya and the neo-colonial land owner of the modern Kenya.

In 1976, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, together with Ngugi wa Miri had helped to set up the Kamirithu Community Education and Cultural Centre which, among other things, organized and produced indigenous theatre. According to Wa Thiong'o, the Kamirithu Centre was meant to "liberate the theatrical process from "the general bourgeois education system" by

encouraging spontaneity and audience participation in the performances. Like Brecht, Wa Thiong'o sought to "demystify" the theatrical process, and to avoid the process of alienation which encourages passivity in ordinary people. The activities of the Kamirithu community education and cultural centre earned Wa Thiong'o a prison term of over a year.

Arguing that colonialism still existed in Kenya in spite of independence, Ngugi saw the need to educate his people beyond the alphabet, to include "culture". Language being central to culture, any vernacular in Kenya, fell victim to colonial or neo-colonial exploitation. This was why it was necessary for African writers to address themselves to the majority of the people in a language and style the people could understand. This would herald the experience of 'homecoming' for Africans.

Ngugi Wa Thiongo was later to collaborate with Michael Etherton in developing a theatre which was directly political in its texture although still within the mode of theatre for development. Etherton's work with Ogah Abah at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, has now gone down in history as the beginning of this form of popular drama in Nigeria.

Theatre for development is a form of theatre practice that addresses itself to the issues and concerns of the marginalized urban and rural poor in the society. It uses a technique that focuses on participation of the rural community and dialogue to diagnose the problems peculiar to that community and to find lasting solutions to those issues. According to Chiduo Obadiogwu, it is "The theatre of ideas and cognitive clarification" (xi).

Theatre for development (TFD) can be referred to as popular theatre, propaganda theatre, community theatre or developmental forum. Each of these terms point at what this theatre seeks to address - issues that affect the socio-political life of a community. This is why the theatre is also referred to as political theatre in some quarters. It is being developed as "one

way of helping the masses in the developing world to come to terms with their environment and the onus of improving their lot culturally, educationally, politically, economically and socially” (Kamlongera, 435)

Abah opines that TFD has increasingly started to be used not only to talk about the marginalized but to also talk to authority and policy makers to sensitize them to the implication of policy decisions (122). Referring to this critical role of TFD in addressing the dynamics of the relationship between the ruled and the rulers, the poor masses and the policy makers, Obadiogwu asserts:

Community theatre therefore is a participatory theatre at the service of the people for their socio-political development. Its existence borders on dialogue and action, which will lead to critical consciousness and emancipation of the society. This is the model upon which community theatre is built. Its aims are to raise the consciousness of the masses towards full understanding of themselves and mechanics of their own society. (xii)

Thus TFD is essentially a functional and didactic theatre. It is a theatre in service to the poor masses. Christopher Kamlongera proffers that work in Theatre for Development in Africa derives its origins from three factors

1. Colonial attempts to improve Africans through drama.
2. A recognition, on the part of colonialists that some positive aspects of behavior could be extruded from indigenous performances.
3. The Africans own reaction to these colonial attempts at developing their culture.

Kamlongera cites an example from Stevens G.A where the British made an attempt to develop theatre skills among the Africans. One of the methods employed was “to take a native legend or story with a moral, split up the action into as many as eight or nine different

scenes, each dealing with one dramatic moment, and interspersed with considerable knock-about dancing and singing” (436).

He also described a 1933 report from Kenya of a work carried out at the Jeans School of Kabete in which there was “a first evidence of direct use of a theatre art for purpose other than aesthetic education” (437). Here the Jeans teacher employed a “crudely propagandist” method to instill civilized tenets in the “pagan population” using folk tale characters. Kamlongera this time quotes Taylor:

The moral or points to be emphasized were always placed in a favourable position by the use of characters personifying animals from native lore. If the objective of the play was to teach the values of grainstores, it was the clever Hare who profited by its use and Hyena who regretted clinging to the old methods; if we were trying to show the value of good management of a village school, the poor type of teacher was generally represented by the Monkey or Hyena and the better type by the Hare or the Bee. The acting was burlesque in the extreme and often overdone, but the point or points to be stressed were much discussed afterwards and taken to heart. (437)

Accounts like these clearly show that the earlier part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century portray a clear emphasis on propaganda theatre employed by the white colonialist to “civilize” or “develop” the natives in their own manner. However, the later part of the century was dominated by a theatre for art’s sake and other means, as the now educated African natives took up playwriting and tried to assert their individualism through plays that addressed their social realities with peculiar colourations.

It was only inevitable that there would be re-emergence of grassroots utilitarian drama on the continent to meet the need to address the growing inequality between the privileged few in urban cities who control the resources of the nations, and the poor majority, who mainly reside in rural areas and have no influence over the management of the collective wealth and the forces that shape their existence. Hence Obadiogwu argues that “what we should do is to

transfer theatrical instrument to the people as a medium for discussing their immediate problems using their art form (xv). Going further Obadiegwu credits Augusto Boal as saying that “all truly revolutionary theatrical groups should transfer to the people the means of production in the theatre so that the people themselves may utilize them. Theatre is a weapon and it is the people that should wield it” (xvi).

The birth of Theatre for Development in Nigeria according to Etherton, who founded the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria (Nigeria) experimental theatre project was engendered by the realization that the “real media for disseminating scientific information helpful to rural African communities are the so-called folk media: masquerades, drumming and dancing, storytelling and the songs of the wandering praise-singers...” (15).

Etherton further notes that these folk forms make the community development message so immediate and pertinent emphasizing the basic goals of participation and self reliance.

Theatre for development, which later became popularized by Nigerian scholars like Oga Steve Abah (a pioneer student of the Zaria University Project) and Jenkeri Okwori, grew as a result of its community based and problem solving thrust. Whereas the commercial forms of theatre operating in the country, especially in the urban centres, revealed and highlighted the oppressive conditions in which the masses found themselves, they did not seek to change the status quo. As Harding puts it:

Theatre-for-development is deliberately directed towards enabling people to challenge, modify and even change local circumstances of injustice and oppression. It is intended to give people a technique of fictionalizing reality by “rehearsing” a range of responses to social and political situations which favour the rich and powerful at the expenses of the poor... (21)

Micheal Etherton, according to Kamlongera, opines that for TFD to succeed, the plays must take the part of the local people. They should reflect life from the viewpoint of the villagers



themselves; and they should not avoid articulating criticism of government policy which is inadequate. Thus, although they may initially set out to be less than political in their aims, these plays may end up as the most politically active of all African theatre (440).

Elisha Rwang in his discussion on the origin of TFD in Nigeria, states that the practice later became common with the Theatre Arts Departments in University of Ibadan, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Ife, University of Jos, and others.

Most Theatre for Development workers the world over adopt an almost uniform approach to the practice of this community based theatre. Since this theatre practice has come to be widely accepted in Africa and in other parts of the developing world as a theatre for the ordinary people, it uses the indigenous performative forms of the people to define the aesthetics of its operations. Ogah Abah notes that “the people are the protagonists, generating the themes and infusing the drama with conflicts from their daily lives” (158). There is also no audience in the traditional western sense of the world and everyone is a ‘spect-actor’ or participant.

However, this theatre type does not exist without the input of facilitators who provide the professional expertise and guidance in the theatrical process. Obadiogwu lists the “most ideal methodological approach prescribed by scholars for community theatre facilitators” to include:

Training the participants

Researching communal issues

Analysis of data

Scenario development

Rehearsal through improvisation

Performance

Post-performance evaluation

Follow-up (6)

In the same vein, Amirikpa Oyegbenu describes steps in a TFD process to include:

- 1- Meeting with community leaders
- 2- Research and data collection from target community
- 3- Data analysis
- 4- Casting and rehearsals
- 5- Criticism of rehearsals
- 6- Actual performance
- 7- Evaluation of the sketch and its relevance in the lives of community leaders
- 8- Follow-up action (109-121).

Theatre for Development is a wholly improvisational theatre which does not require professional skills to actualize. Essentially, it requires the collective aspirations and resolve of a people/community who wish to use theatre to solve a problem or develop their community. This is why the theatre utilizes traditional artifacts such as songs, dance, folk tales and lores and other such cultural artifacts as can project the message of the drama. As a participatory theatre, the stages progress from problem identification, group discussions, casting, rehearsals, to staging. With the guidance of the facilitator or development animator, the people choose for themselves the way forward.

Obadiogwu opines that the community theatre is geared towards demystifying the popular ideas held by elites that only professionals in the area of theatre can use theatre for the benefit of the society. He says this demythologization is contained in the ethics and aesthetics of community theatre for integrated human development.

Elisha Rwang in his paper “Development Agencies and the Quest for Development” relates the efforts of the UNICEF-TFD Alliance for Participatory Development. He regales the experiences of the development agents with their use of the homestead method of data collection which necessitated that despite all challenges involved, the group lodged in the community and embarked on the field work in groups to five different areas. This way, after the analysis of the data at the close of the day, problem ranging from poverty, ignorance and superstition were identified. Hence, Rwang concludes that:

The strength of any TFD project is the research and interaction it provides for both the facilitator and the participants, on the one hand and the benefiting community on the other. This is... done through contacts, discussions and distilling of opinions, through the process of improvised performance. (43)

There is no doubt that the producer of the chosen case study for this study has drawn from this genre of theatre for his reality television experimental work, *Dawn in the Creeks*. It remains to be determined, however, the extent to which he has conformed to TFD, and, of course, what impact the programme has left on the battle-ready youths of the Niger Delta Creeks of Nigeria

#### **2.4 Review of Related Projects**

It is necessary to scrutinize some other attempts at driving development through the medium of reality television in Africa. Such efforts include the Kwanda Initiative of South Africa and the Ruka Juu of Tanzania.

### **2.4.1 The *Kwanda* Initiative of South Africa**

*Kwanda*, an initiative of the South African Soul City Institute, was an innovative project aimed at mobilizing communities to address major development issues. It was a pioneer project which employed Reality Television for community development.

*Kwanda* centres around a thirteen-part “community make-over” reality TV show- which was broadcast in 2009 in South Africa.

Five-deprived communities were challenged to make their areas look and work better by addressing health and development issues. The four main interlinked development goals included: to prevent new HIV infections, to address alcohol abuse, violence and crime; to take care of vulnerable people in the community and to foster engagement in projects that strengthen livelihoods by generating income, encourage the growing of food or in other ways improve the quality of life in communities. Lebo Ramafoko, Gavin Anderson and Renay Weiner, co-producers of the programme believe that *Kwanda* demonstrated that when communities organize on their own behalf, government is better able to deliver.

According to the online article describing the *Kwanda* Initiative as Reality Television for Community Development, five communities were selected from different areas of South Africa. They include Kwakwatsi, Lephephane, uMthwalume, Pefferville and Tjakastad. They ranged from towns, inner-city neighborhood, to village communities. (Ramafoko, Anderson and Weiner)

#### ***Kwanda* Format**

Ramafako, Anderson and Weiner in their online article state that the thirteen episodes were comprised as follows: Episode one was the learning camp; episodes two to eleven focused

on the communities (two each), episode twelve was a recap and episode thirteen, a live programme where viewers had the chance to phone in and vote. The first twelve episodes were edited prior to broadcast.

The series were complemented by a radio show, involving a range of radio stations that gave other communities a chance to talk about how they were dealing with issues similar to those faced by the *Kwanda* communities.

Viewer participation was encouraged. They could send in comments every week by mobile phone text messages (short messages service or SMS) or by letter. They were also offered a different number to text for help with an issue, and were then referred to relevant government services, for example, the Department of Social Development, through return SMS.

According to the Soul City Institute report on *Kwanda*, the experience was built on forming partnerships from the inception of the programme to the selection of sites. Partnership teams were encouraged to link with other partners including municipalities, civil society organizations and local business. The philosophy underpinning the project was an experimental learning approach that encouraged participants to take an active role in their own learning while coaches provided continuous feedback during the whole process (Soul City *Kwanda* Report). *The South Africa Info*, an online newspaper, in its review of the initiative, reports that in tracking the journeys of the five teams, the series will give its audience inspiration and concrete ideas for taking action themselves, as well as contact information for helping people in their own communities.

Describing the Soul City project as belonging to the category of ‘second generation edutainment’ Thomas Tufte notes that it has a broader scope than the first generation edutainment strategists. He opines that:

Acknowledging the complexity of social, health and other developmental problems, second generation edutainment connects the focus on individual behavior change with the participatory paradigm, although still in a restricted manner compared to the ideals of participation, as for example, Paulo Freire formulated them. (329)

**Method:** *Kwanda* was competitive as the communities (divided into teams) were assessed and rated by the viewers on their ability to put to use skills they were taught at the learning camp. Coaches were engaged who engaged the participants daily to provide direction. However, before all these, the participants had been through a four-week learning camp where they were taught skills that enhanced leadership qualities, such as how to settle disputes, organization skills, the value of working together, investing and sustaining businesses. Each community was trained and assessed on skills that were relevant to the development challenges facing the people. No teams were eliminated throughout the duration of the reality show. However, a winning community emerged through analysis of viewers SMSs and letters, as well as through interviews undertaken in communities. Viewership ratings indicated that the average number of viewers per episode was over one million, three hundred people, and these figures remained relatively constant throughout the screening of the show. The Soul City Institute's report also catalogued the steps that the producers of the reality programme underwent.

### **Preparation**

With the clear aim to inspire people to work together to uplift their communities, the organizing team of *Kwanda* went ahead to identify the development focus areas through consultation with provincial and district stakeholders. These issues were later endorsed by the communities as common themes that needed to be tackled.

The process of **selection of communities** included consultations with provincial, local and district players as it was clear from the start that the support of local government was crucial. The facilitators also took into consideration communities where Soul City Institute training partners were already involved and where existing resources and networks were in place. Moreover, the communities chosen were those in whom certain development issues had been identified.

**Participant selection and Selection of teams:** Soul City Institute partners that worked in or near the communities, assisted in selecting an initial group of participants. Different ways were used to advertise for volunteers, such as putting up posters and talking to people in the area.

The final participants were selected by a joint group which included the partner organization representatives, a coach and the TV field-producer team. A hundred participants were selected from each community. They were from different gender and age groupings and with different skills and character dispositions.

**Community mapping:** Each community team conducted a mapping exercise of the area prior to the learning camp. This was aimed at helping the teams to understand the issues facing their communities. The exercise was effective at building participants knowledge about their communities and it also helped committee members find out more about their areas. A period of one week was set apart for this exercise.

### **Evaluation Methodology**

According to the Soul City Institute Report, the evaluation of *Kwanda* as a reality programme for development was conducted at two levels: at the participating community

level and at the audience and media level. The external evaluation took place about six months after the completion of the process.

At the participating community level, the evaluation explored the social and development changes within the communities resulting from *Kwanda*. It looked at the extent to which these experiences were considered to make the community look, feel and work better, and to which extent *Kwanda* was able to strengthen communities. This evaluation took place in all the five participating communities and two non-participating control communities, Thakgalang and Mamafebedu, who had access to the *Kwanda* TV series.

The evaluation was designed to measure the perceived impact of the programme even though the inclusion of two non-intervention control sites lent the evaluation-exercise a qualitative point of comparison.

Data collection methods were mainly qualitative, consisting of an extensive desk research, focus group discussions, wide interviews, field observations and an analysis of film footages.

### **Feedback and Results**

Ramafoko, Anderson and Weiner, in their essay, report that a total of 6,776 SMSs were sent by viewers to the live comment crawler during the series. These SMSs comprised messages of support for the communities while others were responses to questions posed during the show. The questions centred on the social issues raised in the episodes. The viewers also commented on the leadership styles of the group chairmen (Ramafoko, Anderson and Weiner).

Ramafako and co conclude that in general, the SMS indicate that the *Kwanda* series content touched on social issues that were important to viewers. The SMS response also indicated



that the series was pitched at the right level and encouraged viewers to think about social issues in their own communities.

They, however, acknowledge that while most viewers generally supported the series and believed that it could make a difference in their own communities, some were skeptical about the sustainability of certain initiatives to bring about long-term social change.

In addition to SMSs, a total of 94 letters were received from both individuals and organizations, according to the initiators of the series. Most of the letters were received from community-based organizations including care groups, youth groups, sports groups, NGOs and religious groups. These letters indicated interests in the series and some were requests for assistance with funding, managerial skills and material for similar projects. Ramafoko and his partners also disclose that letters were received from prisoners who wished to get involved with *Kwanda* after they had served their jail term and prisoners who wanted to implement *Kwanda* in their respective jails.

Concluding, the *Kwanda* team opines that the initiative was successful because it showed what communities could achieve if they organized themselves. It also showed that television can be a useful medium for making authorities and leaders accountable.

### **Follow Up**

Some problems that were experienced during and after filming of the series, such as team members' inability to accept change, pointed to the need for Soul City Institute, the major organizing partner, to maintain a degree of interaction and mentoring of the groups for a while longer, after conclusion of the filming. The community work programme was born as a necessary intervention of government, albeit managed by the Seriti Institute, one of the

*Kwanda* initiators. Soul City Institute also embarked on a series of learning convocations/workshops within each participating community to try to address questions and issues as they pertain to the communities.

The feedback or “talking back” feature of reality television bequeaths the process an often advantageous quality of continualness. This follow-up opportunity can prove invaluable to a development initiative as the initiators have greater chances of reaching the target. Most importantly, the programme can be tailored to the needs of the people, for whom it is intended, not to a perceived or influenced opinion of the people’s need.

Ekstrom and Sekei cite an example of audience feedback given to a civil society media platform, Femina HIP, in Tanzania, which redirected the organization to the more pressing need of the people. One of such responses went, “it is well and good to learn about HIV/AIDs and reproductive health, but we need jobs”.

In response to this demand for information related to livelihoods, Femina organized a youth conference on Zobe under the theme “Empowering Youth for Employment”. Massive turn out and response to the conference further revealed the need for developing skills in entrepreneurship, business and income-generating activities which led to the launch of the economic empowerment programme *Ruka Juu* which means ‘Jump Up’.

#### **2.4.2 *Ruka Juu***

*Ruka Juu* is a Reality TV entrepreneurship competitive programme. It was broadcast on national TV in Tanzania between March and May, 2011. The objective of *Ruka Juu na Fema* TV show was to inspire young people to become more entrepreneurial and proactive instead of waiting for opportunities to come to them. Part of the objective was to provide information

about the different aspects of entrepreneurship required to succeed in business, such as marketing, customer care, savings, access to capital, record keeping and planning. The main target group was young people in Tanzania aged 15 to 30, both in school and out of school, living in urban as well as rural areas and the Tanzanian community at large (Ekstrom and Sekei, 185).

During 11 episodes, the audience followed six Tanzanian entrepreneurs, all under 30 years, as they competed for the opportunity of a lifetime. Each entrepreneur was followed through a number of competitive challenges that explored money management, savings options, dealing with emergencies, funding working capital, business planning, and so on, with the aim of determining how the six could improve and grow their businesses. The final episode was broadcast live and the winner, Idrissa, a barbershop owner from Kibaha, was awarded a prize of TSH5 million (USD 3000) to invest in his business. The contestants were evaluated by three judges and by members of the audience who were encouraged to vote for their favourite contestant by mobile phone SMS messaging. They were also encouraged to engage with *Ruka Juu* by answering a ‘question of the week’ and sending spontaneous comments and questions. (Ekstrom and Sekei 185)

Ekstrom and Sekei conclude that the broadcast of *Ruka Juu* threw up new challenges to Femina HP in the area of getting more value out of the SMS feedback communication system. It became important to devise ways to mine the content of the messages that were coming in. The programme ‘*Sema na Fema*’ was developed to serve as a new channel for the audience to interact with and “talk back” to *Ruka Juu*. It also created a potential space for citizen engagement (186).

Joergensen and Tonsberg also highlight the strengths of *Ruka Juu* as edutainment when he notes:

With its focus on the societal problems of lack of business training in school, and through the social change approach of wanting to inspire people to start their own businesses, *Ruka Juu* can be put in the category of what Tufte refers to as the third generation of entertainment education. *Ruka Juu* entertains its audience by following six entrepreneurs ... Through the TV-show the audience will be able to learn how to use resources and skills to develop and build a business of their own.  
(15)

The above underline one of the benefits of the feedback system employed by most reality television shows as well as the efficacy of educating through entertainment.

Against this backdrop of seemingly successful reality shows, the programme *Dawn in the Creeks* would be scrutinized and analysed as an electronic media arts intervention into the problem of militancy in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria with a view to determining the merits of its distinctive features.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *DAWN IN THE CREEKS: A NIGER DELTA LEGACY*

#### **3.1 Background to the Niger Delta Crisis**

The Reality show *Dawn in the Creeks* was created in response to the youth restiveness which prevailed in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This turbulent period was at its peak in the decade that opened the 21<sup>st</sup> century and abated towards the end of that decade. A close look at the people of this region and the circumstances that led to the crisis would allow for a deeper understanding of the project.

##### **3.1.1 The People**

The Niger Delta occupies 7.5% of the total land area and 12% of total surface area of Nigeria and is home to approximately 30 million people. Historically and even cartographically, the region consist of just Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers states, but the Nigerian Federal Government included Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Abia, Edo, Ondo, and Imo in the year 2000. So it is appropriate to regard the region now recognized as the Niger Delta Region by the Federal Government as the Political Niger Delta Region (URA Nigeria). The map of Nigeria numerically show states typically considered part of the Niger Delta region to include these nine.

The over 30 million people of the Niger Delta region account for 23% of Nigeria's total population. This population density is also among the highest in the world with 265 people per kilometer squared. These people make up 40 different ethnic groups, speaking 250 languages and dialects. They include Ijaws, Ogonis, Ikwerres, Etches, Ekpeyes, Ogbas, Engennes, Obolos, Isokos, Nembes, Okrikas, Kalabaris, Urhobos, Itsekiris, Igbos, Ika-Igbos,

Ndonis, Oron, Ibenos and Yorubas, Ibibios, Annangs and Efiks, Bekwarras and Binis (NDRMP, NDDC)

The traditional economic activities of the Niger Delta communities fall into two main categories:

1. Land based type on the drier parts, at the northern end of the region which includes farming, fishing, collecting and processing palm fruits, as well as hunting.
2. Water based type of economy at the southern parts of the Delta, including fishing and trading, with a less diversified economy.

The predominant settlement type in the Niger Delta is in small and scattered hamlets. In total, there are more than 13,000 settlements with the average population of these settlements falling below 20,000 people. The majority of these comprise largely rural communities lacking essential amenities, such as medical facilities, efficient marketing, water, power supply and goods transportation systems (NDDC).

According to the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan of the Niger Delta Development Corporation, the region is a paradox of poverty amidst plenty. The Delta is beset with many challenges including widespread poverty with about 70% of the population on or below the poverty line; a very low level of industrial development, unemployment and poor health and 20% child mortality rate which is amongst the highest in the world. There's inadequate transportation structure with movement and access to settlements being hampered by a poor road network and difficult conditions especially in the river-rine areas, absence of electricity supply in many river-rine areas and regularly interrupted supply across all areas. The people also live with poor telecommunications, shortage of land for

development, inadequate health and education facilities, ineffective waste management and inadequate sanitation facilities, and above all these, social restiveness and conflict. It is no wonder that the area is grossly undeveloped.

Nigeria, after nearly four decades of oil production, had by the early 1990s become almost completely dependent on petroleum extraction economically, generating 25% of its GDP (this had arisen to over 80% by 2014). The Niger Delta fuels Nigeria's heavy dependence on oil and account for approximately 90% of federal government export earnings. (Human Rights Watch)

### **3.1.2 Origins of Militancy in the Niger Delta**

In spite of the fact that the Niger Delta accounts for 90% of the nation's proven gas and oil reserves, in-essence, the federal government export earnings, the region remains one of the poorest parts of the country, the extreme neglect of human rights and governance is endemic throughout the region. What's more, the damage to the land and waters from decades of oil exploration and exploitation has attracted local and international concern.

Kimebi, Imomotimi Ebiefa of the Centre for the Advancement of Socio-Political and Environmental Justice, Yenagoa, Nigeria, categorized the origins of militancy under remote and immediate causes. According to him the remote causes include inter-alia: environmental underdevelopment in the region, the existence of obnoxious laws such as the Petroleum Act of 1969 and the Land use Act of 1978, and the killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa. The immediate causes of militancy on the other hand include the militarization of the Niger Delta by the Nigerian state, the "Youths Earnestly Ask for Abacha programme, the Kaiama Declaration, bunkering by Niger Delta Youths and the mobilization of youths as political thugs during the 1999 elections (Ebiefa).

A report by Human Rights Watch, on human rights violations related to oil exploration in the Niger Delta and published in 1999, described extensively the impoverished state of the locals and the flagrant violations and abuse they were being subjected to by the major multinational oil companies and the Nigerian government security forces. The online Report states that during the Human Rights Watch trip to the Niger Delta in 1997:

We found repeated incidents in which people were brutalized for attempting to raise grievances with the companies, in some cases security forces threatened, beat, and jailed members of community delegations even before they presented their cases. Such abuses often occurred on or adjacent to company property, or in the immediate aftermath of meetings between company officials and individuals claimants or community representatives. (Human Rights Watch, par 3)

Oil production in the Niger Delta has had damaging effects on the environment of the oil producing region. The decades of oil production has often occasioned large oil spills that have killed fish and agricultural crops, destroying the livelihood of many of the people who are predominantly farmers and fishermen.

Poorly designed causeways and canals used by the oil industries affect the hydrology of the seasonally flooded fresh water swamp of the delta region, and the brackish water of the mangrove forest, killing off crops, destroying fish grounds, and damaging drinking water source.

The Human Rights Watch report addressing the issue of compensations continues:

The realities of the Nigerian legal system make it difficult to establish or enforce such an obligation often, the Nigerian government effectively entrusts the oil companies themselves to provide the facts on such matter as land claims and valuation, environmental impact assessments, agreed terms of compensation for property and labor, assessment of sabotage, and damage claims. The affected communities are in an unequal bargaining position, largely obliged to accept whatever compensation is offered by the companies in such situations. (par 10)



In a September 2014 issue of *International Business Times*, Ludorica Iaccino reports that in 2015, Amnesty International said that the Royal Dutch Shell and the Italian Multinational oil giant ENI admitted to more than 550 oil spills in the Niger Delta in 2014 alone. In January 2015, Shell agreed to pay 84 million dollars in compensation to the Bodo community over two spills which affected more than 15,000 fishermen in the area.

Against this backdrop of brutality and exploitation by foreign multinationals, the Nigerian government officials and some of the politicians, traditional leaders and contractors, the emergence of protest and militant groups was inevitable. The most prominent and organized of the early protest groups was the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), formed in 1992 and led by well-known author Ken Saro-Wiwa. Saro-Wiwa successfully mobilized thousands of Ogonis, an ethnic group of just half a million people to protest at the policies of the federal government in relation to the oil wealth, and the activities of Shell, the oil company that produces almost half of Nigeria's oil.

Shell Petroleum was forced to close its production in Ogoni following the mass protests at its facilities. MOSOP's protest, though peaceful, provoked a violent and repressive response from the federal government, for which any threat to oil production is a threat to the entire existing political system.

Human Rights Watch reports that thousands of Ogonis were detained or beaten by the River State Internal Security Task Force, and hundreds were summarily executed over a period of several years. In 1994, Ken Saro-Wiwa and several others were arrested in connection with the murder of four traditional leaders in Ogoni and on November 10, Saro-Wiwa and the eight other MOSOP activists were hanged by the military government for those murders. They had been tried before a tribunal which blatantly violated international standards of due

process and which produced no credible evidence that he or the others were involved in the killings for which they were convicted.

Ebienfa, in his online essay explains that:

When in his bid to transform himself into a civilian president, the late military dictator General Sani Abacha, invited youths from all the local government areas of the federation to participate in the Two Million Man March in Abuja, the event served as an eye-opener that propelled the youths to change tactics. Hundred of youths were mobilized to attend the Abuja program from the “Poverty- ridden and development elusive interior enclaves of the Niger Delta... While in Abuja, the youths from the Niger Delta saw for the first time in their lives, express roads with four lanes, roads that were free of potholes, bridges built over dry land (flyovers) that contrasted with the absence of bridges across creeks and rivers back home, and beautiful streets and high-rise buildings. The youths at first thought they were in a foreign land, but after several inquiries they were told that they were in Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria, a new city built by oil revenue sourced from the Niger Delta.

Ebienfa continues by saying that the youths returned home to fight for the development of their land and to secure resource control. After the trip, protests against the activities of the oil industry increased in geometric progression and culminated in the birth of the famous Kaiama Declaration.

Kaiama town in the region, was the home-town of Isaac Adaka Boro, and became the revolutionary headquarters of the Ijaw nation. The All Ijaw Youths Conference of 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1998 was held there, hence, the name “The Kaiama Declaration:.. At the close of the gathering which Ebienfa says included “over 5000 Ijaw youths drawn from over 5000 communities of about 40 clans that make up the Ijaw nation”, the Kaiama Declaration was announced.

The Declaration, among other things, while stressing ownership of all lands and natural resources in the territory, ceased to recognize all “undemocratic decrees” that rob their people of the right to ownership and control of these resources. It demanded immediate withdrawal

from Ijaw land of “all military forces of occupation and repression by the Nigeria state” saying Ijaw youths in all the communities in Ijaw clan of the Niger Delta, will take steps to implement the resolutions beginning from December 30<sup>th</sup> 1998 as a step towards reclaiming the control of their lives.

“Operation Climate Change” was then launched as the preliminary step to bringing about the vision. The Kaiama Declaration also gave birth to the Ijaw Youth Council, with the motto “Resource control by any means possible”. Thus, the Kaiama Declaration ushered in the era of violence by Niger Delta militants who abandoned the non-violent stance of Ken Saro-Wiwa and adopted violent measures as their modus operandi.

As tensions escalated and culminated in attacks in the region, new militant groups were born. Foremost of them all was the Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force (NDPVF), created in 2003. NDPVF was one of the largest armed groups in the area and was founded by Alhaji Mujahid Asari-Dokubo (simply known as Asari Dokubo), a former president of the Ijaw Youth Council.

Asari Dokubo’s NDPVF attempted to control the region’s petroleum resources largely through oil ‘bunkering’ a process in which an oil pipeline is tapped and oil extracted into a barge and then sold to other countries. Oil corporations and the Nigerian state condemn bunkering as illegal but militants justify the act, saying they are being exploited and have not received, adequately, profits from the profitable oil industry which has destroyed much of their sources of livelihood.

Ebiefra traced the emergence of militant groups like the NDPVF of Asari Dokubos and the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV) of Ateke Tom to political thuggery and its aftermaths. The do-or-die characteristic of Nigeria’s politics is always marked with recruitment of youths who

are armed with dangerous weapons and financially mobilized by politicians, to carry out their parochial and undemocratic plans. However, after the elections, such youths are abandoned, without anything tangible done to retrieve the guns and ammunitions from them. Thus, with such instruments of coercion in their possession, some of these frustrated and neglected youths decided to set up militant camps and violently pursue their own interest.

Explaining further, Ebienfa said it was in this context that Asari Dokubo and Ateke Tom were recruited in Rivers state to deliver certain local government areas that were seen as crucial to winning the elections in the state. Likewise, in Bayelsa State notable militant leader like General Africa, Joshua Maverick, Young Shall Grow, Egberi Papa and Daddy Ken graduated from being political thugs to become militants.

When Asari Dokubo fell out with NDPVF's chief financial supporter who was then the governor of Rivers State, the governor launched a paramilitary campaign against the militant group. This only worked to escalate violence in the region with NDPVF on one hand fighting for control of the bunkering routes against NDV, supported by government, on the other hand. Violent clashes disrupted civilian life in the city of Port Harcourt, forcing schools and economic activity to shut down and also resulted in numerous deaths. By 2014, the NDPVF was fighting a combined force of the police, army and navy with the violence increasing to the point that NDPVF was accusing the military of conducting air bombing campaigns against several villages where they believed the NDPVF soldiers were hiding. When the President Olusegun Obasanjo administration launched a mission to wipe out NDPVF, Asari Dokubo declared an all-out-war with the Nigerian state, as well as oil corporations, threatening to disrupt oil production activities through attacks on wells and pipelines. This caused a major crisis in the sector as Shell had to evacuate hundreds of non essential personnel from oil fields, drastically cutting oil production by 30,000 barrels per day.

Yet another category of violence that arose in the Niger Delta was the cult group militancy. This type of militancy mostly emerged from the Rivers State axis of the Niger Delta. There were the cult groups that originated from the fraternity groups on campuses such as the Supreme Vikings Confraternity, Black Axe, Buccaneers, and Mafia fighters. There were also the urban social groupings that spun off from the university fraternities who used coercion to recruit, indoctrinate and retain their members, mostly for violent purposes. Some of them include Dey Gbam, Dey Well, Green Landers and Germans. These groups are also known as street cults and seek to exert control over defined geographical areas which they claim as their territories.

Ebienfa further claims that many of the politicians in the Niger Delta, especially in Bayelsa and River states, are known to be members of confraternities, particularly the Vikings (which dominates higher institutions in the two states). These politicians and other wealthy ex-members act as patrons to the various cult groups and also fund their activities. This militant group type is also known to have carried out most of the kidnapping crimes that were common in the region in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

At the peak of the Niger Delta Militancy crisis, some groups stood out. Some of them were the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, led by Asari Dokubo, the Niger Delta Liberation Front, the Joint Revolutionary Council, the Niger Delta Vigilante and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) which was, perhaps, the most sophisticated and co-ordinated of all the militia groups.

A February 2007, Nigeria/Africa Masterweb News Report on the chronology of Nigerian Militants' Attacks notes that:

Unlike the gin-swilling, flip-flop wearing youths of previous movements such as Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) members wear matching camouflage body armour, boots and masks. MEND launched a series of attacks this year that cut-off twenty-five percent of Nigerian oil output. (2)

The news report goes on to say that little is known about MEND but it has shown that it is capable of destabilizing Nigeria's oil industry. Its leaders are unknown, the same is applicable to the members as they wear masks. Mend's leaders like to be faceless, they usually send statements to the media via e-mail (2).

Between 2004 and 2010, the different ethnic militia groups in the region launched a barrage of offensives at oil installations, kidnapped expatriates and oil workers for ransom and almost grounded the nation's economy which has always been heavily dependent on oil. The government deployed a joint task force comprising the Nigerian Army, Navy, Air force and Police in operation after operation to fight the militants. Many lives were lost, including those of the JTF members who were at a disadvantage in the swampy terrains of the Niger Delta Creeks.

In August 2008, the Nigerian government launched a massive crackdown on militants. They patrolled waters and hunted for the militants, searching civilian boats for weapons and raiding numerous hideouts. Again, in May 2009, a military operation by the Joint Task Force (JTF) began against MEND militants who had kidnapped Nigerian soldiers and foreign sailors in the region. Thousands of Nigerians fled their villages and many died because of the offensives.

However, on June 26, 2009, the Nigeria government under Umaru Musa Yar'adua announced that it would grant amnesty and unconditional pardon to militants in the Niger Delta. The exercise would last for 60 days, beginning on 6<sup>th</sup> of August to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009. The

president presented the proposal after convening the council of state in Abuja. During the 60 day period, the armed youths were expected to surrender their weapons to the government in return for training and rehabilitation.

The militants though still apprehensive and doubtful of the intentions of government acceded and surrendered their weapons during the 60 day period. Some gave conditions, like MEND, under an acting leader General Boyloaf, who demanded the release of one of its leader Henry Okah. Never-the-less, they accepted the amnesty plan. Militant commanders like Tompolo, Fara Dago took the oath of surrender on behalf of their members. The erstwhile militants were camped in rehabilitation camps and put through an orientation programme. The Nigerian government promised to train some in vocations and put those who wished to study through school. They were also to be paid an allowance in the programme.

A few militant leaders, like General John Togo abandoned the post amnesty programme claiming insincerity on the part of government in fulfilling its promise. He took up arms again creating a new group known as the Niger Delta Liberation. Togo died in May 14, 2015 from injuries sustained in a JTF bombardment.

One hundred and sixty youths in the amnesty programme were awarded scholarships to the United States of America and the United Kingdom in May 2014. Another set of 35 youths of the region were offered overseas scholarships in Jan 2014 to build capacity, among other such programmes.

To many Nigerians, the amnesty programme exceeded the expectation of even those who initiated it. According to Bisi Olatilo, a veteran journalist:

Indeed the amnesty programme has exceeded the expectations of Nigerians because there is practical demonstration that money disbursed to the programme

has been judiciously utilized. Today the gains of the presidential amnesty programme is better appreciated in the empowerment of youths through techno-vocational training and employment... Out of a total 30,000 persons enlisted in the first, second and third phases of the presidential amnesty programme, an appreciable number of them, totaling five thousand, are currently undergoing training spread across a hundred and four universities and twenty two skill acquisition centres in twenty-eight countries and nineteen training institutions in eight states of the country. About one thousand of them in the oil sector have graduated ... 29 have graduated in drilling engineering in France...

However, others like the leader of the Ijaw Youth Council and former war lord Asari Dokubo, in June 2015 condemned the amnesty programme as a bribe to allow the oil flow from the Niger Delta region to the northern part of the country.

### **3.1.3 The Post Amnesty Situation**

Besides the training and scholarships programme extended to the ex-militants, the situation in the Niger Delta region after the amnesty has led to some pockets of developmental activities dotted around the states of the South-South. These, however, are a far cry from the enormity of work needed for socio-economic development of the people. The people are still very impoverished, lacking basic needs for survival with their environment devastated by oil spills and their sources of livelihood taken away from them:-

This situation has led many to conclude that amnesty did not meet the needs of the people of the region, it was only an act to free the militant youths, engage them otherwise and continue the mindless plundering of the region.

S. R. Akinola in the synopsis of his online essay on “Post Amnesty Plan, Peace-Building and People Oriented Development in the Niger Delta” postulates:

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 attention. In other words amnesty programme needs be completed with



pragmatic post-amnesty poverty reduction and development strategies that are people-oriented.

Akinola in his Polycentric Planning and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PPPRS), further proposes that “amnestied” persons will be involved in the activities of community assembly where they can function as agents of change in development areas.

No doubt, as Akinola suggests, the relative peace in the Niger Delta region is at best tenuous because other youths who have not been co-opted into the programme and the rest of the communities still contend with the degrading and debilitating socio-economic conditions that bred militancy in the first place. This is more so, as some of the youths of the regions have been agitating to be captured in the programme, threatening they be included and trained for employment or they would resort to violence and mayhem.

The amnesty programme had been billed to end in December 2015 but the Ijaw Youth Council had resisted the deadline insisting that the security process had not been completed, so the Muhammadu Buhari led Federal government announced an extension.

Despite the amnesty programme, and relative peace in the region, pockets of violence have continued. In 2015 alone, one thousand, six hundred and ten sea pirates were arrested in the region, oil bunkering continues to thrive in spite of raids by government officials, kidnapping persist and occasional bombing of oil installations occur. Again the December 2015 gubernatorial election in Bayelsa State was marred by violence and massive irregularities such that the exercise was cancelled in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area, (the largest in the state) and supplementary elections conducted. Several deaths were still recorded when the rescheduled elections held in that area in January 9, 2016. New militant groups have sprung up in the region with renewed violence, in reaction to policies and actions of the new administration of President Muhammadu Buhari. Oil installations and pipelines have been

blown up, further endangering the precarious state of the nation's economy. Chief among these groups is the Niger Delta Avengers.

So, it was in and around this still simmering and underlying violent social condition that the United States Consulate General, in 2013, supported by the US Department of States Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (US CSO) engaged an NGO, the Stakeholders Democracy Network and a young filmmaker Jeta Amata, to execute two seasons of the Reality show *Dawn in the Creeks*.

### **3.2 Reality TV in the Niger Delta**

The Reality series *Dawn in the Creeks* is the baby of the United States Consulate General, backed by US Department of States Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (US CSO). It is a contribution towards reducing the likelihood of conflicts in Nigeria's oil-rich but violence-prone Niger Delta region.

In 2013, the US Consulate launched the Niger Delta Legacy Engageent and, together with a board of distinguished Nigerians, sought strategies to change the prevalent mentality of youths in the Niger Delta region that violence pays. They also partnered with Nigerians already in the forefront of non-violent civic activism. The partnership with Jeta Amata, the then thirty-nine year old film maker and Theatre Arts graduate of Benue State University, Makurdi, was one of such endeavours.

Amata, who won the Best West African Film Award in 2006, had also produced films on the Niger Delta which premiered variously at the United Nations, the Kennedy Centre, Library of Congress in Washington DC as well as nine universities in the U.S.

Stanley Azuakola, in his review of *Dawn in the Creek* posted in an online newspaper, *The Scoop* writes that “One of Amata’s works which no doubt helped convince the US Consulate General and the CSO that he was the right man, was the documentary, “Into the Delta”, which was screened in nine American Universities including Cornell, New York University and UCLA (par 4)”.

So, while the US government produced the financial backing, the task before Amata was to go into the Niger Delta region, visit local communities, select teams of youth and train them on the art of filmmaking. Afterwards, these young people were expected to return to their local communities with their acquired skills, equipment and finances to produce real life stories around themes of non-violence, conflict, oil, reconciliation, among others. Their movies will then be released on the silver screens with star-studded movies premieres. It was the whole experience of their selection and transformation from village yokels to filmmakers that was made into the Reality series *Dawn in the Creeks*.

In its description of the TV series, *The Nations* online also highlights other preoccupations of the show.

*Dawn in the Creeks*, is a combination of three television series, including *Save Our Souls* and *Truce*, written, produced and directed by the 21 youngsters in groups of seven... it portrays the horrible and pitiful lifestyle an average Niger Delta is subjected to ranging from water and food pollution, cultism as well as negligence by multination oil companies operating there in connivance with the traditional rulers. It also shows how illegal bunkering led best friends to become arch enemies, unleashing terror and blood bath on opposing camps, destroying living and non-living things.

Two seasons of the TV reality series have been completed and aired on Nigeria television stations including Channels Television, African Independent Television (AIT), MITV, and Silverbird Television including the concerned states TV stations.

The first three episodes of the first season largely deal with the recruitment of seven youths from each of the three communities chosen to participate in the exercise. Again, each of the episodes open with a statement of objective built into the film montage - “so you have to determine, what kind of role model do you want to be in future? It starts from now”. It is at once a statement of intent as well as a challenge to the youths.

### **Season One, Episode 1**

This maiden edition opens with a press conference involving the United States Consulate General, Jeffrey J. Hawkins and officials of the US Department of States Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (US CSO) and Jeta Amata himself at the Consulate General's residence in Lagos. It opens with the address of the US Public Affairs Officer, Dehals Ghebreab.

Ghebreab: This is a project that brings Nollywood, Hollywood and diplomacy together to make a difference in the Niger Delta.

Consulate General: This partnership I hope will provide a positive vision for Nigeria and its young people. This project will bring together all the excitement, energy, the glitz and the glamour of Nollywood to address some pretty serious problems. This engagement will help us to go from entertainment, to implementation of change.

Jeta Amata: The thing about *Dawn in the Creek* is, it's not just a reality TV show. It goes far beyond that. It just makes me know and understand how far we have gone, what kind of chances we can give to other people.

Consulate General: *Dawn in the Creeks* will give voice to Niger Delta communities and allow them to tell their remarkable stories.

This first episode also features such ceremonies as the film crew's brief courtesy visit to the then Governor of Delta State, Emmanuel Uduaghan before their arrival by bus at the first community Ozoro.

In Ozoro, there is a meeting with the people including the elders at the town hall where the young filmmaker explains their mission.

Amata: This is a new concept from what has been done in the past. In this particular one, the people have a voice, the people have a chance to tell their own story without the influence of the West; without the influence of the organizations; without the influence of film makers like we. That is why all we want to do is pick them, put them somewhere and just teach them the technicalities of making this film, and let them make it on their own so that it comes from inside here (touching his stomach).

Traditional Council Member: This is how a son should be, isn't it?

Council: Yes!

Council Member: This is how a daughter should be, isn't it?

Council: Yes!

Council Member: Jeta, Ozoro people say they want to thank you. I can assure you that we will give you all the support to make this project work.

Next is the visit to the King who also expresses his excitement that one of his subjects had brought home an enterprise of such nature.

However, Amata's first contact with the youths of Ozoro is with a group of motorcycle transport operators (popularly known as Okada). His address to them is impassioned.

Amata: Let me ask you one question, do you believe that we can solve our problems in this community without violence?

Okada riders: Yes (shout)

Amata: We believe we can solve our problems without violence?

Okada riders: Yes

Amata: You See, that's what makes us a people, the fact that if we have grievances, we can channel them the right way. We need to make them hear our voice, but in a peaceful way.

The documentary series sharply moves on to another group of youths where he continues his campaign.

Amata: What I want to do is give you an avenue for you to be heard. But the only avenue we can achieve this is peacefully. You see, na we get our land. We don't blame people, we blame people wey old, we blame Shell, we blame government, we blame everybody. But time don't pass for blame. Wetin we go do, one on one, to take make life better for us and for our children na wetin we dey find.

He also narrows his campaign and search to individual level. In a stroll through the village with one of the youths, he says:

I've come here to pick seven people from Ozoro, seven people that I want to train how to make films.

Youth 1: Seven?

Amata: Yes. But the kind of films that they have to make are the kind of films that show how a community can use dialogue in solving conflicts.

Youth 1: Okay

A cutaway follows to where a large crowd of youths under a tree are discussing and quarreling loudly among themselves in their native language, about the project. There is written interpretation on the screen.

Youth 2: I don't believe them! They always promise to fail.

Youth 3: We need to listen to what he has to say...

Then, in comes Amata to address them.

Amata: Time don dey wey instead of una to fight, una go say make we no fight, make we go report or make we go police or make we go court. Una get dat kain story here?

Youth voices: Yes!

Amata: I get pikin eh, but she's five years. I wan carry am come back home but una know say small time dem dey hear say dem dey kidnap, say dem dey fight, dem do dis, dem dey dat. I don tire for all those kain things. Una no dey tire?

Youth voices: We don tire

Amata: Una don tire, abi?

Youth voices: We don tire naa. Yes naa.

Amata: So instead of us to sidon dey blame, government, dey blame oil company, blame dis, blame dat, wetin we fit do as youths to take make the change so dat the children wey we go born, tomorrow, no go suffer wetin we don suffer? Which day you sure say, fit don happen, wey una go wan put inside film to show like Uduaghan, to say, we no fight o! but na so we go like make dis thing work?

Youth 4: Police themselves, today in our kingdom, most of our youths, they have no rights to speak when there is truth. So these are the problems we are facing here in our region.

The same youth continues his complaint to Amata as they walk away from the crowd.

Our local governments are not even looking at us. They always bring money to buy machine for them to share so that they will fight and kill themselves...

Youth 5: So Bros, dis thing wen una day discuss, na one of those things we go bring job to dis Nigeria?

Amata: Na so naa

Youth 1: Una continue am, take us, train us well... ahh. Why? I think say we go dey get sometin. We no go put hand for all those militant things we dem dey talk about.

Amata: That is the idea. So wen people get sometin to do, positive things, then dem no go dey put hands for militancy.

Youth 1: Or armed robbers... or nonsense to do.

So una must put effort for dis thing to take more than seven o!.

Amata: Ah ah



Youth 1: Yess!

(General laughter)

The film progresses with clips from his previous meetings with Okada riders, the youths and the town hall meeting. He also continues his parley with individual youths as he moves through the community, listening to them and explaining the workings and gains of the project. The foray takes them to the front of a house where a young woman addresses them.

Female 1: Government, dem say dey want to do road, they want to do water.

The water, we no go see am drink. Make dem ask that one because the water wen dem sink for dis place, e never reach three months, abi one year, the water don go, we no see am. Dem say if some big men come, dem go open am. When dey even come, dem go open the one wey-- we no go see am. All na Isoko chiefs and Isoko government.

Youth 6: Our old men den wen dem farm, dem don tire to farm. At least, if person go go farm, e go carry keke, kekere kekere kekere (demonstrating). Before e go carry waka do kpokpotitl come back, e don tire!

Amata: So when we shout, dem no gree hear us, we fight, dem no gree hear us. Okay make we find another way wen dem go take hear us.. and na through film. My work na to give you voice. My work na to give you opportunity so that your voice can be heard. In a peaceful way so that we can inspire the people around us ... so we can move on.

Youth 7: It will be good if we can start from our house. If you can affect your family, your small world, you can easily save the whole community.

Female 2: The way we can solve the problem is by dialogue. May be, like you are fighting over kingship or because of oil, it can be solved by dialogue. May be somebody standing as mediator between the communities and other persons. Through that, one can see reason with the other person.

The film takes us through one-on-one interviews with several youths each saying how he or she would feel if chosen as one of the Ozoro seven. There is an intermission period of cutaways and scenes of dialogue without voice, then Jeta Amata begins to make his selections.

The first is Monday Denge who is married and says he aspires to provide job opportunities for jobless Nigerians. With his arm around Denge's shoulder, Amata walks down the road.

Amata: Denge

Denge: Sir

Amata: There are certain things you spoke about today that impressed me. I see a leader in you.

Denge: It's the work of God, Sir

Amata: I want you to be one of my guys.

Denge: You are welcome, Sir,

Denge takes the crew to his home where his father meets them and is given the news of his son's conscription. Mr. Omojoro gives his support and blessings to his son and the film project.

Next is Vincent Great Akporero, an aspiring actor who expresses hope of making a difference in the Niger Delta and believes in sharing of knowledge and wealth.

Amata: Vincent Great Akporero, I've chosen you as one of my people. You know why? I see some leadership qualities in you. You command people and you do it from afar and I want you to put confidence in these kids out there. Can I rely on you to do that?

Akporero: Yes, Sir. (Beaming besides his pleasantly shocked mother).

Amata: I'll take you to Lagos. I'll put some of my training in you and we'll see how we take it from there. Are you ready to move in the next eight days?

Akporero: Yes, Sir.

The first female youth is then selected. She is Nelly Okporeze, Born April 16, 1985, Nelly is a student who desires to continue her education and wants a permanent solution to the dumping of toxic waste in her community.

Amata: You know why I've chosen you as one of our women.

Nelly: No, Sir.

Amata: Because of the toxic waste story. Amongst all that I spoke with, nobody told me about that story. I knew the story, but you told me about it. So, I want to rely on you that when we take you over to Lagos and teach you the techniques of making films, that you will put your heart and soul into creating the story you told me about. Can you do that?

Nelly: Yes

Nelly's mother expresses joy over the development.

The crew moves to a compound, with Amata calling out his greetings in Isoko language and exclaiming over the frying of a local cassava delicacy – Kpokpogari. Then he calls out for the next recruit. She is twenty-four-year-old Endurance Ekemeriere, an aspiring stylist who wants better education for the people of her community.

Amata: (Addressing a laughing and shy Endurance) You remember how you curse us go there, curse us come back. Even when we enter motor dey go, you curse us till we comot. You remember?

(Endurance continues laughing self consciously and keeps saying “I’m sorry, Sir”)

She insulted us from here, down there (scenes of the young lady’s tirades and laughter are relayed as he addresses the small crowd gathered in the compound) when we were there, she insulted us...

Endurance: I’m sorry, I’m sorry.

Amata: But you know what was happening? She had a voice, she was not intimidated by us, by anybody. She expressed herself more than anyone else, but she’s a person I have a lot of confidence in. So what’s your name again.

Endurance: Endurance

Amata: (To the small crowd gathered in the compound) She’s not a very enduring girl...  
Endurance, we are going to take seven people in Ozoro and you are one of them.

Endurance: (jumping about and clapping) Heyy! Congratulations. Thank God!

Amata: We're going to take you to Lagos, amongst other people and we're going to train you on a particular aspect of making films...Then, you people will come back, we'll give you some money and some equipment and you'll make the films and you'll become a role model to all these people here. See this your sharp mouth? You will put it to good use, you understand? I'll make sure of that...

What kind of role model do you want to be in future? You must determine... It starts from now... you have to value yourself more than you are doing now.

Esther Jonathan, the next recruit, is a twenty-five year old business woman who wants better health for her people.

Amata: I have chosen you because you struck me as someone who understands the story, who understands the pain people have gone through and I want to rely on the fact that you can tell that story to the world, that you can join hands with other people in making this film to tell the world the story. Can I rely on you on that?

Esther: Yes Sir you can rely on me on any story that you need telling.

Another female Elina Emasaruome is a twenty-seven year old Mass Communication graduate who was chosen because of the need for someone who could produce a good script.

Festus Ariotormu Umiegwa, born in 1983, is a commercial motorcyclist and is the last of the lot from Ozoro. He is chosen for his boldness and forthrightness Festus is the same as Youth 1 in the earlier scene.

Thereafter, the crew boards the bus and heads out of Ozoro, waving at the large crowds on the streets who have gathered to witness their departure: Season One Episode 1 ends with clips of the next episode.

## **Season One, Episode 2**

The second episode of season one takes place in Nembe in Bayelsa State, one of the many communities of that state that can only be accessed by boat. So it was that this time the team arrive the location by engine boats.

The river-rine community is established by shots of children playing in shallow water and a town-crier who beats on a wooden gong, calling out to the community and announcing the arrival of visitors.

Amata begins his sensitization campaign here with a meeting with the local women where he declares his mission. Then he commences his campaign amongst the youths on the street. One of such youths is Beladanyo Ben Aka General Ngolo, a former militant commander during the crisis period.

General Ngolo: We are retired but not tired. What they agreed with us... employment, road, light, clean water for us to drink, and then they would train our boys, paying everybody sixty-five thousand naira, to come out and drop our guns and see what they will do. We drop gun for them. They take our boys for training, bring them back without no job. That means you train somebody, bring the person back without no work, what do you want the person to do? The next thing you see, e go still enter back creek because no job, no wok, that's how militant come out.

Amata: Obviously, you want peace for Niger Delta?

Gen. Ngolo: Yes

Amata: You feel say we fit solve conflict without fighting?

Gen. Ngolo: Yes

Amata: That's good to hear. How you see political thuggery?

Gen. Ngolo: Because of personal interest and power. They will come with their money to come and poison you and me, our mind, pay you money, another person pay me money, to come and be their thugs, to kill you or you to fight against me, to kill me, No! It's not good.

Amata: How can we stop it?

Gen. Ngolo: We can organize ourselves..., we militants as a whole, because they will come with their money to pay...., pay you money not to allow another person to vote his choice. We can stop that... we militants can stop this because we have the largest number of youths in Niger Delta.

The sensitization continues as Amata seeks to discover the opinions and suggestions of the Nembe youths. Again there's his parley with commercial cyclists in the area.

Amata: You feel say we fit survive for Niger Delta, solve our problem without violence?

Youth1: Yes

Amata: Good, how you feel say we fit achieve that?

Youth 2: For you to, at first, go to some people and have discussion with them, go to the leaders. After talking to the leaders that's when you now go to his follower and speak to them.

Amata: Quick one now!, Elections dey come eh, you know say elections na next year, you know say anytime elections dey come for Nigeria, things dey dey hot. You feel say Nembe go dey hot for elections wey dey come?

Youth 3: If you don't show yourself, they will not recognize you, there will be no empowerment. Like we, the drivers, before, 6 to 6, one thousand, two thousand but that time... nothing less than five thousand or ten thousand. The more violence, the more money we have to go home with.

Amata: Do you understand government? Do you feel that government understands you?

Youth 3: For me, no!

Amata: Do you think the oil companies... like say they don understand us yet?

Youth 3: The leaders, they are the ones that is causing all these things.

Then out comes one of the tough boys..... Big Fish Killer.

Big Fish: Na sleep I dey sleep, as I hear the voice, I take am say they don come again. I don carry my shoe for hand, come peep. I bin wan pass sef but as I look I see people wey wear T-shirt, I say abi na politics? If na politics, I say make I come, una fit make am sweet. Some of us here, we get talent but na angala (ghetto) we dey im make our talent dey die like angala. I beg make una try. Because we don



write things, snap passport, thumbprint, use our hand, our chest, our throat but till today, we no dey see anything. Dem dey convert am to politics.

There is a short intermission during which shots of Nembe town land marks, community gatherings, locals are shown with background music. Then, another interview with yet another ex-militant and ex-soldier, Joel Jombo begins the recruitment.

Joel Jombo: The revolution started in the town so we were all involved, we were all initiated. Before you know, you will have your parcel, that is, welfare.... that enticed us, changed our thinking.....

Amata: Wait... just a minute, let me get you straight.... You said when you were introduced to this, they gave you packages?

Joel Jombo: Yes

Amata: Packages in form of money?

Joel Jombo: Yes

Amata: Which is welfare to encourage you to join this militancy? And you did?

Jombo: Yes, I did.

Amata: Do you feel bad at times about the things you have done?

Jombo: I joined the military 2003; I was one of them that even secured the amnesty. Since I began to realize that my boys are suffering we are suffering, it was not my mind to serve the military again. I killed my brothers at Camp 5. We are the soldiers that attacked the Camp 5. As a soldier, you are ready to do whatever thing they ask you

to do. I was a special force, we went to Israel. I am a biglar, I was the man that blow the roll call of the unit and I am still a sniper, that is, military assasinee, then I' m still in combatant.....

Amata: You are combatant?

Jombo: Yes

Amata: What do you think about the Niger Delta? What do you see the future of the Niger Delta to be?

Jombo: Our youths ... is our future leaders.....

Amata: Joel, I like you and I want us to do this together. I want you to be a part of what I am doing so that you can be a voice....

So, Joel Jombo, a thirty-one year old ex militant and ex-soldier who hopes brothers would not have to kill brothers again in Niger Delta, becomes the first to be chosen in Nembe. Next Alamco Robinson, a twenty-four year old cyclist is picked because he is a strong voice in the ghetto.

Martin Esieya, born June 9, 1979, owns a small music studio in Nembe. He is chosen because he already has a structure that could be utilized and expanded. Jim Nengimote was born on July 21, 1987 and unemployed. He is chosen because, as Amata puts it he is an organizer.

Amata: Jim, when we got here, you were one of the people who came, helped us with our bags... and everything. You know.... It's difficult to get food around here but you gave us food that might. You called the person who was meant to cook for us; you were making phone calls.... You were arranging...water ,..this, that... As far

as you know you haven't been one of the people we are considering because we have been talking to other people... but do you know what you've been doing? You've been organizing things for us... All this while you did not even know that you are one of the people that I've been considering because you are an organizer. That is very important.

Regina Josiah, a twenty three year old hair stylist is next to be recruited. Then Moses Stephen, born June 10, 1984 and unemployed is brought in. He says, "I want a means where they can know that peace is the most important thing in life. When I come back, I will make sure I bring that change to the community".

The second woman to make the group is Rita Otuma, a civil servant who wants women of Nigeria to be given a fair chance at governance. Rita is married and she completes the Nembe seven

**Episode 3 of Season One** goes very much like the two previous ones. The film crew arrive their third chosen community Erema in Rivers State by road and begin the usual conscientization and campaign to select seven youths for the film-makers' project.

Erema, community obviously an Igbo speaking one appears to have more learned and articulate people than the previous two. It is not long before Amata makes his first choice. Young Azuma Great-man, a student impresses the film maker with his eloquence and sound reasoning.

Azuma: I will not say the government is not trying in our community. We have enjoyed so many things from the government, although most of them is coming from the earth

that we have here. I have travelled and I have seen that some people don't even have light, they buy water, but in Erema here, we don't buy water.

Amata: You don't buy water?

Azuma: We don't buy water

Amata: How's your light situation?

Azuma: Let me say... five years ago we had stable light but as it stands now, it's not that stable anymore. I can see that some changes have taken place but in all, we are still trying, I just love this medium... that we can use this medium and say our mind to the people. And I believe if seven are being chosen, we can express ourselves because we have much to say....Some people, immediately they are oppressed....they riot, throw bombs. If we destroy buildings, we have damaged a center for tourism in our community.... So I don't see why a youth should involve himself in an act of violence because that thing you are destroying, if it is not useful to you, it is useful to someone that is useful to you.

Amata: Will you be interested in this kind of opportunity that I am giving?

Azuma: I will be very interested

Amata: What do you do? This guy is a future leader.....

The parley with youths in this community held under a tree is much more in-depth and exposing. The youths even though they differ in opinions over the culpability of the community elders in the youth unrest, however offer their opinions intelligently and in an orderly manner.

Amata does not have much work to do to come out with his chosen ones. Right there, Chibuzor Joseph, a commercial cyclist is chosen because, though his opinion differed from most others, he stuck to his guns.

Eti Ugoma, known as ‘Mr creativity is next to be picked because he got on well with everybody and did not capitalize on the fact that he had been an extra in one of Amata’s earlier films *Black November*. Eti is thirty- three years old. Lucky Singer Elvis is a thirty-one year old business man who wants a future where the people of Nigeria can be better educated in business and commerce. He is chosen as one of the Erema seven.

The first female choice is also a budding actress but she is not chosen because she is an actress. She however believes she can be trained to be a director. Her name is Bridget Ogbo, a seventeen year old caterer. Then in comes Dede Nwaudo, an accountant who wishes Nigerians would give thought to long-term plans of stability. The final choice is Happiness Huoma Osah, a twenty-one year old student who wants better understanding between the traditional leaders and the youth.

#### **Season One, Episode 4**

Episode 4 of season one features the team mates (now at the Nollywood Academy) sharing their feelings and experiences since they were chosen by filmmaker Jeta Amata. Individually, they speak about the novelty of the experience... travelling by air for the first time, staying in ‘opulence’ in Lagos and the training they were undergoing to become film makers.

While each team mate speaks, there is a relay of his/her departure from the home community- the goodbyes, the trips to the airport (either by road or boat) and their arrival in Lagos. Arriving Lagos, the three teams are taken by bus to the hotel in which they would be lodged,

where Jeta Amata joined them to pass across information on their daily routine for the next ten days.

### **Season One, Episode 5**

The tutorials and training sessions begin here. The teams are introduced and lectured on all the areas of competency in film making. This is the training school proper.

However, Jeta does not do this alone. Other professionals in the field are brought in to conduct sessions with the students. Some of them include veteran actor and lecturer Zack Amata, actress Babara Soky, Actor/Model Bobby Michael, Actor/Director Fred Amata, and Rev. Father Edward Obi, the Chairman of the Niger Delta Legacy Engagement, who speaks to them on conflict resolution.

There are also trips to some studios like Desmond Elliott's production studio, Ultima Studios, Lagos where the co-founder and Managing Partner Chude Jideonwo lectures the team mates on creating a Brand. There are practical sessions and along the course of the episode, Amata assigns roles to the young film-makers to allow them concentrate on acquiring skills in particular areas.

The youth also face their first practical lesson in peaceful resolutions as they have to resolve an altercation between two roommates, Chibuzo Joseph and Vincent Great Akporero.

Through it all, Amata never loses sight of the over-riding aim of the exercise which is to make peace-makers out of the youth from Niger Delta.

Amata: My grandfather used to say one thing, that human nature can be changed. The way we think, we can change it. We can move from negative to positive whether we

have been militants before or wayward people; whether we have been armed robbers... whatever.

We can turn that into something good that we can give to people. It is not who is right but what is right. No be say na me correct, na me correct' but wetin correct.

There is, in this world, enough for every need but not enough for everyone's greed.

I want you to say it.....

The class repeats it over and over again.

### **Season One Episode 6**

The team mates are now separated into their home teams, according to their communities and are now allowed to practice film production. Actors O. C Ukeje and Chelsea Eze are brought in to help them practicalize the lessons and show them the ropes.

There are more 'talks' from social activists brought in to conscientize the youths towards non-violent responses. These activists and resource persons are all from the Niger Delta Legacy Engagement Board. There is also a visit from a delegation of United States Diplomats led by the Ambassador, Thomas Shannon of the US Department of State. The students graduate and receive certificates from the US Consular General.

### **Season One, Episode 7**

The teams are back in their various communities to produce films having been given equipment for that very reason.

The Ozoro team is working on a movie, *Save our Souls* and are facing myriads of challenges in their assigned roles which they disclose from time to time. Most of their cast are drawn from locals while others are brought in from outside.

A white lady, one of the partners from the United States, is admirably transformed with make-up into a man to act the part of a white man. However, the production crew is totally composed of the youth ambassadors.

### **Season One, Episode 8**

The Nembe team, back home, has produced a film called *The Truce*. It is a movie that utilizes the narrative technique and is written by Jim Nengimote

*The Truce* tells the story of three childhood friends who due to idleness end up in oil bunkering. The lead actors are culled from professionals outside the community as Tonye, the arrow head of the illicit business is played by Will Ekanem and his mother is played by veteran actress Barbara Soky.

The film underlines the dangers associated with oil bunkering to both the practitioners and the community. It reveals the damages to the environment and the calamity that follow as a careless flare of a match by a passerby turns the whole area into an inferno. The Episode also boasts a second movie, *Conflict prevention*.

*Conflict Prevention* depicts the cult wars as three friends struggle between themselves to become the strong man of the community. The war is finally resolved and the cult members sheath their swords as they embrace one another after much bloodshed. The story is largely told by the crew members who also talk of their difficulties.



### **Season One, Episode 9**

The Erema graduates of the Nollywood Academy are working on their film. The film tells the story of Nwabunwa who was kidnapped but refused to exact vengeance on those who kidnapped him. He voted for peace in the spirit of reconciliation. This film is titled *A New Dawn*.

Team Erema is seen shooting the movie as Bridget Ogbo directs and Chibuzo Joseph operates the camera. Dede Nwaudo, the screen writer, says the movie is an attempt to create a new label for the Niger Delta youths.

### **Season One, Episodes 10, 11 and 12**

Production is now over and it is time to premiere the movies for the community. For this, there is need for an anchor person who will also serve as Master of ceremony at the viewing. The man for this is Andre Blaze Henshaw.

In each episode, Henshaw begins with an introduction to the community and the show *Dawn in the Creeks*, then he takes the viewer to the Town hall or centre where the whole community will turn out for the premieres... Viewing over, he then conducts an open session of observations, and comments on the issues that the films highlight.

These sessions are heated and animated with accusations, counter accusations, rebuttals, suggestion as the youths accuse the elders of misleading, embezzling and cheating them out of opportunities. The less popular opinion belongs to those who accuse the youths of indolence and mis-direction.

The following is an excerpt from the Ozoro session

Man: I just want to talk very briefly in my own capacity as a representative of the local government chairman. I want to say emphatically that you are carrying out a refining process. If you are able to define, then you are able to refine. And these gentlemen and ladies have been picked and they are going through a refining process.

If a dog can be trained to become a detective, we human beings are not animals. As a youth, if you are trained then you are prepared for the future, but if you refuse to be trained, then you are ending up as nothing. Is someone hearing what I am saying?

(Some say yes, others murmur)

Listen to me... A youth should be able to present himself for training when you are able to do so, when the opportunity comes, you're going to be picked and placed in a position ... you are not a youth they just pick and give some money. You go about carrying out, you know your "okpeghe" or whatever...

Then, in comes this youth:

Youth: We don't know who is who. We need to come out from all these things we are doing and sit down and sign a conflict agreement with the government, with the leaders.

How many of you have gone to the local government to cry out to them...? How many of you have gone in your own way to say... "this is what we want"?

The solution is this, we as youths we need a voice, as he said, because something happened recently... A youth picked something and wrote against a government that is killing people. For example, our school, the polytechnic... And because the youth did not have a voice, they dropped him. Is that proper my people?

A voice: E no proper o!

Youth: Because, he was saying the truth.

Please my people, my elders, look at Ozoro today, no good drainage, no good road, our children are suffering and yet they are saying we are progressing. We can't progress...

Yet another youth says:

Youth 2: How peace can reign here in Ozoro is this, one, because our traditional rulers, they believe on political bullying, the only way peace can reign here in our kingdom is for them to carry the youths along. They are throwing away the youths because they believe that everything they want to do is for themselves. Why did they give birth to us? Why did they take us as the children?

But when it comes to money, they throw us about but when we want to 'provoke', they will invite the Federal police, the Federal army, that we are cultists of which they have given us the heart of cultism.

So the only way peace can reign is that they should employ us, give us job and opportunities... Not only buying Okada for us. Ask them questions... What is your profession, ask them, give them different offices...

In Nembe, the discourse gets even graver. Henshaw overhears a comment in the audience and takes it up:

Henshaw: I overheard something when we were speaking here and someone said one of our biggest problems is with leadership, and went on to say 'we have got poor

leaders. We have poor execution of duties’. Somebody else in the audience said, ‘ah, that one. E no go tey, dey go soon kill am’. Is that true ... Can someone in Nembe kingdom be killed simply for saying something that is not the popular opinion? Can someone lose his life in this community for saying something that is right?

Voices: Yes!

Henshaw: Let’s do it this way, if you think it’s true, say yes...

Voices: Yes!

Henshaw: If you think it’s wrong say no..... (Silence)

Man: Many of us..., why we don’t want to say something, if you say now, people will write your name and call Yenagoa that this man said something.

And on it goes. Another matter in which all the communities share a common opinion is that the answer to their problem does not lie in elections, because the process is always hijacked.

### **Season Two, Episode 1, 2 and 3**

The first three episodes of season two of *Dawn in the Creeks* is all about consolidating on the gains of all the labour that went into Season one. The Season is all about finding a way-forward.

The team mates go office-hunting in their various communities and having found decent accommodation, put up their sign posts which read Nollywood Academy, offering services like film production, Music production and editing. Next they elect executives to run the

academies. The anchor Andre Blaze Henshaw is also busy, visiting their families and seeking opinions about the way to ‘rebrand’ the people of Niger Delta.

### **Season Two, Episode 4, 5 and 6**

It is field time for the peace ambassadors from the three communities. They now work to fulfill their mandate to spread the message of peace among their people, turning them away from violence. As peace vanguards, the twenty-one youths enter the streets, market places and drinking spots of their communities, talking to youths about the need to embrace peace and also seeking their opinions on how to find lasting peace for their society. They also recruit other youths to join the movement to make greater impact on the people.

### **Season Two, episode 7, 8 and 9**

In Episode 7, the seven team mates of Ozoro are tasked to find two people to join their team. They go about speaking to people on the streets, markets and parks. They encounter some very hostile youths at the motor park (Agberos) whom they are able to subdue and convince to consider speaking up for peace.

**Episode eight and nine of Season Two** take an entirely different route. Jeta Amata brings in some professional artists to critique, encourage and try to show the teams how to come out with better films. Dede Mabiaku and Uru Eke sit-in with the Nembe team while Fred Amata and Nse Ekpete visit the Ozoro team.

**Season Two, Episodes 12 and 13** are the concluding episodes. In 12, the Erema team present their own film *A New Dawn* while in Episode 13 the Nembe team take us back to the beginning of the reality show and then take us round the community, allowing the members of the community themselves to expose the evils of oil bunkering.

After two seasons, 26 episodes of the Reality programme, and 21 youths engaged in the business of using film to conscientize their communities on the gains of peaceful resolution of their problems, what remains to be decided is the extent to which they have been able to reform their fellow youths towards peaceful resolution of problems, and by extension, the success of the Reality television programme, *Dawn in the Creeks*.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

The programme *Dawn in the Creeks* as a development communication intervention in the Niger Delta Region, sought through the medium of television, to convey a message that would change the perception and attitude of the youths in three communities - Ozoro in Delta State, Erema in Rivers State and Nembe in Bayelsa, towards the elders of their communities and government.

As Okunna puts it, the practice of development communication refers to “the entire process of communicating with a specific group of people who require development (target audience), with the purpose of achieving the social change that should change their lives in a positive way, thus giving them better living conditions (295).

However, the producers did not just try to communicate change; they did so through a format that would offer entertainment while delivering the message of change. Entertainment-education as a strategy of development communication has the ability to command “the attention of the audience while encouraging their growth and development (Onuekwe, 5). Onuekwe believes that when effectively applied, entertainment education will “attract and hold the attention of the audience by engaging their emotion and then enhance the knowledge and skills of the learners so that they can reach their potential” (6).

In the same vein, Arvind Singhal and Everret Rogers argue that the purpose of entertainment education is to contribute to the process of directed social change which can occur at the level of an individual, community or society (117).

This is the same principle that the Classical poet and philosopher Horace, in 19 B.C describes in his *Ars Poetica* or The Art of Poetry, when he averred that poetry ought to be “dulce et utile” or sweet and useful. Horace insists that “the ultimate aim of poetry: to please and to instruct; to seduce and to educate; to entertain and to teach” (343).

A programme that is entertaining as well as educating can command the attention of the audience while encouraging their growth and development. This is because it can attract and hold the attention of the audience “by engaging their emotions and then enhance their knowledge and skills of the learners so that they can reach their potential (Onuekwe, 6). It is also Onuekwe’s opinion that:

Entertainment-Education can influence awareness, attitudes, and behaviors to a socially desirable end. It can also influence the audience’s external environment to help create the necessary conditions for social change at the community level. (7)

Youths are a very significant part of any society. The ability of any society to regenerate both in terms of population and values lies in the strength and quality of its youths. This is why Gever believes that “Youths are an integral part of the population of any growing society. The thoughts, beliefs, actions and inaction of youths have direct effects on a nation’s political life (Des Wilson, 13). This is also why there are increasing calls among local and international bodies addressing the seeming neglect of the youth population of many countries especially among developing nations.

Celestine Gever, citing the charter of the 7<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the General Assembly of the African Union held in Banjul, the Gambian capital on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2006, states that article 10(3a) provides that state parties shall “encourage the media to disseminate information that will be of economic, political, social and cultural benefit to youths (13)”. He further quotes Abdul as concluding that:



A pivotal role that the young should play in politics and any other area of life is to replenish the pool with quality replacement... if today's youth take to politics with more altruistic ideas and champion developmental ideologies, the youth of tomorrow and the leaders will all be better at what they ought to do. (13)

So armed with these potentially transformative communicative strategies and knowledge, the producers of this reality show, assembled twenty-one youths from the afore-mentioned communities to teach them how to produce films that will address the peculiar problems of their communities so that they will no longer resort to violence which had earned them no significant progress.

## **4.1 The Survey**

### **4.1.1 Materials and Methods**

This study adopted the survey design to find out how effective the transmission of the Reality show *Dawn in the Creeks* has affected the attitudes of youths in two out of the three communities of Niger Delta in which the programme produced. This design is deemed appropriate because the study will essentially focus on people their opinions and responses to the TV programme. The survey method has been adjudged as a good means of measuring behavior in large populations (Wimmer and Dominick, 42). Besides, it offers a means to obtain systematic, deductible, generalizable data through numbers such that a researcher can measure behavior (Iwueze 59).

The study also utilized the interview method of data collection. This is another way of “gaining insights through discovering meanings by improving our understanding or comprehension of phenomena in their totality” (Nze, 82). The phenomena of our interest. in this instance, happens to be a case study- a television production involving twenty-one ‘film makers’ from three communities

The interactive interview method, being holistic and inductive allows the researcher to elicit from people their varied experiences and perceptions of a given phenomenon. Open ended interview questions were administered to allow respondents express their opinion freely. Another method of data collection, this study adapts is observation where what observed is described in detail. Nze opines that:

Observational data are another important component of qualitative data. The reason for collecting these data is to enable the researcher particularly the evaluation researcher to describe the setting that was observed ... His description must be “factual accurate and thorough without being cluttered by irrelevant minutiae and trivia”. His description must be clinical enough to allow the reader to “enter the situation” easily. (987)

Observation is very essential to the study of a phenomenon, for example, a case study. It allows the evaluator to better understand the context within which the programmes operates and allows him to move beyond the selective perceptions of others (the respondents and interviewees) to make for proper inductive approach..

#### **4.1.2 Setting**

This study was carried out in two communities out of the three that were used for the television intervention programme. The communities are Ozoro in Delta state and Erema in Rivers state.

**Ozoro** is a small town less than 100 kilometers from the capital city of Asaba in Delta state. It belongs to the Isoko tribe and the mainstay of the people’s economy, like other communities of Nigeria, had always been fishing and farming but today, with the extensive degrees of oil spillage in the Niger Delta region, the people have also turned to trading and other petty business for survival. Ozoro also boasts of a higher institution- Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro.

In the aftermath of recent ecological disaster which saw a lot of their sources of livelihood, being the long stretch of waterways, going into the endangered species list, the people of Ozoro have found out the hard way that it is difficult to make a living. The oil spills have polluted the waters and also destroyed much of their farmlands. The result is that the people have been greatly impoverished with their young people growing increasingly restive, enlisting in cult groups and clashing with their leaders whom they believe are amassing the compensatory funds from governments and oil companies for themselves. There has also been increase in vandalism of oil and bunkering in the last two decades.

The people of Ozoro also complain bitterly of the presence of toxic waste dumped in a dry oil well for about 15 years and which they believe might explode after about 50 years. They claim the toxic waste remains in their land, posing a threat to every living thing despite their complaint and calls for help from authorities. Above all these is the general bitterness towards the exploitation of their land and its resources by foreign oil companies and other regions of the country when they cannot even get jobs to work in the companies.

It was for this purpose that Ozoro community was chosen for the media intervention programme, the aim being the education, training and re-orientation of the youths, towards a non-violent presentation of their issues, through film, to authorities and organizations, who may address their problems. In fact the maiden film production of the Ozoro team was built around the problem of toxic waste dump. It was titled *God Save Our Soul*.

Ozoro, though not to be ranked among the big cities of Nigeria, or even of the South South region of the country, is a growing city where many of the inhabitants are expected to own television and as such have access to the programme. Furthermore, they are also expected to

be able to make informed opinions about the TV programme and its effects on the target population of the community.

The second location in which this study was carried out is **Erema** in Ogba Edema Ndoni Local Government area of Rivers State. The town which is a little over one hour's drive from the capital city, Port Harcourt is inhabited by people whose major occupation is farming. The Erema people are of the Egin tribe of the Niger Delta and speak the Ogba Language, which they share with the Usomini and Igburu people

Clearly, the Erema locals appear more educated than the people of Ozoro and the town boasts of a College of Education which was in session when the reality TV show was shot.

Youth restiveness and violence is not uncommon in Erema. Even as this researcher pens this, vestiges of a recent cult war remain within and around the community. This cult war, however, is not restricted to the community as other local government areas around Ogba Edema Ndoni have also been embroiled in the group fighting. Such neighbouring local government areas as Ahoda East, Ahoda West and Abua Odua are affected. The violence has even spilled over to some parts of Port-Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State.

The cult wars are not unconnected with the scramble to gain surveillance contracts of pipelines and exert control over other members of the community with the economic power that comes with such contracts. It is common for oil companies within the area to grant surveillance responsibility to prominent youth leaders who in turn acquire a following that soon transmutes into a cult group.

Beyond this, restiveness in the area is, to a large extent, attributed to the constant conflict between the youths and elders of the community. The younger generation accuse their elders

of converting their common funds, scholarships and opportunities to private use. Their bitterness often find expression in violence and destructive preoccupations.

The Reality TV show *Dawn in the Creeks*, the development communication initiative was televised in stations including AIT, NTA, Silverbird TV, Channels TV among others.

#### **4.1.3 Instruments**

One of the instruments used to draw responses from the participants and observers was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. It is comprised of two sections: the first section drew information on the respondents' demographic variables while the second consisted of both close ended and open ended questions which were designed to gauge the effect of the TV programme on the youths of two communities out of the three - Ozoro and Erema. 13 items of this second segment of the questionnaire were based on a simple response format (variables) which ranged from "yes", "no", "particularly" can't say", "All", to "I don't remember". The responses for each item was counted, i.e. total scores for each items were recorded and not total scores for responses.

Four research assistants were engaged to administer the instruments in each community. These were mostly local people who could speak the people's language and assist the less literate respondents in filling the form.

Another instrument used to collect opinion and responses was the general open-ended interview form. Nze is of the view that the "interview guide performs an important function which is to serve as a "checklist in the course of the interview, to make certain, that all the important topics or subject areas are adequately covered" (86). Through the interview, the researcher was able to probe and asks questions that brought illumination and prominence to

certain salient issues pertaining to the communities in question. The persons interviewed were members of the teams selected from the two communities under study.

#### **4.1.4 Procedures**

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed in the major quarters of the two communities. The sampling method deployed was the simple random sampling technique. This was adopted because through every strata of the community was deemed useful to the study, though it was most convenient and expedient to seek out the opinions of the youth population. So, with the help of a total of eight assistants the questionnaires were administered in homes, market place, motor parks, offices and the community, tertiary institutions, mostly where youth could be found. A total of 486 questionnaires were retrieved in Ozoro out of which 14 were not properly answered. Thus, the study was evaluated on the 462 properly answered copies.

In Erema, out of the 500 distributed questionnaires, 492 were retrieved, out of which 8 were discarded, with 484 properly answered for use.

#### **4.1.5 Participants**

A total number of 278 males and 222 female respondents participated in the study in Ozoro, Delta state. Of the number, 116 were over 35 years while 384 are 35 years and less. In Erema, Rivers state, 305 males and 195 females participated in the study, while 89 of them are over 35 years, 411 were 35 years and less. All these were drawn from various occupations and backgrounds. There were farmers, health workers, business people, civil servants, unemployed youths and most of all students. The idea of drawing the sample of respondents

from different subsets of the society was for purpose of achieving heterogeneity of source.

This will in turn ensure a wider perspective to the questions posed.

#### 4.1.6 Analyses

The mass of data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages. The data were coded into such an order that the similarities and differences can be recognized. As in any quantitative analysis, the aim was to realize the frequencies of the variables, the differences between the variables and estimating the significance of the results including the probability that they did not occur by chance. The 13 structured questions in the second section of the questionnaire were coded into five (5) super-structures representing some of the research questions.

#### Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval

Tables 1A (Ozoro)

Questionnaire	Number	Percentage
Copies returned	486	97.2
Copies not returned	14	2.8
Total	500	100

Table 1A shows that a total of 486 questionnaires representing 97.2% of the start –up number (500) were returned with 462 completed. These were scrutinized to assess the success, or otherwise, of the programme.

Table 1B (Erema)

Questionnaire	Number	Percentage %
Copies returned	492	98.4
Copies not returned	8	1.6
Total	500	100

Table 1B shows that in Erema out of 500 questionnaires shared, 492 were returned representing 98.4%. Out of this however, a total of 8 were discarded as they were not filled, leaving 484 valid set of responses.

### Sex of Respondents

Table 2A (Ozoro)

SEX	Number Of Respondents	Percentage %
Male	278	55.6
Female	222	44.4
Total	500	100

As Table 2A shows, in Ozoro majority of the respondents were male. This scenario is replicated in Erema

Table 2B (Erema)

SEX	Number Of Respondents	Percentage %
Male	305	61
Female	195	39
Total	500	100



### Research Question One

How appropriate is the choice of the medium of television to foster change in the grass roots?

Table 3A (Ozoro):

Possession and Access to Television set.

Statement	Responses	Frequency	%
Do you have a television set in your home?	Yes	301	65.1
	No	161	34.8
If no, do you have a place you normally go to watch TV	Yes	73	15
	No	88	19

The table above presents responses to two questions (a) Do you have a television set in your home and (b) if no, do you have a place you normally go to watch TV. From the responses, an impressive total of 301 respondents, representing 65.1% of the 462 useful data, own television sets while 161 people (34.8%) do not have one at home. Of the 34.8% who do not own TV sets, 73 (15%) have a place where they can go to watch the programme while 88(19%) do not go anywhere to watch television.

Table 3B (Erema)

Possession and Access to TV set

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
A	Do you have a television set in your home?	Yes	397	82
		No	87	17.9
B	If No, do you have a place you normally go to watch tv?	Yes	60	12.3
		No	27	5.5

As evidenced by the table above, an even greater number of respondents, 397 (82%) have ready access to television sets, out of the total number of 484. A modest 17.9% i.e. 36 people

do not own TV sets. Of this number, 60 people, representing 12.3% have a place they normally go to watch television while 27 (5.5%) do not.

With this result, the researcher further whittled the sample down to the number of respondents who possess or have access to television sets for the purpose of viewing the programme. In Ozoro, the new number was 374, while it became 457 in Erema.

### Research Question Two

How appropriate is the language of choice (English) for communication to local folks in Ozoro and Erema.

Table 4A (Ozoro)

Respondents' comprehension of choice of language for *Dawn in the Creeks*

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
A	Do you understand English language very well?	Yes	295	78.8
		No	9	2.4
		Partially	70	18.7

The Reality show was presented in both Queen's English language which would not be a popular choice for a development communication project. Another language used was Pidgin English. However, from the data shown above, a large percentage of the respondents -78.8% representing 295 number claim to understand English very well, 9 people (2.4%) do not understand while 70 (18.7%) comprehend only partially.

Table 4B (Erema)

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
A	Do you understand English language very well?	Yes	367	80.3
		No	10	2.1
		Partially	80	17.5

Once again, Erema proves to be a more educationally advanced town than Ozoro. 367 respondents representing 80.3% claim to understand English language very well, 10 (2.1) do not while 80 (17.5) understand only partially.

### Research Question three

What is the extent of the communities' awareness and viewership of the programme *Dawn in the Creeks*?

Table 5A (Ozoro)

Respondents' knowledge of existence and viewership of *Dawn in the Creeks*

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
D	Have you ever heard of the TV programme <i>Dawn in the Creeks</i> ?	Yes	251	67.1
		No	115	30.7
		I don't remember	8	2.1
E	Have you ever watched <i>Dawn in the Creeks</i> ?	Yes	118	50.2
		No	115	30.7
		Partially	43	11.4
		I don't remember	28	7.4
F	How many episodes of the programme did you watch	One	120	32
		Many	98	26.2
		All	37	9.8
		I don't remember	119	31.8
G	Were you at the premiere/opening of the show at the town hall?	Yes	132	35.2
		No	242	64.7

According to the table 251 respondents in Ozoro (67.1) have heard of *Dawn in the Creeks*, 115 or 30.7% have not while 8 people representing 2.1% do not remember if they have heard of the programme. 118 (50.2%) have watched at least one episode of the programme, 115(30.7) have not, 43 (11.4%) have watched at least a part of an episode while 7.8% or 9 respondents do not remember if they have.

In response to the question of how many episodes those who have watched it saw, 120 people or 32% say they have seen one episode only, 98 or 26.2% have seen many episodes. 37 or 9.8% claim they have seen all the episodes while 119 or 31.8% do not remember.

Table 5B (Erema)

Respondents' knowledge of existence and viewership of *Dawn in the Creeks*

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
D	Have you ever heard of the TV programme <i>Dawn in the Creeks</i> ?	Yes	373	81.6
		No	54	11.8
		I don't remember	30	6.5
E	Have you ever watched <i>Dawn in the Creeks</i> ?	Yes	316	69.1
		No	72	15.7
		Partially	49	10.7
		I don't remember	20	4.3
F	How many episodes of the programme did you watch	One	33	7.2
		Many	231	50.5
		All	75	16.4
		I don't remember	118	25.8
G	Were you at the premiere/opening of the community's civic centre?	Yes	207	45.2
		No	250	54.7

Table 3B shows that an overwhelming 81.6%, representing 373 persons out of the total 457 questioned in Erema community have heard of the reality show *Dawn in the Creeks*. 54 respondents (11.8%) have not heard of it while 30 (6.5%) do not remember if they had.

Addressing the question “have you ever watched *Dawn in the Creeks*, a high number of 316 (69.1%) answer in the affirmative while 72 representing 15.7% say no. 49 (10.7%) have watched part of an episode while 20 representing 4.3% do not remember.

Only 75 respondents (16.4%) watched all. 231 i.e. 50.5% watched many episodes, 33 (7.2) watched one episode only and still 25% cannot answer the question.

To the question in Table G seeking to know if they had been present at the premiere of the show 207 (45.2) answer in the affirmative while 250 (54.7%) reply in the negative.

#### **Research Question Four**

To what extent did the programme sensitize the youths of the communities on non-violent resolution of their problems?

Table 6A (**Ozoro**)

Respondents’ perception of issues of youth restiveness in the community as presented by the programme.

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
H	Has any member of the team ever spoken to you personally about non-violent resolution of problems?	Yes No	199 175	53.2 46.7
I	Do you think the programme addressed the issue of non-violence clearly?	Yes No Partially I can’t say	183 33 54 104	48.9 8.8 14.4 27.8
J	From the programme, do you think the producers understand the problems of the Niger Delta youths very well?	Yes No Partially I can’t say	186 40 65 73	52.4 10.6 17.3 19.5

Table 4A, H shows a little margin between those who have received a personal attention from the team of programme participants from Ozoro. 199 respondents (53.2%) answer in the affirmative, while 175 (46.7%) had received no personal approach.

Yet again, in I, in Table 4A, only 183 respondents (4.9%) feel the programme *Dawn in the Creeks* sent across the message of non-violence clearly. Others are shared between the opinions “No” 33 representing 8.8%, “Partially” totaling 54 or 14.4%; and “I can’t say” - 104 being 27.8%

However, Table 4A, J shows that 52.4% or 19 think the producers of the show understand the problems of the Niger Delta youths very well. 40 (10.6%) think they don’t, 65 (17.3%) think they understand to some degree while 73 persons (19.5%) can not say.

#### Table 6B (Erema)

Respondents’ perception of issues of youth restiveness in the community as presented by the programme.

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
H	Has any member of the team ever spoken to you personally about non-violent resolution of problems?	Yes	301	65.8
		No	156	34.1
I	Do you think the programme addressed the issue of non-violence clearly?	Yes	273	59.7
		No	20	4.3
		Partially	90	19.6
		I can’t say	74	16.1
J	From the programme, do you think the producers understand the problems of the Niger Delta youths very well?	Yes	188	41.1
		No	35	7.6
		Partially	156	34.1
		I can’t say	78	17

From Table 4B, H, a higher percentage of respondents from Erema had received a personal touch from the participating youths of *Dawn in the Creeks*. 301 persons, representing 65.8% respond in the affirmative while 156 or 34.1% respond in the negative.

Table 4B, I shows that 273 or 59.7% feel the issue of non-violence was clearly presented in the show, 20 (4.3%) do not think so. 90 (19.6%) think the issue was partially addressed while 74 (16.1%) cannot say if it was. However, in spite of the rather high number of persons who feel the major issue of non-violence resolution of problems was adequately addressed by the programme, only 41.1% or 188 believe the producers of *Dawn in the Creeks* really understand the problems of their youths. A total of 35 persons (7.8%) out rightly answer in the negative, 156 (34.1%) say they only partially understand and 78 (17%) will not give an opinion.

### Research Question Five

How effective was the reality TV show in curbing youth restiveness and other crimes in the communities?

Table 7A (Ozoro)

Respondents' perception of the programme's effectiveness in curbing youth restiveness in their community.

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
K	Do you think the programme was able to reduce violence among youths in your community?	Yes No Partially I can't say	182 56 61 75	48.6 14.9 16.3 20
L	Do you think the programme has helped elders in your community to understand the youths better?	Yes No Partially I can't say	195 49 60 70	52.1 13.1 16 18.7
M	The programme is meant to give the youths in your community a voice. Do you think the relevant authorities have hard what they have to say?	Yes No Partially I can't say	105 204 53 12	28 54.5 14.1 3.2
N	Has there been a reduction in the incidences of oil bunkering in your community?	Yes No	209 165	55.8 44.11

From Table 5A, k, 48.6% or 182 respondents believe *Dawn in the Creeks* has reduced violence among youths in Ozoro, 56 (14.9%) don't think it has, 61 (16.3%) feel violence has only partially reduced while 75 (20%) decline to give an opinion.

Table 5A, L addresses the issue of difference between elders in the community and the youths. 195 (52.1%) respondents believe the programme helped the elders understand the youths better, 49 (13.1%) deny it did, 60(16%) agree the programme just helped partially while 70 (18.7) cannot say.

From Table M, 105 (28%) think the youths of the community now can be heard by authorities, a greater number 205 (54.5%) do not think the program made a difference in that area, 53 (14.1%) believe it helped partially while only 12 persons (3.2%) do not have an opinion.

Table 5A,N shows that 209 respondents (55.8%) agree the incidence of bunkering has been reduced in their community, while 165 (44.1%) do not agree.

#### Table 7B (Erema)

Respondents perception of the programme's effectiveness in curbing youth restiveness in their community

s/n	Statements	Responses	Frequency	%
K	Do you think the programme was able to reduce violence among youths in your community, Erema?	Yes	128	28
		No	49	10.7
		Partially	156	34.5
		I can't say	124	27.1
L	Do you think the programme has helped elders in your community to understand the youths better?	Yes	140	30.6
		No	64	14
		Partially	133	29.1
		I can't say	120	26.2
M	The programme is meant to give the youths in your community a voice. Do you think the relevant authorities have hard what they have to say?	Yes	164	35.8
		No	83	18.1
		Partially	92	20.1
		I can't say	118	25.8
N	Has there been a reduction in the incidences of oil bunkering in your community?	Yes	331	72.4
		No	126	27.5



Table 5B, K shows that only 28% representing 108 respondents think that the programme was able to reduce violence in Erema. 49 people (10.7%) out rightly say there is no reduction, 156 (34.5%) believe there is a partial reduction while 124 (27.1%) abstained from an opinion. From Table 5B, L, 140 respondents (30.6%) believe the programme has helped breach the gap between the youths and the elders of the community. 64(14%) disagree that the programme in any way helped improve relations between the two groups, 133(29.1%) say there was partial improvement while 120 (26.2%) cannot say.

Table 5B, M addresses an important objective of the reality show which is to give the youths a voice, and get the government to hear them. 164 respondents (35.8%) believe the objective was met, 83 (18.1) disagree, 92 (20.1%) believe this object was partially met while 118 (25.8%) will not proffer an opinion.

Table 5B, N shows that an over-riding 331 (72.4%) people out of the sample say there is a reduction in incidences of oil bunkering in Erema community while 27.5% or 126 persons say there is no reduction.

## **4.2 Interviews**

The researcher restricted interviews to the participants in the Reality show since all efforts made to get responses from the Director of the programme, Jeta Amata and a representative of Stakeholders Democracy Network (SDN), the producers of *Dawn in the Creeks*, failed. Contact was made with both persons but they declined to answer the questions when they received them.

In Ozoro, three members of the team-Festus Omiegwe (Team leader), Esther Jonathan and Igheredo Godwin Oghenekaro were interviewed while Dede Nwaudo (Team Leader) and

Ugoma Eti a.k.a (Creativity) were interviewed in Erema.

### **Interview Questions**

- 1) How effective is the choice of television to achieve behaviour change in the grass-roots, especially in the Niger Delta Region?
- 2) Why do you think your community was chosen for this project?
- 3) How effective was the Reality TV show in curbing youth restiveness in your community.
- 4) Do you think the programme actually gave youths in your community a voice?
- 5) Do you think the programme actually achieved the purpose for which it was launched?
- 6) How did the programme enhance your life, as a participant?
- 7) Do you think the programme ended well?
- 8) Would you rate the programme a success or a waste of resources?

### **Responses**

Interview Question One: How effective is the choice of television to achieve behavioural change in the grassroots, especially in the Niger Delta Region?

Most of the interviewees were of the opinion that the choice of television was a well-informed one being that most families now own a television set. Moreover the time belt chosen for the programme on the local channels ensure that people were home to see it.

Ugoma Eti (creativity) a graduate of Fine and Applied Arts, was particularly insistent that lots of people saw the show. He claimed it was advertised in as many as nine stations.

Interview Question Two: Why do you think your community was chosen for this project?

Festus Omiegwe from Ozoro believes the community was chosen because it has been vandalised by both locals and oil companies leaving a lot of youths jobless and restive with no means of income. Besides he claimed Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) has dumped toxic wastes in dried oil wells on their land. The community was chosen to tell this story. Godwin Oghenekaro corroborated this claim and added that the toxic waste which is said to have a life span of fifty years before its explosion, has been there for fifteen years.

Dede Nwaudo from Erema believes their community was chosen because the producers, SDN, had been in Erema before to settle a youth crisis in 2004 and were familiar with the community. Ugoma Eti confirmed this and added that SDN has since continued to organize other programmers in the area.

Interview Question Three: How effective was the Reality show in curbing youth restiveness in your community?

Godwin Oghenekaro from Ozoro said in his estimation Ozoro had never been given to much violence but other manifestations of youthful rebelliousness have continued. Oil bunkering, for one, has not stopped, however they are not happy that nothing had been done to address the problem of the toxic waste dump.

For Dede from Erema, the message of the programme was received and effective. When questioned about the subsisting violence in the community (this researcher was variously warned to stay away from the town because there were cult wars going on), he said this trouble cuts across three local government areas and was even showing up in University of

Port-Harcourt, Rivers state. It did not begin in Erema. Eti also shared this view.

Interview Question four: Do you think the programme actually gave youths in your community a voice?

Esther from Ozoro was of the opinion that despite the fact that the group project, a film titled *Save Our Souls*, addressed the community's major problem, the film has not done its work because many people had not had the opportunity to see it. The film has not been released to them. It was only seen by the people who attended the premiere at the town hall. In her opinion they were yet to have a voice. Besides, she expected *Dawn in the Creeks* to have been run for a longer period to achieve the desired result. Festus Omiegwe who was very bitter over the manner in which the programme was concluded said there was nothing to indicate they had been given a voice. He claimed they were abandoned without enough empowerment, contacts and means to market their subsequent productions even after they had made efforts to get assistance for other films they produced. Without funds and contacts to disseminate their works, they had no voice.

Dede of Erema also shared this view. He said many people had been asking to see their maiden project *The New Dawn*, but they were yet to take custody of it. Besides, funding to produce more films was a problem. However, Eti was more positive in his outlook, saying he believed that when the cult disturbances in their community completely abates, they would be able to produce and spread the message of non-violence since their equipment were intact.

Interview Question five: Do you think the programme actually achieved the purpose for which it was launched?

Esther from Ozoro thinks the people expected more. They watched the programmed and

expected to see other things. Some had completely forgotten there was ever such a media intervention because of the abrupt manner in which the programme was concluded. Other members of her team, Festus and Godwin were totally bitter about the way they claim the youth participants and the programme itself were abandoned. The programme did not attract the authorities' intervention in their toxic waste problem, so it did not achieve its purpose.

Dede Nwaudo thinks the programme could have achieved more if the organizers had made effort to empower the youth participants financially and put them in better stead to continue the project. For Eti, there was a problem of trust worthiness on the part of the Nigerian organizers of the show; he agrees with Dede that the NGO somehow had circumvented the sincere intentions of the American consulate to achieve lasting behavior change among the youths of the region. For them, it had just been another "business"

Interview Question Six: How did the programme enhance your life as a participant?

All the interview respondents were unanimous in their gratitude to the organizers of the show for the skills they acquired in film production. However, in other aspects some of them felt they had been left worse-off than they were before the experience.

Festus said he had disposed of his three motorbikes expecting to be able to make a living with his newly acquired abilities in film and music production. With no funds and no way to market what he could come up with, it is now a struggle to survive. The same goes for Godwin who used to make a living working as a brick layer and other odd jobs. Even worse is the fact that they had been given false identities as celebrities and people would not help or believe that they are destitute.

Dede said although the programme had been heavily funded by the US Department of States,

they were often owed stipends and not properly paid.

Interview Question Seven: Do you think the programme ended well?

Again all the interviewees were unanimous in their response that the programme did not end well. It did not make provision for continuity which is deemed necessary for lasting behavior change. Since Season Two ended in 2015, the teams had been abandoned to their own devices. Esther in Ozoro said they had lost contact with some members of their team and some members had started fighting over the equipment given to them by SDN. They had even lost their academy (office) because they could not pay the rent. Others concurred that they had been short-changed because the programme should not have ended abruptly.

Interview Question Eight: Would you rate the programme a success or a waste of resources?

To this, the interviewees responded in diverse ways. For Festus and Godwin, even though they were grateful for the novel experience of living briefly the privilege life of celebrities and learning new skills, the whole effort was a waste as they could not benefit from it. They also felt they were better off the way they were, at least, financially. For Esther, except for the new skills acquired the programme was a waste.

Dede was not so quick to conclude the programme was of no use, but believed that much more could have been achieved and the participants should have got more. Eti was most positive in outlook believing that more can still be achieved in spite of the “lack of trustworthiness” exhibited by the local organizers of the show, *Dawn in the Creeks*.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The adoption of the full interactive participation model towards development involves

“beneficiaries deciding which development initiatives should be pursued, whether the initiatives were feasible – prioritizing those that were – and only then deciding how to carry them out, all the while keeping in mind the requirements for sustainability and ultimately ‘self-mobilization’ upon project completion” (Gary Coldevin, 238). In the project under scrutiny - *Dawn in the Creeks*, there appears to be a breach of this process as the audience finds the programme opening to a form of selection exercise for a project whose preoccupation or concern had already been determined. As much as the problem of violence and restiveness can easily be identified as endemic with the youths of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, there is also need for the local participants themselves to determine if the initiative could be feasible as well as sustained. This critical neglect accounts for the inability of the target community to own and drive the initiative as well as their failure to continue the project when the development agents withdrew from the scene.

In his opinion, Jan Servaes believes the participatory model calls for upward, transitive, open and radical forms of planning that encompass both grassroots collective actions ... which is centrally conceived with human growth, learning processes through mobilization, and the basic aim is to involve the people under study to co-operate with one another in the planning and research process, with the planner or researcher as a facilitator and participant (214). Once again the emphasis is on prepping the people to decide and plan which course of action to take to address their collective problem. This is probably why Georgios Terzis and Myria Vassiliadou in their essay on “Working with Media in Areas Affected by Ethno-political Conflict” argue that mainstream line of thinking behind ‘media and peace-building’ which presupposes that media agents are not supposed to ‘take sides’ on the conflict in question other than the side of peace, is problematic. They insist that issues like who defines peace, how is peace conceptualized, how many types of peace exist for the various stakeholders and

how do these apply in particular conflict areas cannot be predetermined by outside agents. Other considerations are who decides if media interventions should take place at all, what are the defining conditions for such interventions and what is the justification for the (often international) organization's presence in areas of conflict and to which extent are they imposing their own value-system while attempting to introduce a media culture of peace.

Against the background of considerations like those mentioned above, one could easily query the change agent's choice of films to address problems that are essentially political but with no guarantee of reaching all the parties involved in the conflict. Clearly there is a wide gap between the people's perception of peace and that of the development partners. While the local participants believe peace lies in their control and possession of their natural resources, the development agents see peace in an amicable, dialogue driven resolution of the differences even though control remains with the ruling side. In this situation, whose idea of peace takes pre-eminence?

Based on data collected from both communities researched - Ozoro in Delta State and Erema in Rivers State, it can be concluded that the producers of the programme *Dawn in the Creeks* did sufficient background research on the target audiences to inform their choice of channel of communication and the language of use. This is of utmost importance in the process of development communication. As Okunna puts it, "communication is so important in the process of development that it is seen as the very soul of development" (301).

This pre-project research or "needs assessment survey" would make it possible for the development agent to put together a 'community profile' as well as help to design an effective development message for the target community. Okunna opines that:



In addition, the community profile which emerges from the research should provide information about the physical characteristics of the environment, available and accessible channels or media of communication, demographic features... and system of government or political authority. (301)

From the results of the survey conducted, the development agent, in this case- the American Consulate via the Stakeholders Democratic Network, SDN, obviously, knew enough about the accessible channels of communication of the communities of target as well as the political permutations at play within the region, which informed their choice of a television programme to address the incessant violence among youths of the region. However, these development agents may not have taken fully into consideration, certain environmental, social and infrastructural challenges such as power outage which may have informed the low viewership of the programme.

In Ozoro, only 50.2% of those questioned claim to have watched the programme fully and 11.4% saying they have seen parts of it. The result is higher in Erema where 81.6% responded in the affirmative with another 10.9% claiming to have seen parts of it. For a development agenda, this level of response could be better.

Again, if the development agents had conducted an extensive and thorough needs-assessment study before designing their development message, it has not left much impression on the people, going by the survey. In Ozoro, only 48.9% of the respondents think the programme clearly addressed the issue of non-violence with another 14.4% agreeing it partially did, while in Erema 59.8% think it did with another 19.7% acceding some partial success was achieved. Furthermore, 52.4% of respondents in Ozoro believe the producers do not understand the problems of the Niger Delta youths very well from the Reality show they watched, while 41.15 believe same in Erema.

This result does not indicate great success at communicating development, by any standard. Reality television as entertainment education has within it, the potential to make a powerful impression on its audience, thereby encouraging growth and development. Chima Onuekwe, writing on the potential of entertainment-education to impact behavior avers that it can attract and hold the attention of the audience by engaging their emotions and then enhance the knowledge and skills of the learners so that they can reach their potential (6). Continuing Onuekwe notes that “not only does entertainment exploit the vulnerabilities of target groups; it can also be a way of persuading them at the emotional level to adopt behaviors (6).

*Dawn in the Creeks* is a reality programme which utilizes ordinary people as actors, putting them in natural settings where they are expected to act and react naturally, not rehearsed, should possess a unique attraction for the audience. As Soong puts it:

Reality TV takes ordinary people, sets them up in ordinary situations on a world or national stage, with other similarly common place individuals, and makes them the focus of a nations/global attention for, sometimes several hours every day of the week as long as the contest last. Besides the promise of money and the vicarious joy at someone winning lots of money, or more commonly spectacularly losing said money, draws millions of viewers (Zona Latina).

In essence, a reality show featuring ordinary people such as unemployed graduates, commercial motorbike operators, hair dressers, should have attracted a lot of viewership in the Niger Delta region and made a lot of impact on the audience. Other defining features of a development communication campaign are its provision for a feedback mechanism and the consequent allowance for continuity. Okunna notes that the need for continuing evaluation in any development programme underscores the point that mobilization for development is not a ‘once-only’ activity, but should form an integral part of the entire development process.

This obvious neglect of the need to evaluate, reposition and ensure continuity lends credence

to the claim by critics of participatory who adduce that its popularity stems from prevailing factors, many of which are not altruistic. Majid Rahnema, in his essay on 'Participation', identifies various forms of the concept including manipulated, or teleguided forms of participation, and spontaneous ones. According to him, in the former, the participants do not feel they are being forced into doing something, but are actually led to take actions which are inspired or directed by centres outside their control. (Sachs ed, 116)

He, further adduces the popularity of the practice to certain conditions, most of which in themselves undermine and negate the purpose for which the process gained much approval. These reasons include,

1. The concept of participation of the people is no longer seen as a threat by governments and institutions because people have been made dependent on the assistance programmes by donors and their government partners, thereby giving great power of control to them. The threat of lack of risk control is curbed by their dependence on assistance programmes.
2. Participation has become a politically attractive slogan because it gives the constituents the impression that leaders are really interested and sensitive to their problems.
3. It has become, economically, an attractive proposition because the poor masses are often used, through participation, to pay off debts and transact the business of commercial lending.

Participation is now perceived as an instrument for greater effectiveness as well as a new source of investment because it brings to development projects a close knowledge of the 'field reality' which foreign technicians and government bureaucrats do not have and networks of relations, essential to the success of ongoing projects. As such the approach has become a

good fund-raising device, especially in the last few decades, as the electorate and media in donor countries have demonstrated increasing interest in development-oriented NGOs. There has been a significant increase in grants to NGOs from donor countries, perhaps due to the reputation acquired by these organizations that their 'participatory' and less bureaucratized approaches have allowed them to meet the needs of people with greater efficiency and less cost.

It is in the light of these observations that Rahnema concludes that participation has come to be 'disembedded' from the socio-cultural roots which had always kept it alive and is now simply perceived as one of the many 'resources' needed to keep the economy alive (120). In his words, "participation is no longer the taboo it was only two decades ago. On the contrary, all developers seem to have definitively adopted the new child as a reliable asset for their own future development" (120).

If one considers the lapses left behind by the producers of *Dawn in the Creeks* it might be easy to conclude that the project was just one of such development programmes described by Rahnema. The youth participants of the Reality show all complain that they were 'abandoned'. Following the conclusion of Season Two of the show, in which an office each was hired for the teams and equipment given to them, they were left to their own devices. Lack of money to maintain the office, produce quality films and market them has left them unable to exploit the skills they acquired during their brief training period. Their brief time in the public glare, under the klieg lights, ended in an anti-climax with some of them left without a means of survival. Most importantly, the non-violence message was heard no more.

*Dawn in the Creeks* falls short of the mark for a standard reality show. With the advent of the new media of the world-wide web, most Reality shows utilize the opportunity of available

communication technology to obtain and assess feedback from their audience. Such attractions as the benefit of reaching many people simultaneously, overcoming geographical, social and literacy boundaries, and storage of information for on-demand access would facilitate greater efficiency in sending and receiving needed feedback. This way the programme producers can evaluate their performance and take advantage of user-generated content to satisfy the audience or achieve expected ends. However, the project *Dawn in the Creeks* utilized no such facility; instead it recorded an abrupt end to the programme.

The producers of the South African Reality show *Kwanda - Ramafoko*, Anderson and Weiner report in their essay that a total of 6,772 SMSs were sent by viewers to the live comment crawler during the series. These SMSs comprise messages of support for the communities while others were responses to questions posed during the show. According to the trio, the SMS indicate that the *Kwanda* series content on social issues were important to viewers and assured them that the series was pitched at the right level.

In like manner Ekstron and Sekei divulged that the Reality series *Ruka Juu* in Tanzania was born from audience feedback received at a civil society media platform *Femina HIP*, which redirected the organization to a more pressing need of the people. From the feedback, *Femina HIP* learnt that instead of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, the most pressing need of the people was job creation through developing skills in entrepreneurship, business and income generating activities. The resultant programme was *Ruka Juu* (Ekston and Sekei).

Leon Arthur Beckx, in his article titled “Organizing for Social Change” in which he describes the experience of Dutch practitioners as they interacted with their African colleagues in seeking to learn from the methodology that underpinned the *Kwanda* Reality TV show, states:

*Kwanda* broke new ground in making community development the stuff of Reality TV. Viewers comments were shown on a strap line during the show and community radio stations discussed each episode on the days following the show ... This interactive reality TV format was backed by a thorough community development program that gave participating communities the necessary tools for making change. (Beckx)

Beckx concludes that *Kwanda* has an outward and an inward focus facilitated by the two major partnering organizations who brought their expertise in the use of edutainment and mass media in promoting social change in addition to know-how on community organization methodologies that enable large numbers of people to learn about organizing themselves to tackle the challenges of poverty and inequality (Beckx). Such changes result in redistribution of power. As Servaes puts it:

Participation aims at redistributing the elite's power so that a community can become a full-fledged democratic one. As such, it directly threatens those whose power and/or very existence depends upon power and its exercise over others. Reactions to such threats are sometimes overt, but most often are manifested as less visible, yet steady and continuous resistance. (203)

If the complaints of the local participants of the *Dawn in the Creeks* project are yardsticks to measure empowerment of the community, it is obvious that the Reality show left no discernible impact on the people, definitely not as a community. This, again, underlines the failure of the change animators to mobilize and facilitate a truly participatory process.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary of Observations and Findings

Since the second half of the immediate past century, development agencies, mostly from the West have sought to make their interventions into third world communities participatory at the community level, to ensure the impact of their aid on the living conditions of the people. The media, in its varied forms, have lent itself to such ventures, facilitating communication which is key to mobilizing and fostering understanding between the key players in the development agenda while driving home the message. *Dawn in the Creeks*, a Reality television programme, is one such media-driven projects, promoting the use of film and drama rather than violence, to address development struggles and grievances within communities in the turbulent Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

Twenty-five episodes of this programme was televised on some National TV stations, including AIT, Channels TV, Nigerian Television Authority, Galaxy TV, SBTv, Delta Television, Rivers State TV and Bayelsa TV in 2014 and 2015.

However, the extent of the impact of this TV show on the restive youths of the area is the concern of this researcher, especially, in the wake of renewed violence in some of the participating states and even communities. For instance, Nembe in Bayelsa state, one of the participating communities, was embroiled in violence during the gubernatorial election in late 2015. Other issues are, how people-driven and participatory was this project, has it truly empowered the youths and provided them a way out of their frustrations? Moreover, as a Reality show, has *Dawn in the Creeks* acquitted itself as a veritable means of driving development in the grass-roots?

To gather data for this research, a mixed method was adopted. The qualitative approach, using Observation and Content Analysis methods were applied to scrutinize the video recordings of the episodes of the programme and gather data from written materials. Also the quantitative Survey method was used to gather opinions of audience members, while the Interview method served to measure the impact of the programme on key players in the programme.

A sample size 500 questionnaires were distributed in two communities out of the three, out of which 462 respondents in Ozoro, and 484 in Erema claimed to have watched the programme. Their responses were analysed using simple percentages.

Five members of the two teams from Ozoro and Erema were also interviewed after which research questions were answered. Efforts to interview the director of the show, Jeta Amata and the Programmes Manager at Stakeholders Democratic Network (SDN), producers of the programme, failed as they both declined to make contributions.

The following findings were drawn from the study:

1. Although the choice of television as medium of behavior change communication is well informed, to the extent that a high percentage of the locals have access to TV sets and have adequate understanding of the English language, less than half of the number of those who watched the programme actually saw more than a few episodes. Obviously, in a country like Nigeria, with its power challenges, it takes more than owing a television to have access to a programme. The producers did not take cognizance of this fact.
2. A little over half the sample size believes that the message of non-violent resolution of issues was clearly enunciated, yet the expected result of eradication of violence has not



been achieved. This view is clearly enunciated by the electoral violence in Nembe and the incidences of cult wars in Erema and surrounding communities of River state. Indeed, going by the remarks of some of the members of the communities after the premier of the films, the project had within it the potential to transform the lives of the youth class of the area.

One member of the audience from Ozoro had said:

I want to say emphatically that you are carrying out a refining process. If you are able to define, then you are able to refine. And these gentlemen and ladies have been picked and they are going through a refining process.

If a dog can be trained to become a detective, we human beings are not animals. As a youth, if you are trained then you are prepared for the future, but if you refuse to be trained, then you are ending up as nothing. Is someone hearing what I am saying?

However, his faith in the exercise to contain violence within his community was dashed, as was the hopes of thousands of other residents of the three communities and beyond.

3. Dawn in the Creeks failed to utilize many of the windows offered by the world wide web of new media to expand participation of audience members in the programme. This would have given the show greater depth and involved more youths in the venture ensuring the spread of the message of non-violence. This is the same problem that has bogged the practice of Theatre for Development for decades. While recounting the deliberations of a TFD workshop held in Zambia in 1979, David Kerr noted that the participants in the workshop identified three major defects of the practice, including the shortage of participants who spoke the language of the locals, the lack of genuine involvement of the local villages in the post-performance

discussion and the lack of meaningful follow-up programmes by the workshop organizers (80). Besides, there was also the option of the short message service, SMS, to either affirm the direction of the programme or inform amendments, as the case may be. A sincere effort to utilize feedback in a programme of this sort would serve as demonstration of true desire to effect change.

Kerr, while discussing another meeting of Arts for Development practitioners, this time held in Harare reveals that the role of mediated arts for development was one of the most hotly debated issues with many participants expressing the opinion that the macro-media of radio, television and commercial popular music had a built-in cultural imperialism due to their colonial origins and because their technological imperatives create a dependency on Western programming formats. However, Kerr notes that John Elsom made a radical case for media for developmentally-oriented arts when he suggested that technological innovations in the field of satellite communications and video recording facilities made the whole concept of media imperialism obsolete. Kerr continues:

He suggested that the cheapness and fluidity of the new millennial media would make it impossible for the Northern metropolises to sustain their dominance of media systems. He envisaged a positive climate for Third World filmmakers, musicians and actors to fulfil the insatiable appetite for cultural diversity in the global village. (83)

4. The expression “to give the youths of Niger Delta a voice” was a mantra in the show *Dawn in the Creeks*. This suggests empowerment that will engender change. Luke Uka Uche stresses the goal of communicating for development as putting in place acceptable social organizations, structures, rules, and procedures, within a given cultural context, that would lead to enhanced living standards for greater productivity

and capacity for generating higher income per capita ... (16). However, the rather abrupt conclusion of the programme, without arming the youths with resources to ensure continuity of the development agenda, did not in any way facilitate this objective. Some of the youths rather feel that the show has rendered them exposed and vulnerable with no means of earning a living.

A successful development agenda must be sustainable, leaving the people for whom it was intended in better stead to solve their problems, even if such problems are not eliminated. It should not leave them feeling they have been used by a privileged minority, possibly, to further other ends.

## **5.2 Contributions to Knowledge**

In the past few decades, it has become popular for development agents to utilize the media of radio, television, along with other traditional media to transmit development messages to developing nations. Such interventions span all areas of socio-economic life of the target nations and communities. However, in Nigeria, it is novel that the relatively new but increasingly popular television programming format, Reality television, be employed to sensitize and train youths to adopt a non-violent approach to resolution of their peculiar problems. This study has ventured a critical analysis of this rare effort, to determine how useful or otherwise this medium could be for driving behavior change agenda, especially in the grass roots.

This study represents another analytical look into the practice of development communication in Nigeria. In its attempt to gauge the level of compliance with known formula” or “stages’ of its practice, the study accentuates or stresses the importance of these stages to ensuring a

sincerely participatory and enduring improvement to the lives of the people. While doing this, it draws attention to the possibilities inherent in the use of new media to engage the masses in finding new ways of doing things for their own progress.

Again, the essence of any scholastic endeavor being that it opens up windows of insight to further literary enterprise, it is expected that other researchers would expound on the findings of this study to enhance the use of the medium of Reality television for communicating development in communities. It is also expected that other researchers would take interest in other projects or programme in like form to assess and underline the need for truly participatory practice and call attention to exploitative processes in the guise of development communication.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

There is need for thorough needs assessment of the target community as the first step to any successful 'devcom' campaign. Such assessment process must involve and should be conducted by the people themselves. While the change agent facilitates this, it is important to ensure proper ownership of the programme by the people and make sure the tools of communication are appropriately suited to the target audience.

It is important that every step of the development process is such that the locals themselves can carry it through on their own, especially when the foreign change agent is no longer with them.

Continuity is of utmost importance in any development communication campaign. All the skills and enablers needed to ensure this must be communicated and provided to the people if there is sincere intention to engender change.

A necessary part of the continuous process is evaluation. This is necessary for finding out how well the development communication project is going. It must begin at the onset and run through the programme to ensure that set objectives are being achieved, and must continue even after the foreign change agents have exited the scene.

For evaluation to be successful, a two-way communication process must be put in place facilitating a lot of feedback from the target audience. It is important that the development agent continues to dialogue with the people at every stage of the project. Feedback can come through inter-personal communication or SMS facility. Scrolling such short messages across the television screen while airing the programme would also encourage cross fertilization of ideas.

Development programmes must not disrupt the lives of members of the target communities without providing better options of sustenance. A situation where locals are pulled away from their normal arenas of existence and exposed to seemingly better lives only to be abandoned and left bereft of means of livelihood underlines an insincere and exploitative process that has nothing to do with development. If development should produce a change for the better in human, cultural, socio-economic and political conditions of the individual, and consequently, of society, then the process of communicating it, whether by mass media, interpersonal, traditional or community media, must sincerely aim to achieve this.

#### **.5.4 Conclusion**

As far back as 1981, Moemeka rightly observed and noted that development communication is not merely a matter of transmitting information about raising aspirations on how things can be done better by using available facilities. According to him, it also involves the generation of psychic mobility or empathy, raising aspiration, teaching of new skills, and encouragement of

local participation in development activities using different strategies (39).

Such an opinion underscores a needed altruism necessary for sustainable and beneficial development communication in the grass-roots. If the era when foreign development partners were engaged just to teach locals how things can be done better is in the past, one can actually conclude that producers of *Dawn in the Creeks*, to that extent, started off on the right footing by raising aspiration, teaching the new skills of film making and encouraging local participation. However, the aftermath of the abrupt or inconclusive abandonment of the project lends credence to the opinions of critics of the participatory development theory, who see it as another weapon of manipulation in the hands of so-called “change agents”. This is the same criticism and problem that practitioners of Theatre for Development face, i.e. the inherent possibility of manipulating people’s psyche, and failure to engender tangible or lasting change because of lack of a continuous evaluation and follow-up system.

As Asigbo succinctly puts it, “the fact that a so called “development expert”, or amateur is there to instigate or animate the people gives it a supercilious bent and equally introduces the risk of manipulation”. Along with other critics of the subsisting participatory development form, he argues that a people must be allowed to evolve and decide which direction their desired change must take, insisting that so long as the practice of community theatre requires conscientization, the “change-agent has the discretion to decide on which problems or rights to conscientize the target community about. This scenario, “increases the risk of manipulation since the conscientizing is consciously done from without”. Asigbo concludes that, “it is therefore our submission that theatre loses its popularity once it ceases to be a communal event, evolved and practiced by the people”.

Indeed, the role of the change agent should be that of a facilitator allowing the locals to own

the project from the initial stage of choice of problems to tackle, through conscientization, to solution point. This way the people will be able to continue or sustain the change or development achieved, because the ultimate aim of communication for development is to bring about and sustain the desired behavior, that is, behavior change. Many well-intended projects are thought out in places far remote from the actual context or situation in which they are supposed to be implemented. Consequently, the planners fail to understand the complexities of power relationships among the recipient people, as well as the cultural and communication processes existing at these local levels.

Participatory development promotes ownership, that is, a group's right to decide how and in which order it will address its development needs and to control the design and implementation of projects they intend to meet those needs. It also empowers the people when individuals in a community have access to and can manage their own development resources such as information and skills training.

The Reality programme *Dawn in the Creeks*, if it had been sincerely executed with the intention to empower the youths of the three communities involved, could have raised a crop of youths who will be in better stead to address their challenges, engage government and authorities, and make room for peaceful intervention in the socio-economic problems of the region.

Indeed, the unique programming style of Reality shows, evident in the spontaneity of content, use of real life people instead of trained actors, the educational-entertainment status, not to mention the added advantages of the new media and world wide web to facilitate instant feedback for purposes of evaluation and adjustment, can be invaluable for the purposes of development communication. The example of *Kwanda* in South Africa and *Ruka Juu* in

Janzania, as reported, show how the application of the web and new media can facilitate real participation and dictate the direction of an intervention programme to maximize results.

Rahnema rightly describes the current situation when he says;

Participation is becoming a good fund raising device, especially in the last few decades, as the electorate and media in donor countries have demonstrated increasing interest in development-oriented NGOs. There has been a significant increase in grants to NGOs from donor countries, perhaps due to the reputation acquired by these organizations that their 'participatory' and less bureaucratized approaches have allowed them to meet the needs of people with greater efficiency and less cost.... An expanded concept of participation could help the private sector to be directly involved in the development business. (118-120)

Sadly, for many NGOs these grants have simply been a means to further their individual aspirations and feed their greed.



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## APPENDIX A

### **A questionnaire for residents of Erema, to determine the effects of the reality programme- *Dawn in the Creeks* on the people.**

Please, as plainly as you can, answer the following question. Tick the right answer. God bless you

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Occupation:

(1) Do you have a television in your home?

(A) Yes

(B) No

(2) If no, do you have a place you normally go to watch TV?

(A) Yes

(B) No

(3) Do you understand English language?

(A) Yes

(B) No

(C) Partially

(4) Have you ever heard of the TV Programme *Dawn in the Creeks*?

(A) Yes

(B) No

(C) I don't remember

(5) Have you ever watched *Dawn in the Creeks*?

(A) Yes

(B) No

(C) Partially

(D) I don't remember

(6) How many episodes of the programme did you watch?

(A) One

(B) Many

(C) All

(D) I don't remember

(7) Were you at the premiere/opening of the show at the town Hall?

(A) Yes

(B) No

## APPENDIX B

(8) Do you know any of the Erema team members from your community? Which one(s)?

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(9) Has any member of the team ever spoken to you, personally, about non- violent resolution of problems?

(a) Yes (B) No

(10) Do you think the programme addressed the message of non-violence clearly?

(9) Yes (B) No  
(C) Partially (D) I can't say

(11) From the programme, do you think the producers understand the problems of the Niger Delta Youths very well?

(A) Yes (B) No  
(C) Partially (D) I can't say

(12) Do you think the programme was able to reduce violence among youths in your community?

(A) Yes (B) no  
(C) Partially (D) I can't say

(13) Do you think the programme has helped the elders in your community to understand the youths better?

(A) Yes (B) No  
(C) Partially (D) I can't say

(14) The programme is meant to give the youths in your community a voice. Do you think the relevant authorities have heard what you have to say?

(A) Yes (B) No  
(C) Partially (D) I can't say

(15) Can you give an example/ instance that supports your answer, whether yes, No or to some extent?

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(16) Has there been a reduction in the incidences of oil bunkering in your community?

(A) Yes (B) No

**Thank you very much**

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Questions

- 1) How effective is the choice of television to achieve behaviour change in the grass-roots, especially in the Niger Delta Region?
- 2) Why do you think your community was chosen for this project?
- 3) How effective was the reality TV show in curbing youth restiveness in your community.
- 4) Do you think the programme actually gave youths in your community a voice?
- 5) Do you think the programme actually achieved the purpose for which it was launched?
- 6) How did the programme enhance your life, as a participant?
- 7) Do you think the programme ended well?
- 8) Would you rate the programme a success or a waste of resources?



**PIX 2: Director Jeta Amata speaking to the youths participants during the selecting process at Nembe**



**PIX 3: Jeta Amata coaching the youths on film making at the Nollywood Academy in Lagos.**





**PIX 4: The youths in training**



**PIX 5: Practicals by Erema youths at the Academy**



**PIX 6: Officials of the US Consulate arriving Nembe by boat for the Movie Premiere of *The Truce***



**PIX 7: Guests heading for the Premiere**



**PIX 8: Practicals at the Academy**