



UNIVERSITY OF UYO
&
LANCASTER UNIVERSITY
LINK



End of Grant Conference

**On PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY IN THE
NIGER DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA**



*"Giving voice to the poor people of the Niger Delta ...
through Oral Testimonies. . ."*

**(AN ORAL TESTIMONIES PROJECT
SPONSORED BY THE BRITISH ACADEMY)**



The
British
Council

**Venue: Community Centre, University of Uyo
Date: Thursday, 21st September, 2006.**

INTRODUCTION

The Higher Education Links Steering Committee (HELSC) and the Subjects/Gender Advisers of the British Council approved of the University of Uyo (Nigeria)/Lancaster University (UK) Link in November 2002 with an end date in 2008. The theme of the Link was Governance, Environment and Development in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria (GED). The subject category for the GED Link was Geography although the linkage itself was interdisciplinary. Link activities commenced once the comments made by the HELSC were noted.

As a fall-out of the GED Link project, the University of Uyo and Lancaster University, in February 2003, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the intention of furthering link activities in more subject categories including engineering, communication, business and entrepreneurial studies and economics with the overall view of enhancing capacity building in the University of Uyo.

However, following the successful Mid-Term Evaluation and Country Report held in Uyo in March 2005 and an equally successful exhibition of the GED Link project at the 2004 Nigerian Universities Research and Development Fair (NURESDEF) in Abuja, the Department for International Development (DFID) that funded the Link through the British Council dismantled the former Higher Education Link structures and set up a new one called Development Partnerships for Higher Education (DePHE). The Uniuyo/Lancaster Link has submitted fresh applications for participation in the DePHE programme. We have also submitted applications for the European – African Partnerships (EAP) for the current year. We hope that our international linkage activities will continue to expand. To the larger society, a fall-out of the Link is to improve the capacity of civil society with a view to influencing social and environmental policies in the Niger Delta on behalf of the diverse and vulnerable communities, especially women, the youth and the rural poor. The pivot aim of the Link in this aspect is to contribute to the current initiatives of social and environmental sustainability in the Niger Delta through requests for good governance and better management of the environment and its natural resources.

Prof. Imoh Ukpong (Nigerian Coordinator)
Dr. Lenny Bear (UK Coordinator)
University of Uyo/Lancaster University Link.

POVERTY RESEARCH GROUP
UNIVERSITY OF UYO/LANCASTER UNIVERSITY LINK
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

4 January 2005

The British Academy
Research Grants
10 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5AH
UK

Dear Sir or Madam,

REFERENCE: POVERTY IN THE NIGER DELTA

Dr. Uwem Ite has asked me to comment on his proposal for a grant from the British Academy to help build institutional capacity for research in the Niger Delta. I am enthusiastic about his proposal, and offer the highest possible recommendation.

The Higher Education Link between the University of Uyo (Nigeria) and Lancaster University (UK) is intended to help build institutional capacity in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. From its beginning, an important component has been the need to document chronic poverty in the region. Despite severe problems with chronic poverty, no one has asked people in our villages about their personal experiences and what they think should be done. It is deeply unfortunate that this work has not yet been done, and all the more necessary for this proposed project to go forward.

We know Dr. Uwem Ite and Dr Lenny Baer well from their previous visits, and of course we have known Dr Ite for years as a former student of ours. For the past years they have worked successfully with Prof. Imoh Ukpong of the University of Uyo on issues of governance, environment and development in the Niger Delta region and are already quite familiar with the local communities.

Last year Dr Ite, Dr Lenny and Prof Ukpong led preliminary training sessions on perceptions of poverty that help pave the way for this project. They earned the strong support of people in Uyo and Manta Village, where they gained community entry. We had not heard of oral testimonies before, and it was a new experience for people to be exposed to the basic ideas behind it. We fully support what they are doing, and want very much for their work to expand into full training and a project. This grant would help them continue their work, but more importantly it would help people in the Niger Delta gain the necessary skills to do this important research, and to train others so that the research can take place over the long term as well.

There is very strong support in Uyo for this work, and people are eager to be a part of it. I sincerely hope that you will provide funding for this important project to go forward.

Sincerely,

Professor Akpan H. Ekpo
Vice Chancellor

PROGRAMME

Part: 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Music by Uta Group).

1. Arrival of participants and recognition of personalities.
2. Opening prayer by Prof. Philip Akpan, head of the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Uyo
3. Opening remarks by the Vice-Chancellor, University of Uyo, Prof. Akaneren Essien.
4. Comments on the Oral Testimonies Project by the former UK Coordinator, Uniuyo/Lancaster Link, Dr. Uwem Ite.
5. Further recognition of personalities.
(Music by Uta Group).

Part 11: PRESENTATION OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES AND TRAINEES. (Traditional Greetings)

1. Ikot Odiong (Nsit Ibom) Representatives
2. Ikot Okpudo (Nsit Ubium) Representatives
3. The Trainees
4. What is Poverty? More remarks on the oral Testimonies. Project by the Nigerian Coordinator, Uniuyo/Lancaster Link, Prof Imoh Ukpong
(Music by Uta Group).
5. Replay of some recorded interviews (Power Point Paronama of of Community Scenes).
(Music by Uta Group).

Part: 111: EXPERIENCES

1. An Address Presented on Behalf of Dr Lenny Baer(UK Coordinator, Uniuyo/Lancaster Link) at the Oral Testimonies Conference (By Emmanuel Akpabio, Assistant to the Nigerian Coordinator).
2. Comments on Perception of Poverty by:
(a) representatives of Ikot Odiong
(b) Representatives of Ikot Okpudo
(Music by Uta Group).
3. Experiences by Oral Testimonies Project Trainees
(Music by Uta Group).

Part IV: GENERAL COMMENTS

1. Honorable Commissioners present (or their representatives)
2. Representatives of NDDC
3. Representatives of MPP6
4. Representatives of NGOs
5. Others/Open Discussion by Participants
6. Further directions and sustainability of the Oral Testimonies Project (Prof Imoh Ukpong/Dr. Uwem Ite).
7. Vote of Thanks by Dr. Ubong Nda
8. Closing Prayer by Mr. A. J. Udo

UNIUYO/LANCASTER LINK

ORAL TESTIMONIES PROJECT

Funds:

- Lancaster University (UK)
- British Academy (UK)

Facilities:

- University of Uyo (Nigeria)

Project Title:

- Perceptions of Poverty in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria using Oral Testimonies

Subject Category:

- Geography

Heads of Institution:

OVERSEAS – Prof Akaneren I. Essien, Vice Chancellor
University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Overseas Link Coordinator:

- Prof. Imoh Ukpong, Department of Geography and
Regional Planning, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

U.K. Link Coordinator:

- Dr. Lenny Bear, Department of Geography, Lancaster
University, U.K.

Heads of Department:

- Overseas – Prof. P.A. Akpan, Department of Geography and
Regional Planning, University of Uyo, Nigeria.
U.K.- Prof. Barbara Maher, Department of Geography,
Lancaster University, U.K.

Consulting Coordinator:

- Dr. Uwem Ite, SPDC, Port Harcourt.
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CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Contact and Mobilization:

1. Daniel Asuquo
2. Brian Ett
3. Ogechi Sunday
4. Etimbuk Ekpenyong

Publicity and Venue:

1. Edet Etim Okon
2. Lizzy Utin Akang
3. Basseyy Atakpo
4. Itohowo Joshua

Community Relations:

1. Emmanuel Akpabio
2. John Attah Friday
3. John Vanney Inyang

Entertainment and Logistics:

1. Lordson Akpan
2. Llizzy Utin Akang
3. Ndiana Udo

Assistant to the Nigerian Coordinator:

Emmanuel Akpabio

Repertoire for the Conference:

1. Dr. NseAbasi Akpan
2. Mr. Joseph Udo

Procedures:

Dr. Aniekan Brown

...we have the listening ear...

