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## Assessment of Non-Government Organizations' Contribution to Environmental Awareness in Nigeria

By Afangideh, A. I. , Obong, Linus B. & Robert, U. I.  
*Environmental Science University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria*

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**Keywords** : ENGOs, Environmental awareness, Environmental problems, Environmental management, Uyo.

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# Assessment of Non-Government Organizations' Contribution to Environmental Awareness in Nigeria

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Environmental management is central to sustainable environment. Hence, the continuity of all life on earth relies on human activities in and

around the biosphere. As observed by Akpabio (2009), environmental management is much more than the control of nuisance. He contends that it involves an orientation that is philosophical in nature which is deliberately designed to encourage the existence of a congenial environment for healthy life, liberty and industry as well as promoting beauty of the environment.

At the fore of environmental management are the Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs). ENGOs are the most active actors in the environmental arena. In Nigeria, ENGOs are observed to be involved in managing the environment for the last four decades (Oyeshola, 1995). They advocate sustainable development, protest for the environment and engage in all kinds of environmental activities. As Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), ENGOs are known to have a mission to changing people's unsustainable attitudes and behaviours (Ebong and Bassey, 2004). In order to achieve their goals, the ENGOs need to draw attention of the public, business organizations or even politicians to the reality of development and environmental sustainability. Using the media, public awareness could be created on how best to manage the environment for continued existence.

Historically, a number of non-governmental organizations with environmental inclination abound. For example, Table 1 shows the various NGOs over time:

Table 1: NGOs in Nigeria over time.

S/N	NAME OF NGO	ABBREVIATION	YEAR FOUNDED
01	FORESTRY Association of Nigeria	FAN	1970
02	Ecological Society of Nigeria	ESN	1973
03	Nature Club of Nigeria	NCN	1980
04	Nigerian Conservation Foundation	NCF	1982
05	Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team	NEST	1987
06	NIGERIAN Society for Environmental Management and Plannin	NSEMP	1987
07	Green Crocodile Foundation	GCF	
08	Environmental Watch Association International	EWAN	
09	Food Basket Foundation International	FBFI	
10	Population Environment and Development Agency	PEDA	
11	Friends of the Environment	FOTE	
12	Foundation of Environmental Development and Education in Nigeria	FEDEN	
13	Green Environment Movement	GEM	
14	Living Earth Nigeria Foundation	LENF	

Source: Akpabio (2009) and Okaba and Obong (2006).

Author  $\alpha$  : Department of Geography & Environmental Science University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

Author  $\sigma$  : Department of Geography & Environmental Science University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. E-mail : linusobong@yahoo.com

Author  $\rho$  : Department of Geography & Environmental Science University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

Indisputably, NGOs at the local, regional and international levels are the saviour and stewards of environment; they protect the environment from abuse, misuse and damage. However, it is the believe of Akpabio (2009) that of the NGOs in Table 1, only few have really made any significant impact in the promotion of environmental awareness, scientific research and protection of endangered species and critical habitats. Since human influences virtually all areas of life, a means of communicating information and innovation on managing the influences becomes crucial. This view is shared by experts in Agricultural Extension (Leeuwis, 2004), Behavioural Scientists (Ikurelong, 2009), Educationists and Environmentalists (Okaba and Obong, 2006) and Ukpong, 2009).

Creating environmental awareness is a complex process that requires meticulous and continuous efforts. It involves people from all classes of life. It also involves government and non-governmental bodies, their behavior and cooperation is highly needed for success in all facets of life. Over time, the need for awareness and management of our environment seems insurmountable. Strides in environmental management has transformed immeasurably from various forms of awareness to mitigation as well orchestrated foray into combating critical environmental issues. Bereft of consummate effort to ensure effective awareness creation, is a life challenge of slow diffusion of information by the populace. This study, however, focuses on the contribution of Non-Government Organizations to Environmental Awareness in Nigeria using Uyo Metropolis as a case study.

## II. IMPETUS FOR RESEARCH

Today, the entire world seems to be aware of the ailing environment. Rural environments are fast becoming urban and there are rising concerns over cases of air, land and water pollution. The challenge managing waste materials from anthropogenic activities leave palpable fear in environmentalists and environmental managers and planners of may become of our home shortly.

The question of sustainable environment in urban areas like Uyo Metropolis keeps rising with the growing concern if the public is aware of the need to manage the environment. Since the government alone cannot take the challenge of creating environmental awareness, the question is: what are ENGOS doing to create awareness in Uyo Metropolis?

The concerns above, therefore inform this study which was designed to assess the level of environmental awareness by ENGOS in the study area, identify the pressing environmental issues in the study area, ascertain the impact of ENGOS in the study area and determine the effectiveness of the mechanism, tools and skills adopted by ENGOS on public communication and relation of environmental information. A null

hypothesis which states that "Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations have not created significant environmental awareness in the study area" was also tested in the study.

## III. METHODS AND APPROACH

Uyo the study area is the state capital of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It occupies a landmass of 8,421 square kilometers. The study area is stratified into regions. Four of the regions were randomly sampled for administration of structured questionnaire. 100 persons were selected from each region on the basis of one person in every five adults encountered in selected offices. Also, 20 offices were randomly selected in each region. 40 Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations were selected from among those that registered with the government (Ministry of Environment and Corporate Affairs Commission. A number of 10 in each of the four regions of the study area were also randomly selected which gave a total of four hundred (400) respondents and forty (40) Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations in all.

The structured questionnaire and oral interviews was the major instrument for data collection. Data collected was on the location or contact region of respondents, level of environmental awareness by ENGOS in the study area, awareness and acquaintance with ENGOS activities, relationship with ENGOS in the study area, benefits derived from ENGOS and environmental awareness creation by ENGOS in the study area.

Collected data was sorted, presented and analyzed using tables and graphs; while the stated hypothesis was statistically tested using the Contingency Chi-Square test statistic technique.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data for the study was collected from residents in Abak Road 112 (31%), Ikot Ekpene Road 108 (27%), Aka Road 81 (20%) and Oron Road 89 (22%) of the study area (see Table 1).

Table 1: Contact region of respondents.

Contact regio	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Abak Road	112	31
Ikot Ekpene Road	108	27
Aka Road	81	20
Oron Road	89	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Fieldwork, 2010.

a) *Level of environmental awareness by ENGOs in the study area*

The study assessed the level of respondents' awareness of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs) in the study area. Table 2

reveals that only 25 per cent (100 respondents) are aware of ENGOs in their area. On the other hand, as high as 300 respondents, representing 75 per cent are not aware of the group in their area.

*Table 2 : Awareness of respondent on ENGOs.*

<b>Awareness of ENGOs</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	100	25
No	300	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source : Fiedwork , 2010.*

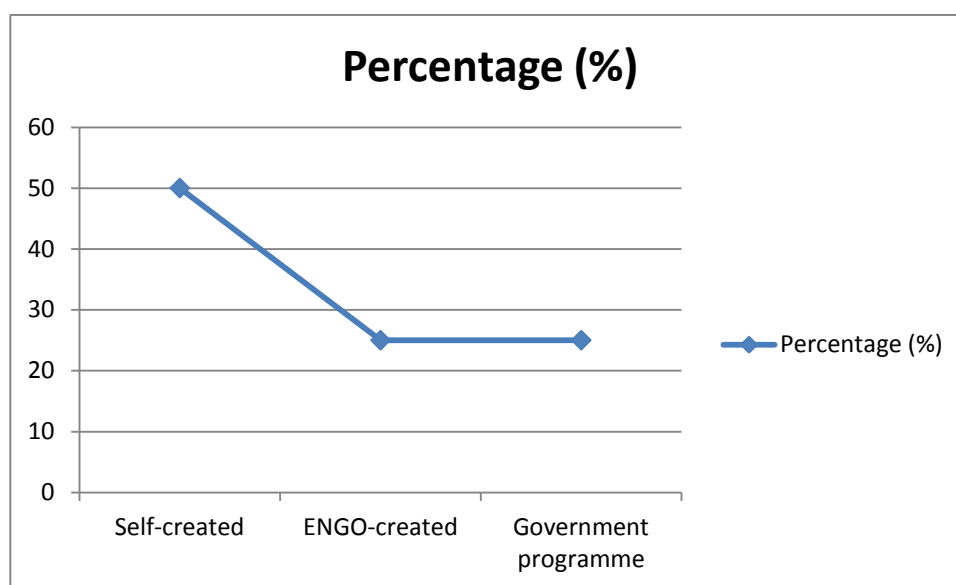
Consequently, Table 3 shows that respondents awareness and acquaintance with the activities of the ENGOs. Out of 400 respondents, 50 per cent (200 respondents') awareness was self - created , 100 (25%)

per cent was created by by government programme and 100 (25%) per cent awareness was created by the ENGOs.

*Table 3 : Level of Awareness And Acquaintance With ENGOs activities in the study area.*

<b>Level of awareness and acquaintance of ENGOs</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Self-created	200	50
ENGO-created	100	25
Government programme	100	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source : Fiedwork, 2010.*



*Figure 1 : Level of awareness and acquaintance with ENGOs activities.*

From Table 3 and Figure 1, it implies that individuals in the study area have self awareness of environmental issues. Although ENGOs have created a level of awareness, it has a low percentage as well of the government.

are captured in Table 4 and include waste disposal, erosion, flooding, water pollution, air pollution, gas flaring, noise pollution, oil spillage, and drought.

## V. THE PRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN THE STUDY AREA

The study also identified a number of environmental concerns in the study area. The issues

Table 4 : Environmental issues in the study area.

Environmental issues	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Waste disposal	120	30
Erosion	80	20
Flooding	100	25
Water pollution	20	5
Air pollution	16	4
Gas flaring	8	2
Noise pollution	40	10
Oil spillage	8	2
Drought	8	2
Others (specify)	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2010.

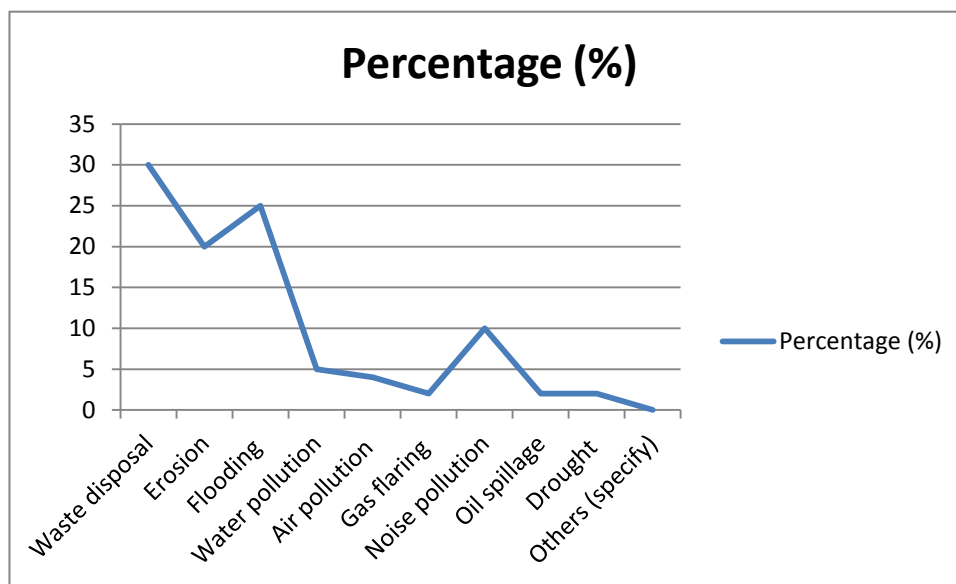


Figure 2 : Environmental issue in the study area.



As depicted in Table 4 and Figure 2, a list of environmental concerns in the study area shows that waste disposal has the highest percentage of 30 representing 120 respondents, followed by flooding with a total of 100 (25%) respondents, erosion (20%) representing 80 respondents. Others are noise pollution 40 (10%), water pollution 20 (5%), air pollution 16 (4%), while gas flaring, oil spillage and drought has a total of 8 (2%) respectively as pressing environmental issues.

## VI. IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (ENGOS) IN THE STUDY AREA

Table 5 shows that 100 (25%) respondents indicate that there exists a good and cordial relationship

Table 5 : Level of relationship with ENGOS in the study area.

Level of relationship	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Good and cordial	100	25
Bad and aggressive	300	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Fiedwork , 2010.

Table 6 : Benefit from Environmental Non – Governmental organizations ( ENGOS ).

Kind of benefit from ENGOS	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Training	40	10
Financial compensation	40	10
Seminars	20	5
None	300	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Fiedwork, 2010.

## VII. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MECHANISM, TOOLS, AND SKILLS ADOPTED BY THE ENGOS ON PUBLIC COMMUNICATION AND RELATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

The creation of environmental awareness by ENGOS is carried out through radio, television and other mass media outlets. Percentage distribution as pictured in Table 7. It could be seen that only 100 (25%) of the total respondents have seen, read and heard of the

Table 7 : Environmental awareness creation by ENGOS.

Environmental awareness creation by ENGOS on radio, television, etc	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	100	25
No	300	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Fiedwork, 2010.

between ENGOS and residents in the study area; while 400 (75%) of respondents maintained that there is a bad and aggressive relationship.

On benefit from ENGOS by members of the study area, result show that 40 (10%) respondents have benefited in training, 40 (10%) benefited in financial compensation, 20 (5%) in seminars and a total of 300 (75 %) have not had any benefit at all (Table 6).

awareness programme embarked upon by the ENGOS on environmental issues, while the remaining 300 (75%) of the population have not seen, heard or read any thing from the ENGOS on environmental issues in the study area.

On occurrence of programme, Table 8 shows that the Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) carry out awareness only once a week representing 100 (25%) of the total percentage and 300 (75%) have not been opportune to know about the programme in the study area.

Table 8 : Occurance of ENGOs programme.

Occurrence of ENGOs programme	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Once a week	100	25
Once a month	00	00
Once a year	00	00
Once in two years	00	00
None	300	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Fiedwork, 2010.

Table 9 summarizes the previous tables with ENGOs in the study area , benefit from showing the contact region , level of environmental Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations awareness by ENGOs in the study area , awareness (ENGOs) and Environmental awareness creation by and acquaintance with ENGOs activities, relationship ENGOs in the study area.

Table 9 : Contingency table of table 1 □ 8 ( contact region ) of respondent

Location (contact region)	Yes	No	Total
Abak Ro:ad	30	92	<b>122</b>
Ikot Ekpene Road	19	89	<b>108</b>
Aka Road	23	58	<b>81</b>
Oron Road	28	61	<b>89</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>400</b>

Source : Fiedwork, 2010.

### VIII. TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Tables 2-8 were used in testing the stated hypothesis which state that "Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (ENGOs) have nt created

significant environmental awareness in the study area".Cells were represented by different regions using Yes and No of the responses.The computations of Contingency Chi-Square was drawn for the test (Table 10):

Table 10 : Computations of Contingency Chi-Square.

Cell	O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
1	30	30.50	-0.5	0.25	<b>0.0082</b>
2	92	91.50	0.5	0.25	<b>0.0027</b>
3	19	27.00	-8.0	64.00	<b>2.3703</b>
4	89	81.00	8.0	64.00	<b>0.7901</b>
5	23	20.30	2.0	7.29	<b>0.3591</b>
6	58	60.80	-2.0	4.00	<b>0.0658</b>
7	28	22.30	5.7	32.49	<b>1.4570</b>
8	61	62.80	-5.8	33.64	<b>0.5036</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>5.5568</b>

Source : Fiedwork, 2010.

The Chi-Square formula is given as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2$$

The calculated  $\chi^2 = 5.5568$

Degree of freedom = 3

Critical value = 7.815

From the calculations above, the Chi-Square value of 5.557 is less than the critical value of 7.815, therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) have not created significant environmental awareness in the study area" is accepted.

## IX. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings of this study show that respondents on awareness of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) as an environmental group in the study area is low with a total of 25 per cent; as high as 75 per cent of respondents are not aware of the group in their area. It is however, observed that respondents' awareness and acquaintance with the activities of the ENGOS is up to 50 per cent awareness self-created, 25 per cent by government programme and 25 per cent awareness of environmental issues.

Although ENGOS have created a level of awareness, it has a low percentage as well of the government. Findings also show a number of environmental concerns in the study area. The concerns include waste disposal, erosion, flooding, water pollution, air pollution, gas flaring, noise pollution, oil spillage, and drought. The list of environmental issues in the study area shows that waste disposal has the highest percentage of 30, followed by flooding with a total of 25 per cent and erosion 20 per cent. Others are noise pollution 10 percent, water pollution 5 percent, air pollution 4 per cent, while gas flaring, oil spillage and drought has a total of 2 per cent respectively as pressing environmental issues.

Other findings of the study indicate that there exists a good and cordial relationship between ENGOS and residents in the study area; while 75 per cent of

Creation of environmental awareness by ENGOS is carried out through radio, television and other mass media outlets. Notwithstanding the efforts in awareness creation, findings reveal that only 25 percent of the population have seen, read and heard of the awareness programme embarked upon by the ENGOS on environmental issues, while the remaining 75 per cent of the population have not seen, heard or read anything from the ENGOS on environmental issues in the study area.

On occurrence of programme, it was discovered that the Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) carry out awareness only once a week with a total of 25 per cent in the study area.

Stated hypothesis was tested and results shows that Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS)

Stated hypothesis was tested and result shows that Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (EN GOs) have not created significant environmental awareness in the study area. The finding is in agreement with Akpabio (2009) who stated that though there are a number of NGOs, only few have really made any significant impact on the promotion of environmental awareness, scientific research and protection of endangered species and critical habitats.

## X. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

To ensure a more effective environmental awareness in the study area, ENGOS should improve on environmental awareness in the study area. Measures such as educative programmes, orientation programmes in order to create awareness among the people on environmental problems, encourage youth participation in environmental management, and use media houses to increase awareness of environmental concerns should be employed. Funding agencies should also monitor the planning and implementation of environmental awareness programmes. It is believed that when the measures above are enforced, the desired awareness and proper management of the environment would be achieved.

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