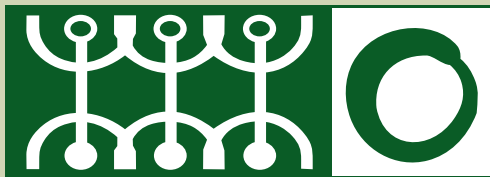


2010
annual
report

We must Choose
what we eat



ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACTION/FRIENDS OF THE EARTH, NIGERIA



Protecting the Environment, Democratising Development

advisory board

- Nnimmo Bassey
- Oronto Douglas
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table of contents

• Advisory Board	1
• Table of Contents	2
• Who we are	3
• Acknowledgment	4
• Executive Director's Comment	5
• Finally, a Movement Against Hunger	6
• Spills: Gulf of Mexico versus Niger Delta	7
• Tobacco-Free Africa Receives Major Boost	8
• Gender Beyond Borders	9
• Oilwatch: Cancun Hosts Carbon Traders	10
• New Skills for Staff, Volunteers, Journalists	11
• Organisational Milestones	12
• Financial Statement	13

who we are

Environmental Rights Action (ERA) is a Nigerian advocacy non-governmental organization founded on 11 January 1993 to deal with environmental human rights issues. ERA is the Nigerian chapter of Friends of the Earth International (FoEI), the world environmental justice federation campaigning to protect the environment and to create sustainable societies. ERA/FoEN currently hosts the International Secretariat of Oilwatch International, the global south network of groups resisting oil and gas extractive activities. ERA/FoEN is also co-coordinating Friends of the Earth Africa (FoEA) campaign on Food Sovereignty as well as Climate Justice and Energy (CJE). ERA is the premier winner of the Sophie Prize, the international award in environment and development. The organization is also a member of the Green Actors of West Africa (GOWA), Network for the Accountability of Tobacco

Transnationals (NATT), and the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA). ERA/FoEN is the co-coordinating NGO for the Nigeria Tobacco Control Alliance (NTCA). It is the host of the Africa Tobacco Control Regional Initiative (ATCRI).

ERA/FoEN currently operates four offices: Benin (Headquarters), Port Harcourt, Lagos and Yenagoa. The organization has 25 full-time staff and several volunteers.

ERA/FoEN Programme Areas: Forest and Biodiversity

- Deforestation
- Resisting Plantations/Monocultures
- Community Forest Management
- Community Rights
- Drought and Desertification
- Gender Justice

Food Sovereignty

- GMOs
- Land Rights and Agribusiness (Economic Justice)
- Climate and Agriculture
- Agrofuels
- Gender Justice

Democracy Outreach Programme

- Legal Resources
- Community Resource Centres
- Policy Advocacy
- Media
- Election Monitoring
- Budget Advocacy
- Gender Justice

Corporate Accountability and Environmental Health

- Tobacco Control
- Water and Sanitation
- Community Health
- Trade and Corporate
- Gender Justice

Energy and Extractives

- Mining
- Oil and Gas
- Energy Sovereignty
- Climate Justice
- International Financial Institutions (IFIs)
- Renewables
- Gender Justice

acknowledgement

Our sincere appreciation goes to our partners for their support:

- OxfamNovib Netherlands
- Friends of the Earth International
- Tobacco-Free Kids Action Fund
- American Cancer Society
- Cancer Research UK
- National Endowment for Democracy
- Cordaid
- Third World Network (TWN)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- World Rainforest Movement (WRM)
- Kairos
- Miliudefesse, Friends of the Earth Netherlands
- Friends of the Earth Norway/NORAD
- Global Greengrants Fund (GGF)

executive director's comment



Our work in 2010 remained true to our anchor: connecting with the grassroots in their struggles for the respect of their environmental and human rights and to ensure that their dignity is secured. It was a year of learning on many fronts as we drank from the wells of wisdom so refreshingly abundant in local communities.

While our struggles have been essentially embedded in the local communities of Nigeria, we had the privilege of struggling with others across Africa and beyond. Such significant engagements occurred in our

struggles on the side of forest communities and in struggles against the destructive activities of oil companies, as well as the merchandising of death by the tobacco industry.

The number of cells of the Host Communities Network, birthed in 2007 to eliminate the dichotomy between communities that host oil infrastructure and those that merely host the impacts, grew in number and effectiveness. Through our hosting of the Oilwatch network, we helped midwife the expansion of the network to other African countries such as Cameroon, Ghana and Uganda in the course of the year. Communities in the oil fields continue to demand that oil be left in the soil because the soil is more beneficial to them than oil that brings destruction to local environments as well as the climate.

More fragile ecosystems are being targeted by the extractive industries and local

economies are being decimated in their wake. Just think of Ghana where at least three oil spills were recorded before the first commercial shipment of crude oil. Spare a thought also to oil activities in the games reserve and around Lake Albert in Uganda's rift valley. No territory is sacred when a scent of crude is in the air.

We confronted the issue of land grabs in Nigeria and Africa as well as the false promises of agrofuels on the continent. Standing and marching with the people remained our core platform. At home, we led advocacy visits by community activists to organs of the National Assembly and also stood by them as they litigated, at home and abroad, for their rights. Together with other civil society groups we fought to create a space for environmental and community rights in the proposed Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), a major piece of legislation aimed to reposition the oil and gas sector in Nigeria.

On the global scene, working within the global federation of environmental NGOs, Friends of the Earth International, we were part of history as we took part in the Peoples Summit on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in Cochabamba, Bolivia in April.

The summit was a meeting of peoples and social movements in the wake of the scandalous failure of the climate negotiations in Copenhagen. In attendance were 35,000 people from 120 countries of the world as well as about 54 official delegations. The Cochabamba Peoples Agreement rejected market mechanisms and other false solutions paraded by official climate change negotiators as being capable of solving the climate crisis. What climate negotiations in Copenhagen (2009) and the in Cancun (2010) at the close of the year could not achieve was attained within two days of open and dispassionate discussions by the peoples of the world

whose voices governments claim to represent. Still, they have been adamant in not respecting the outcome of the Cochabamba Summit. I was privileged to be among the civil society actors that accompanied the president of Bolivia, Evo Morales Ayma, to present the outcome of the Peoples Summit on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth to the Secretary General of the United Nations in May 2010.

Our National Environmental Consultation entered its third year in 2010. At this consultation we set our lenses on the Politics of Hunger. These consultations are quickly turning into international events with participants from many African countries and Europe in attendance. The consultation concluded that the global food crisis has clearly shown that hunger results from a mix of factors. The consultation called on the Nigerian government to pursue ecological-friendly agriculture, reject agricultural modern biotechnology and support small-scale family farmers. Incidentally, President Goodluck Jonathan had made the same point in his address at the opening of the consultation.

As the year drew to a close, a number of things stood out for me and for the organisation. First was the suit brought against BP for their massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The suit was filed in November 2010 at the Constitutional Court of Ecuador based on the provision for the Rights of Nature in their 2008 constitution. I was honoured to be part of the international team that filed the suit there. While at Ecuador, I received the Honoured Guest of Quito Award along with Vandana Shiva of India from the Mayor of the city.

Finally, the receipt of the Right Livelihood Award in December was a great honour that signified the correctness of the work we do at ERA/FoEN and our commitment to stand with the suffering local communities.

As we look back at 2010 I applaud the hard work of ERA people, our allies and supporters. You are all part of our success story. It was quite a year.

In solidarity!

Nnimmo Bassey



finally, a
movement against
hunger



finally, a movement against hunger

In its commitment to putting the hunger question on the front burner of national discourse to engender policy change, ERA/FoEN during the year facilitated the formation of a movement of Nigerians to engage the government on the issues of food security. The movement christened “Nigerian Peoples’ Food Sovereignty Coalition” will henceforth act as a pressure group.

The formation of the interest group was the highpoint of the 2010 National Environmental Consultation (NEC) which had as its theme “The Politics of Hunger”. The consultation had impressive attendance from various sectors and stakeholders including non-governmental and community-based groups, researchers, the academia, students, the media, government agencies, and

farmers from across the country. Participants also came from Ghana, Tanzania, South Africa and Norway.

The consultation held in Abuja from November 16 to 19, was designed primarily to examine the place of food aid, agricultural modern biotechnology, the move towards a new green revolution for Africa and land grabs, in the face of hunger and malnutrition affecting a significant number of African people. It also served as a convergence to build knowledge and skills on Biosafety systems, GMOs and AGRA; and an avenue to build the capacity of groups that will make contributions in the strengthening of the Biosafety Systems and the fight against GMOs in Nigeria and the continent as a whole. On a wider scale, it galvanized the importance of ecologically-friendly agriculture

and the need to build resistance by civil society, media, and farmers to false solutions being promoted by biotech companies.

Nnimmo Bassey, Executive Director of ERA/FoEN and the Chairperson, Friends of the Earth International welcomed participants with an address titled *"We Must Not Play Politics with Hunger"*. This address gave participants a clear picture of what the goals of the conference were all about: "to examine what has made Africa to become a continent at risk". The conference was to examine how Africa has become the poster continent for hunger and poverty whereas she was a net food exporter in the 1960s. According to him, African countries have been opened to manipulation by international financial institutions as well as aid and development agencies. Such bodies draft policy directions and foist them on African countries including Nigeria.

In a keynote address on the theme "Can Africa Feed Itself?", Dr. Olaseinde Arigbede, National Coordinator/Animator, Union of Small and Medium Farmers Association of Nigeria (USMEFAN) said that Africa is a

Grade A continent with enviable natural endowments and as such can feed itself. Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan who was represented by Mr. Ken Saro Wiwa jnr, assured participants that government will do all it can to help farmers and encourage more young people to become farmers while providing incentives that would re-energize the agricultural sector. Other speakers at the first day of the consultation include Aksel Naerstad, Senior Policy Adviser, The Development Fund Norway, who said hunger is unacceptable and the right to adequate food is human right. His paper was titled "The Peoples Framework to Eradicate Hunger: It's Relevance for Africa". Abdulai Darimani of Third World Network Africa spoke on "Interventionist Philanthropism and the New Face of capitalism in African Agriculture".

Two plenary sessions addressed the critical topic: "The Green Revolution, Past Impacts and Current Issues" with speakers from across Africa sharing experience on the growth of genetically modified crops. Resource persons tackled the issues of food security, hunger and the food deficits in Nigeria.

A major highlight of the event was the conferment of the Comrade Che Ibegura Award on the Environment on Madam Juliana Odey. Odey popularly known as “*Mama Cassava*” was honoured for her active campaign and mobilization of rural women on the need to cultivate cassava and resist GMO’s.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The robust consultations and panel discussions at the conference made some observations which helped put the issue of hunger in perspective. The conference concluded that hunger is not only the absence of food but more critically the lack of access to food. Another point was that although the language of hunger is universal, what is not really universal is the question of why people are hungry especially in Africa.

The conference called for the following:

- Massive awareness campaigns at the grassroots to educate the local people on the dangers of ceding their lands to anybody for cultivation of Agro-fuels,

because of its negative consequences.

- The establishment of effective systems to monitor and block the entry of GMOs which participants agreed threaten biodiversity and poses dangers to the environment and health.
- Nigeria and other African countries to give massive support to small scale farmers as one of the critical ways to ensure food security and elimination of hunger in the country and the continent.
- African youths to be encouraged to consider farming as a viable and attractive choice. The conference also made strict demands on land and asked that all lands taken from local people for the purpose of agro fuel be returned to them while also asking for the criminalization of land grabbing.

The National Environmental Consultation was supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Norges Naturvernforbund (NNV), Oxfam Novib,

Third World Network (TWN) and Friends of the Earth International (FoEI).

Aside the successes of the Consultation, ERA's Food Sovereignty Programme engaged other regional groups in answering the food question at global levels. Meetings attended in this regard include the Forum for

Agribusiness and Agrofuels which held in El-Salvador, 3- 5 June 2010, hosted by Friends of the Earth El Salvador, the Land Grabbing in Africa Joint Strategy and Capacity Building meeting held in Accra, Ghana, 4-9 September, and the Consultation on the Tenure of Land and Natural Resources in Addis Ababa 20-22 September .



Spills:
Niger Delta versus
Gulf of Mexico

Spills: gulf of mexico versus niger delta

During the year, ERA/FoEN continued its monitoring and documentation efforts in the oil-polluted communities of the Niger Delta. Interestingly, the year also marked the occurrence of the Gulf of Mexico blow-out which received mammoth hypocritical attention when compared with the situation in the Niger Delta.

The April 20, explosion on BP's Deepwater Horizon killed 11 workers and caused massive environmental disaster with over 206 million gallons of crude spewed into the gulf. But these figures and volumes are little when compared with the situation in the Niger Delta where similar occurrences routinely ruin farmlands and livelihoods.

Oil companies like Shell, Agip and Chevron operating in the Niger Delta lived up to their hypocritical response to pollution from their facilities, evading remediation and

compensation for impacted communities . Confirmed cases of negligence on the part of the companies were blamed on innocent local people. ERA/FoEN did not relent in cataloguing spills in the oil-communities.

A feature common to all communities where testimonies were taken indicated regular destruction of the environment by oil companies who seemed to have perfected a strategy of shoddy scooping of spilt crude and avoidance of remediation of the environment all together.

Aside Ikarama, communities affected in Bayelsa included Umbugbene, Ondewari, Oruma and Ogbunugbene. Umbugbene and Ondewari experienced routine spills from Agip facilities, starting in March. There was a major oil spill and fire along Agip's 24-inch Oporoma/Ogboibiri pipeline and the company's Wellhead within Ondewari/Okpotuwari. Ondewari community

experienced yet another incident in June at the Tebidaba/Ogboinbiri flow line which devastated the surrounding environment.

In May, Oruma community which had consistently experienced ruptures from Shell facility in previous years, witnessed the first of such incidents from an Agip pipeline which spewed crude on farmlands, and left huge number of snails dead.

In July, the company was also blamed for violation of the environment close to its Taylor Creek Wellhead where a gas leak occurred. Trees and shrubs affected wilted and died while petroleum products covered very wide expanse of land, spreading into ponds and other bodies of water. When ERA's/FoEN field monitors visited the site that month, massive gas leak was still observed coming out of the pipeline.

Sadly, the company failed to heed the appeal of the community for an immediate clamping of the leak. Agip only mobilized to stop the leak in June, four days after we took journalists to see the situation first-hand. The gas leak occurred in May and went on for three weeks.

Ogbunugbene community in Sagbama Local Government Area had its own bitter share of the bleeding pipes. The volume of crude oil that escaped the pipes was so massive that it spread to the swamps of three neighbouring communities - Okpotuwari, Ondewari and Umbugbene, with serious impacts on ponds, farmlands, economic trees and entire swamp fishing areas.

Like Agip, so also is Shell which was blamed for five of the six spills experienced in Ikarama Community between the months of June and August.

The areas affected included Shell's Okordia Manifold, the Adibawa/Okordia Delivery Line and along Shell Trans-Niger/Rumuekpe Trunkline.

In the same month, Delta State was not spared the effects of the bleeding pipes as fish farmers in Ekpan Community in Uvwie LGA suffered major fish loss in their ponds from a spill traced to Chevron facility that affected the nearby Ekpan River.

Community folks also blamed Shell for most spills that occurred in Rivers State, particularly

the ones that occurred in Bodo, Gokana Local Government Area and along the company's JK4 pipeline at Edagberi and Owerewere in Ahoada West and Abua Odual Local Government Areas in September and October. And as is the case with Agip and Chevron, the company accused locals of sabotage.

Monitoring agencies like the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) still did not live up to their responsibility of detecting and coordinating oil spill response activities and penalising companies found wanting.



Unfortunately, the persistent ecological disaster in the Niger Delta has not received as much attention as the outrage that trailed the Gulf of Mexico incident which compelled US President Barack Obama to convene a June 16, 2010 meeting where BP was forced to commit to a \$20 billion remediation fund.

Despite several decades of unending spills and unquantifiable damage to the

environment, the Nigerian government has failed to make the oil corporations pay for wanton destruction of the environment.

This brazen lopsidedness in handling a matter of grave concern has only sharpened our resolve to continue to engage communities on environmental monitoring in the incoming years.

Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria
Welcomes you to



tobacco-free africa
receives major
boost

Tobacco-free africa receives major boost

The quest for effective coordination among major organisations involved in activities aimed at reducing tobacco use in Sub-Sahara Africa became a reality in 2010 with the commencement of the Africa Tobacco Control Consortium (ATCC) projects.

The ATCC is led by the American Cancer Society (ACS) and includes other partners such as the Africa Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA), Africa Tobacco Control Regional Initiative (ATCRI), Framework Convention Alliance (FCA - AFRO region), Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK) and the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union).

ATCRI which is being hosted by ERA/FoEN is one of the three implementing partners in Africa. ATCRI has commenced the implementation of ATCC projects for which it has been assigned leading roles. They include technical assistance to tobacco control actors in sub-saharan Africa, a multilanguage Tobacco Control Resource Centre

(www.africatobaccocontrol.org), Communications , Journalists trainings, Languages Coordination and Research activities.

Besides, ATCRI during the period successfully implemented a scoping of tobacco control situation in six African countries namely Benin, Botswana, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Togo and Uganda. The objective of the exercise was to deepen the understanding of tobacco control situations in those countries, identify obstacles to effective tobacco control and identify policy interventions.

A step forward on National Tobacco Control Bill

To further pressure the parliament for the passage of the National Tobacco Control Bill ERA/FoEN intensified its legislative advocacy activities during the period. Several advocacy visits were made to the National Assembly and other collaborating government institutions and agencies.

The visits were used by ERA/FoEN team to meet with select parliamentarians and the key champion of the bill particularly when it became obvious that the legislative process was being compromised by proxies of tobacco companies.

In October , ERA/FoEN's team delivered a petition to the Senate President, David Mark requesting for a meeting between him and the Nigerian tobacco control community. Similar petition was also delivered same day to the Chair of the Health Committee. Those actions helped a great deal in moving the bill forward as the Chair called into ERA/FoEN office to fix another meeting while the Senate President responded officially promising the passage of the bill in a letter dated 18 October ,2010.

In addition, ERA/FoEN also monitored and exposed the underhand marketing and promotion activities targeting youths. ERA/FoEN exposed the "Bursting with Flavour" smoking party to parties organised by the British American Tobacco (BATN).

We exposed an all- night smoking party organized by BAT at the Ajeromi -Ifelodun Area of Lagos and a similar event organized at an expensive restaurant, OceanView, in Lagos on September 24.

The two expose have led to series of meetings between ERA/FoEN and the officials of the Lagos State House of Assembly on how to enact laws to end those practices.



gender
beyond borders

WEAR UP FOR
WOMEN

gender across borders

The year ended on a glistening note with the gender committee.

It was a year in which projects targeted at projecting the plights of women as well as finding answers to them were executed. It was a year in which gender-sensitiveness in the organisational setting and external mainstreaming in the forms of field monitoring and multi-faceted campaigns took a renewed and expansive dimension.

One of the first activities implemented by the committee was the publication of an edition of the quarterly Environmental Impact Newsletter wholly dedicated to gender issues. With the cover title; 'Our Environment, Our Women', it covered a wide range of women-related campaigns, activities, publications and testimonies of 'environmentally dislocated women' of the Niger Delta.

Also in the year several meetings and forums were organised to deepen debates around gender issues and map out action plans. Among the meetings, seminars and roundtables was the 'International Women's Day' 2010. It was colourfully commemorated in three of the four ERA/FoEN offices namely Benin, Lagos and Port Harcourt, to especially raise awareness about women's environmental rights issues in the country.

Amongst others, the Lagos meeting had frontline female activist and President of Campaign for Democracy (CD), Joe Okei-Odumakin, as guest of honour.

Also, in an attempt to continually beam the searchlight on women-related issues, ERA/FoEN held the first ever 'Women and Tobacco' symposium to mark the World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) 2010 whose theme was "Tobacco Marketing to Women". The symposium attracted about 100 participants

mainly women as well as students, journalists, tobacco control activists, former smokers.

Gender -Friendly Workplace:

In ensuring that ERA/FoEN maintains a gender-friendly workplace, two crèches were created and equipped. They are located in the Benin and Lagos offices to create a work-friendly atmosphere for nursing mothers in both offices.

Similarly, the organisation produced ERA/FoEN Gender Justice Policy booklet which encompasses the policies and practise of the organisation with regards to gender equity and justice.

Women in Impacted Communities

As part of creating platforms for stirring up discourse, finding out first hand about issues affecting women, ERA/FoEN organised series of meetings across the Niger Delta in 2010. Two of such meetings which were aimed at

sensitization, experience sharing and for strategising attracted women from about 12 communities in two states (Warri in Delta and Port Harcourt in Rivers States).

It witnessed testimonies, discussions and strategies for future actions. The Port Harcourt event had in attendance two commissioners namely, the commissioner for Information, Ibim Semenitari, Manuela George Izunwa and a representative of the Commissioner for Environment, Isaac Nwankwo all of whom explained government efforts, answered questions from the participants, as well as outlined government's intervention towards mitigating the negative impacts of the extractive industry and multi-faceted injustices perpetrated against host communities. The meetings held on December 6 and 8 consecutively.

Taking Gender Beyond Borders

In 2010, ERA/FoEN coordinated a project on 'Pipelines and Gender' by FoEI in collaboration with Gender Action (USA), meant to examine *the Gender Impact of the West African Gas Pipelines Project (WAGP) and the Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipelines* with a view to addressing them. It took off in April 2010. ERA/FoEN coordinated the four FoE country associates involved namely FoE Ghana, FoE Togo, FoE Cameroon (CED) and FoE Nigeria (ERA).

The project, coordinated by Betty Abah, ERA/FoEN's Gender Focal Person, witnessed several sensitization, research (data collection) and advocacy activities in communities in the four countries. On the Nigerian front, several familiarization/mobilization visits were undertaken to the communities in Badagry, Lagos ahead of the research and advocacy activities.

The team, made up of ERA staff and volunteers were intimated of plans by the WAGP consortium to start flaring gas at the Badagry Terminal. There were reported cases of ill health arising from emissions from the terminal station.

In addition, there was also a capacity building workshop in Cameroon for staff of the four FoE country partners attended by ERA's Betty Abah and Philip Jakpor (Project Officer/Head of Media) community awareness gatherings were coordinated by Abah in the four countries, to extract testimonies and further sensitize them to claim their rights.

ERA/FoEN Leads

Besides executing the GMLT, ERA/FoEN also took part as leading partner on Oxfam/Novib's Measuring Milestones' project which entails comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of successes

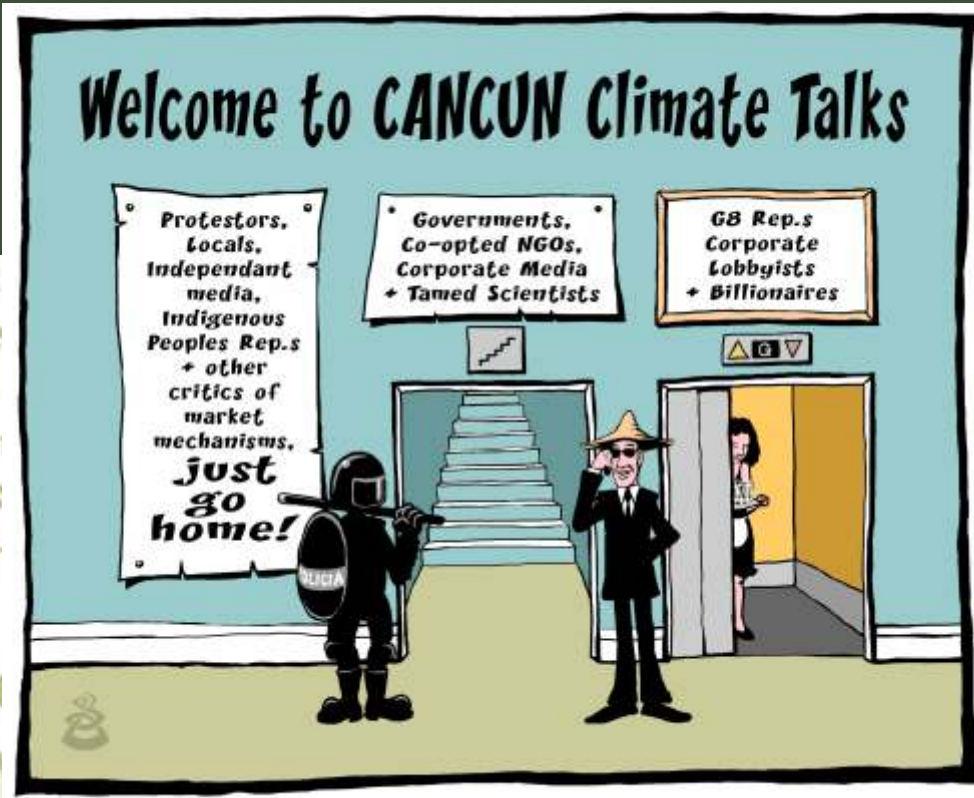
recorded in campaign/project objectives. ERA/FoEN was selected by Oxfam/Novib to work with the country coordinator Bunmi Dipo-Salami to train other GMLT partners on the project.

As part of the project, Abah and Dipo-Salami attended a training for Oxfam/Novib's partners from about 10 countries (counterparts from Africa, Asia and the

Middle East, with training by Gender at work and ON's staff in Cairo, Egypt between October 11-15, 2010. ERA/FoEN now has the task of transferring the knowledge and skills in this new innovative monitoring mechanism which among others utilises the 'Story-telling technique' to partners and within its other organisational campaigns.



Welcome to CANCUN climate Talks



cancun hosts carbon
traders

Credit: Shtig(.net).

cancun hosts carbon traders

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) met in Cancun, Mexico 29 November to 11 December 2010.

COP16 followed the earlier meeting in Copenhagen in 2009 that yielded the infamous Copenhagen Accord. Progress on the climate negotiations have been slow and difficult with industrialised nations reluctant to make commitments to binding emissions reduction while promoting mechanisms that allow them to pollute and offset the emissions through actions taken off shore, often in the global South.

African nations and small island states are among the most vulnerable to the ravages of climate change. Little wonder they have been vociferous in calling for real actions to tackle the crisis. Bolivia stands out as a champion of social movements' articulations of the

needed actions that would not only secure the lowest possible temperature increases above pre industrial levels but also call for recognition and payment of climate debt and other commitments to finance climate mitigation and adaptation. These demands were articulated in the "Peoples Agreement" reached in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in April 2010.

ERA/ FoEN was actively involved in working with climate justice groups as well as other social movements in promoting the "Peoples Agreement" in Cancun and below are two blog postings from our own Nnimmo bassey who also was in Cancun in his capacity as FoEI chair.

The two postings gave insights into happenings at the Cancun negotiations. His blogs were published on ERA's website as well as on the website of Friends of the Earth International (www.foei.org) and of Friends of the Earth Norway (<http://naturvernforbundet.no>)

Climate Negotiations Stuck in the Market - Nnimmo Bassey

Last year in Copenhagen, the conference of the parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) began and ended under a cloud of doubts and perceived undemocratic actions. At that meeting many delegations from developing and vulnerable nations believed that drafts of what would be the final outcome document were being discussed and circulated within privileged circles away from the standard practice where such negotiations took place on the open conference floor.

This year's COP has just opened in Cancun, Mexico, and already delegates are afraid that the same trend that closed the door to reaching a fair and concrete agreement at Copenhagen is already in motion. Whereas in Copenhagen there was a steady flow of leaked documents allegedly prepared by the

President of the COP, this time around the fears are being raised by the texts prepared by the Chair of the ad hoc working group on Long-term Cooperative Action (LCA). The other major working group under the COP is the one that deals with the Kyoto Protocol.

The year between conferences is spent in technical negotiations and preparations during which delegations review texts prepared by chairpersons of the working groups on the basis of the submissions made by the delegations or members.

The document produced by the chair of the LCA appears to be something quite at variance with what many delegates expected would be the outcome of the negotiations and work done since Copenhagen. The document that delegates are to debate is allegedly based on the "Copenhagen Accord" which some delegate insist was not an agreement at the end of COP15, but was merely taken note of by that conference.

Questions are being asked why such a document would now be legitimised and made the foundation for serious negotiations expected to produce a fair and ambitious agreement at the end of the conference in Cancun? Perhaps we can describe the underpinning and the tone of the ongoing UNFCCC negotiations as being a product of the monoculture of the mind using a concept described by the noted eco-feminist, Vandana Shiva as a one-dimensional way of thinking that is “the primary threat to nature and people today” through the centralising and monopolising of power and control.”

The Cancun conference has opened with the strengthening of the steps rich countries have determinedly made into the quicksand of the carbon market. The market is seen as a silver bullet to the problems of the climate crisis and at the same time provides tools for rich countries to shirk responsibility and for off-loading burdens onto already bent and

broken backs of poor nations. This silver bullet is also being exploited to provide a model for merchandising nature and for the rewarding corporate adventurers through carbon market speculations.

After the Copenhagen conference ended without an agreement, the government of Bolivia hosted a first ever World Peoples Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in Cochabamba in April 2010. The outcome of that conference was the Peoples Agreement that the government of Bolivia then articulated into a formal submission to the UNFCCC as well as the Secretary General of the United Nations. The essential fault line between those following the path crafted by the Copenhagen Accord and those who do not accept it as the way towards a fair agreement that recognises the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities are quite serious and the resolution has deep

consequences for the future of our planet and the species that inhabit it, including humankind.

The draft text circulated by the Chair of the LCA puts forward the ambition that actions should be geared towards keeping global temperature increase at 2 degrees Celsius as opposed to proposals made by a number of delegations that the target should be between 1 degree and 1.5 degrees temperature rise above 1990 levels. Analysts see a target of 2 degrees as essentially sentencing Africa and other vulnerable regions to incineration because of expected enhanced levels of temperature rise in such areas.

The text in question has also disregarded the demand by vulnerable nations that to ensure urgent and robust technology transfer for the purpose of mitigation and adaptation such transfers should not be governed by subsisting intellectual property rights regimes.

Another sore point in the text is that the financial commitment proposed does not step up to the level of ambition needed to tackle the climate crisis and is even less serious than what was suggested by the so-called Copenhagen Accord.

Critics insist that the text presented for negotiations is not based on human rights and does not recognise submissions made with regard to the rights of Mother Earth. The critical demand of recognising and payment of a climate debt owed the poor countries by the rich ones as a surer mechanism for dealing with historical issues as well as meeting urgent financial requirements has also been ignored.

The Bolivian delegation sums up the situation this way: "the new text does not reflect the various proposals of the G77 and China, nor does it take into account the proposals of the World People's Conference on Climate

Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, which represent the demands of the more than 35,000 delegates that gathered last April in Cochabamba, Bolivia." The delegation adds "it is essential to uphold the multilateral process at COP 16 and to avoid the emergence of documents that have not been negotiated, as was the case last year in Copenhagen."

Considering the serious divide already on the conference floor, the question now is what lesson has the world learnt since last year and what would happen in the next days to make the outcome of the Cancun conference different from that of Copenhagen.

After One week in Cancun

- By Nnimmo Bassey

The first week of COP16 ended on a foggy note. It was unclear what the final week would yield and what would happen when all the ministers arrive and the political horse-trading takes over from negotiations led by technocrats. Some ministers arrived over the weekend and engaged in some informal talks.

With Japan's clear signal earlier in the week that they would not support any second commitment period of the Kyoto protocol many delegates and observers expressed shock at the seeming infanticide. They saw Japan's action as that of a mother attempting to kill her child. This imagery is compelling because the Kyoto protocol was birthed in Japan in 1997 and it was indeed a high point of the COP held that year.

Japan is not the only country here that would be happy not to have to make legally binding commitments on emissions reduction as required by the Kyoto Protocol. The USA, for instance, at COP15 in Copenhagen introduced the so-called Copenhagen Accord (CA), which essentially sought to side step the Kyoto Protocol. For such countries, what would work is a regime of voluntary emissions reductions that adds to unknown levels of temperature increases.

Observers, including Friends of the Earth International (FoEI), read this move to kill the Kyoto Protocol to mean setting the world on a path towards spirally climate change. In fact, analysts say that the proposal to skip scientifically reached emissions cuts levels for rich countries would mean that there would be no way of working towards a predictable aggregate temperature rise level. Some have gone ahead to say that what is being pushed by the rich nations would translate to a possible 4-5 degrees Celsius rise in temperature above pre-industrial levels. This at a time when some delegates are calling for 1-1.5 degrees Celsius target.

What would a temperature rise of 5 degrees Celsius mean? Would there be possibilities of adaptation measures that would save the planet? Would there be suitable mitigation moves? Not probable. If voluntary, uncoordinated emissions reduction regimes mean catastrophic temperature rises,

why would nations shoot for actions that would lead to such an outcome?

The rich nations appear to control the subterranean levers of the negotiations, but there are also strong forces from less rich blocks pushing for retention of the Kyoto Protocol and ensuring that science and justice based emissions targets are set for a second commitment period of the protocol (2013-2017). The Group of 77 and China is one of such political blocks.

Secret Texts?

By the weekend, rumours made the round that the Mexican COP presidency was cooking a secret text that would skip the multilateral negotiation process. This would mean that ministers would arrive in Cancun and race to conclude the COP without robust scrutiny of points that were yet to be resolved either in plenary sessions or in the various working groups.

Coming after the Copenhagen debacle, the Mexicans appear cautious not to fall into the same corner as the Danes. They are said to be engaging in wide behind the scenes negotiations with regard to the content of what may turn out to be the Cancun Accord. While that has been going on, observers believe that the process is very flawed and that the principles of openness and transparency are being flouted. One delegate was overheard saying that the process should guide the outcome.

Information emanating from the lobbies of the negotiation halls suggests that the Mexican COP is actually more focused on the "content" than on the process that would lead to an ambitious outcome. Who cooks the content?

It is assumed, critics say, that at the end of the day, negotiators will turn a blind eye on the process if the content is something they can

live with. If this happens, we can also ask the question: why not conduct these negotiations via e-mail and spare the huge resources spent in convening conferences only to end up having a few folks draft texts and others browbeaten to step in line?

There has been no shortage of complaints about the texts currently in circulation in Cancun. The Bolivian delegates for one said that new text is not balanced and that the "parties' text" should be used rather than texts prepared by facilitators and the COP Chair. The Nicaraguan delegation argues that facilitators cannot interpret party positions and termed the new text as "an informal text." Nigeria, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and others insisted on the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol. All these are more emanated from the informal plenary that was held on Sunday, December 5.

That reminds me. The other day a delegate spoke about how several nations ended up endorsing the Copenhagen Accord after first rejecting it at COP15. What we did not hear is that some nations actually did so to avoid being denied aid. In fact, at least two countries that did not sign the Accord were denied aid by the USA possibly as punishment for being recalcitrant.

The Caravans are in town

At the weekend, popular mobilisation spaces in the centre of Cancun came to life as the caravans arrived in town from various parts of Mexico and from neighbouring countries with thousands of people. FoEI members were on hand to welcome caravans of members of La Via Campesina, Oilwatch International as well as some indigenous groups. On Friday, the first public protest march took place from the municipal office to a Wal-Mart supermarket denouncing the World Bank for seeking to become a climate bank.

Several events took place in the popular spaces, far away from the restricted official negotiation halls of the Moon Palace Hotel and the exhibition spaces of Cancunmesse.

As we enter the crunch week, the voices of the people will intensify from the streets of Cancun and from the popular convergence spaces. The demand will rise for climate justice and for the defence of Pachamama (Mother Earth or Nature).

The people are demanding the elimination of corporate lobby from the climate negotiations and for truly ambitious emissions cuts. The people are calling for the tackling of the systemic causes of climate change including leaving fossil fuels in the ground and moving on to a mode of civilisation steered away from carbon emissions dependency.

How will it all end? We keep our eyes and ears open.



new skills for staff, volunteers,
journalists in
field monitoring

new skills for staff, volunteers, **journalists in field monitoring**

ERA/FoEN organized several trainings and workshops aimed at building the capacities of staff and volunteers to respond to the ever- evolving environmental challenges in the country and beyond. The trainings were not limited to environmental monitoring and reporting, but extended to journalists in the mainstream media to enable them effectively identify and report the environment from the point of knowledge.

To boost the capacity of staff to effectively carry out monitoring of identified environmental threats, a two-day field monitors training was organized 3-5 August 2010 at the Ken Saro Wiwa gallery of ERA /FoEN.

Executive Director, Nnimmo Bassey explained that the training was an opportunity to re-affirm ERA/FoEN core philosophy that all staff are field monitors who must ensure that any harm to the environment is not swept under the carpet.

Bassey insisted that “if there are no field monitors, impunity cannot be exposed”, challenging participants not only to be whistleblowers but also to be very factual and in-depth in their reports as this would empower impacted people to stand up in the face of evil and injustice.

A guest speaker, Huzi Mshelia, noted that people's livelihoods are always at stake whenever there is an unreported violation and that this should take priority in field reports. Other topics in the very robust training included Environmental Field Monitoring & Media Advocacy and Gender Justice and Participatory Field Monitoring and were taken by ERA's programmes Director Godwin Uyi Ojo, Philip Jakpor and Betty Abah.

Journalists Trainings

In 2010, trainings were not limited only to staff as ERA/FoEN broadened the engagement of journalists on environmental issues by organizing the third and fourth

Journalists trainings (Warri and Abuja). Funds for the trainings were provided by VIKES, the Finnish Foundation for Media, Communication and Development.

The first training was organized in Effurun, Delta State on 6-9 April 2010 at the Wellington Hotels and Towers. The event drew media participants from the Benin-Warri axis while facilitators included lawyers, women rights groups and renowned Nigerian journalists. Timo Sipola, a Finnish journalist, along with Anders Parmann, Anna Tresse and Simon Strumse of the Socialist Youth League of Norway were also at the training to share experiences with Nigerian journalists.

A field trip to Ubeji, an oil-impacted community near Warri, and group discussion were also integrated into the programme to bring the environmental issues within the axis to the consciousness of the journalists.

At the end of the three-day exercise, thirteen Journalists became well-informed on varied environmental issues, and agreed to join the Network of Journalists for the Environment established in 2009.

We did not stop there but decided to draw national attention to under-reported environmental issues in northern Nigeria by organising another journalists training at the Peace Haven Hotel, Wuye in Abuja from 8-11 September 2010. The thrust of the Abuja training was to explore strategies for improving environmental reporting for journalists working in northern Nigeria.

The imperative of the training was highlighted by Executive Director, Nnimmo Bassey who explained to participants that it was indisputable that desertification is a key environmental challenge facing northern Nigeria and indeed all of sub-Saharan Africa and that it has been estimated that the desert area was increasing at the rate of more than

half a kilometre every year, threatening about 35 million Nigerians that depend on impacted areas for their livelihoods. Another major challenge identified was the shrinking Lake Chad which he said, is also a major calamity in northern Nigeria that is yet to

attract adequate news reports.

A major outcome of the Abuja training was the expansion of the Journalist Network to include 13 new members from the Federal Capital Territory and environs.



organisational
milestones

organisational milestones

A remarkable achievement for ERA/FoEN in the year was the recognition of the Executive Director, Nnimmo Bassey by the Right Livelihood Award Foundation, which made him one of the four winners of the 'Alternative Nobel Prize'.

The foundation, which was established in 1980, honours and supports individuals offering practical and exemplary solutions to the most urgent challenges facing the world. The award is widely recognized as the world's premier award for personal courage and social transformation and enables recipients to reach out to an international audience that otherwise might not have heard of them. It is presented annually in Stockholm at a ceremony in the Swedish Parliament.

Unlike the Nobel Prizes (for Physics, Physiology/Medicine, Chemistry, Literature, and Peace), the Right Livelihood Award has no

categories. It recognises that, in striving to meet the human challenges of today's world, the most inspiring and remarkable work often defies any standard classification. Also Bassey was awarded the honour as an Honoured Guest of Quito, Ecuador along with Vandana Shiva, the world-renowned eco-feminist. The award ceremony was held with full pomp at the city hall with Mayor and school children using the occasion to launch a fund to keep oil in the soil in the Yasuni ITT Park in the Ecuadorian Amazonia.

The honour was accorded Bassey for being one of the principal African campaign advocates on environmental and human rights, fighting tirelessly against the practices and environmental devastation by multinational companies. The Metropolitan District of Quito placed Nnimmo Bassey on public record as Quito's illustrious guest.

Besides, In November 2010 the Benin Kingdom in Edo State, Nigeria also recognised the environmental justice campaigns of Bassey in its inaugural award for environmental sustainability, particularly in the Niger Delta where resource conflicts are rife.

In the same vein, ERA Director, Administration & Programmes, Godwin Uyi Ojo was conferred the prestigious Africa Noble Award

by Leadtimes Africa Magazine in recognition of his contributions to strategic national development and pragmatism in leadership. The award is aimed at promoting the virtues of integrity, accountability and transparency in public private sectors.

Ojo, along with Nnimmo Bassey and Oronto Douglas co-founded ERA in 1993 as a platform for increasing environmental awareness and citizens' response to environmental issues.



financial
statement

financial statement

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

	Note	\$	N
INCOME			
NOVIB		288,952	43,342,830
NNV/ EMiS		214,303	32,145,390
NORAD/ NNV		172,073	25,810,899
NED		23,970	3,595,500
OTHER FUNDERS		205,226	30,783,869
		<u>904,523</u>	<u>135,678,488</u>

EXPENDITURE

Remuneration		93,728	14,059,262
Rent		25,604	3,840,550
Field Monitoring & Co-ordination		60,705	9,105,683
Campaign, Media & Advocacy		55,815	8,372,200
Transport & Travelling		28,038	4,205,690
Legislative Promotion		16,000	2,400,000
Legal Expenses		26,667	4,000,000
Consultancy & Research		12,874	1,931,036
Publications & Publicity		42,973	6,445,960

Audit & Administration	15,028	2,254,215
Utilities	20,667	3,100,070
Meetings&Conferences	272,269	40,840,515
Office Running	23,951	3,592,625
Networking/ICT	30,180	4,527,000
Capacity Building	21,629	3,244,350
Evaluation & EIA Training	25,997	3,899,550
Community Exchange&Meetings	22,699	3,404,800
Bank Charges	6,003	900,424
Depreciation	14,655	2,198,210
	<u>815,481</u>	<u>122,322,140</u>
Excess of income over expenditure	<u>89,042</u>	<u>13,356,348</u>
Exchange rate \$1 = N150		

we must choose what we eat

ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACTION/FRIENDS OF THE EARTH, NIGERIA

2010 annual report



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“All peoples shall have the right to (a) generally satisfactory environment favourable to their development”.

-Article 24, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

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