

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE CASE OF MULTINATIONAL OIL COMPANIES IN THE NIGER DELTA OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The Niger Delta of Nigeria is the region that is blessed with oil. The multinational oil companies who have been engaged in upstream activities in the area for many years have degraded the environment of the Niger Delta and have done little to improve the lot of the people. A report by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with the Presidential Committee on Environment, Survey and Clean-up of Ogoni-land set up by the Nigerian government clearly revealed the magnitude and extent of the damage and destruction wreaked on Ogoni-land from oil exploration and production. The case of Ogoni-land is not different from other oil bearing committees in the Niger Delta where oil exploration and production are carried with great fervor by the Nigerian government in partnership with multinational oil companies. Both the oil companies and the government of Nigeria pass the buck as to who should provide the necessary development projects to counteract the adverse effects of upstream activities. This article argues that beyond the payment of taxes and other levies to the Nigerian government, the multinational oil companies who have made tremendous profit from the Niger Delta area also owe an obligation to it; an obligation of corporate social responsibility. Presently the Niger Delta is in turmoil and petroleum operations have been adversely affected. Unless there is a concerted effort by the oil companies to discharge corporate social responsibility to their host communities in the Niger Delta the exploitation of oil from the area will always be fraught with problems, difficulties and dangers

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