



Promoting a Legacy of Non-Violence in the Niger Delta

In September 2013, the U.S. State Department launched a conflict mitigation initiative in Nigeria's Delta region. Nigeria plays a critical role in Africa's stability, and the United States has a strong interest in the country's peace, prosperity, and security. The resource-rich Niger Delta is vital to Nigeria's economic health and its stability is a top priority. The U.S. initiative in the Delta aims to address the risk of destabilizing violence and increase confidence in the power of nonviolent problem-solving among citizens, government, and other key actors.

Defining a New Legacy

Despite the difficulties facing the Niger Delta, leaders are challenging the social acceptability of violence and striving for a future of peace and prosperity. Teachers, journalists, and religious leaders are joining forces to strengthen the social contract by increasing accountability between citizens and government and condemning violence. NGOs and Nollywood stars are teaming up to give voice to communities shaping a legacy of non-violent civic activism. If amplified, these inspiring stories can drown out the adage that "violence pays," and set the tone for a new public narrative of peaceful problem solving. Partnering with a core group of Nigerian activists, businessmen, media entrepreneurs, and thought leaders that comprise the Niger Delta Legacy Board of Directors, the U.S. government is catalyzing the launch of a mass media campaign supported by community and government outreach.

Mass Media Campaign

The Niger Delta Legacy Board of Directors is launching TV and radio shows and social media content that will capitalize on these rapidly expanding media platforms. Featuring prominent celebrities and public figures, the campaign's centerpiece is a television show called "Dawn in the Creeks." It will showcase stories of communities and government working together to non-violently solve problems, in order to inspire similar efforts. With leading broadcasters, producers, and creative artists as partners, the engagement will produce popular media products that will continue paying stability dividends after U.S. government support phases out.

Community and Government Outreach

Building on successes showcased in the media campaign, the Board of Directors has identified practical ways to help communities and governments use non-violent methods more broadly and effectively to resolve problems and meet their priorities. The U.S. Government will work with state and local governments to reinforce the impact of these efforts.

Measuring Success

The goal is to see the Niger Delta emerge from the 2015 election period without destabilizing violence and on a path toward peace, accountable governance, and prosperity. We will measure impact by:

- Tracking frequency and intensity of violence using open-source "big data" tools
- Monitoring public perceptions of and behavior regarding violence, civic activism, government responsiveness, and the social contract

