



## **Academic Associates PeaceWorks**

B35, Trans Amadi Facilities Ltd.,  
129132 Trans Amadi Industrial Layout,  
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.  
Tel: +234 915 310 7741,  
[aapeaceworks@yahoo.com](mailto:aapeaceworks@yahoo.com); [www.aapw.org](http://www.aapw.org)

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# **Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa (C7-WA).**

## **Introduction**

Academic Associates PeaceWorks (AAPW) is implementing a project with three partners, referred herein as consortium members, namely Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile (FAIMM), Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), and West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) with support from the European Union (EU). The title of the project is “Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa (C7-WA). The aim of the project is to strengthen West African Coastal Communities’ resilience to cope with climate change and conflict by developing innovative tools related to conflict sensitive climate change (CC) adaptation and prevention of environmental crimes that exacerbate climate change impact on communities as well as monitoring of the impact of climate change as a driver of conflict.

To achieve this, the project intends to develop tools, based on innovative research and global best practices, which will be tested through the establishment of a Community Stakeholders Network, constituted with highly influential community stakeholders’ by AAPW. The CSNs will then be trained to deliver nature based innovative solutions to the climate change challenges in the region, through a large-scale capacity building program, targeting communities and local actors. Information about climate change and conflict will be used to update the ECOWAS regional framework for Conflict prevention and early warning.

While, the CSNs will be trained to advocate and mobilize resources to address the climate change challenges, the project will also finance climate change mitigation and adaptation interventions of the project targeted communities in the Niger Delta through a small-scale grant scheme. Thus, as part of the project, AAPW carried out community entry and stakeholders mapping as well as supported HOMEF one of the consortium partners to conduct a research. Findings of the research have been encapsulated in a report after validation by community representatives and copies made available for each community. Below are key points during the community entry and stakeholders mapping visit.

## **Finima Community Climate Change Issues**

- Increase in thunder and thunder lightening: Finima is a thunder belt area but currently there is an increase in thunder and lightning.
- Increase in Sea Turbulence: Passenger boat mishaps due to the increasing sea turbulence. Similarly, fishermen also experience increase in boat mishaps at sea.
- Fisherfolks miss their direction due to unpredictable change in the direction of wind
- Piracy, kidnapping, sea robbery in the area is said to have increased due to livelihood depletion.

- Low fish catch: Most fisherfolks complained about low fish catch due to unpredictable of fishing season as a result of the changing climatic conditions
- Unknown sea weed that has invaded the sea, tangling and destroying fishing nets.
- Rise in sea level, sea surge and coastal flood has increased erosion in Finima
- Mangrove cutting for construction and as a source of energy
- Gas leaks. oil spills, bunkering and artisanal refining is high in the area
- Poor industrial and domestic waste management
- Lack of potable water: Water is imported from Port Harcourt.

### **Current Finima Community Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies**

- Implementation of environmental conservation; the Finima Nature Park by the community
- Adopt multiple fishing methods with different types of fishing nets
- Local coastline embankment with sand and stones mixed with cement girded with woods that are pinned to form a barrier
- Cluster fishing, where a number of fisherfolk agree to go out for fishing in the same area to check insecurity
- Use of umbrella made with wooden handles to curb electrocution from thunder.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. As a community member, what adaptation and mitigation strategies would you recommend to each of the above issues if any?
2. What skills are available in the community that will be useful to the adaptation and mitigation strategies you have recommended?
3. What are the current adaptation and mitigation strategies in the community?
4. What can community members do collectively that are different or supportive to improve the current adaptation and mitigation practices?

### **Conclusion**

The visit of AAPW and HOMEF this time, is to fulfil our commitment of presenting our research findings to the community. We will also commence the next step in the project implementation activity plan. As stated in the introduction. Setting up of Community Stakeholders Network as well as commence Tools development interactive session with selected representatives of the community. Particularly the CSN members.

**Godson Jim-Dorgu, Tega Edeki and Ken Omavuayenor. For AAPW**



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