

HEARTBEAT DOCUMENTARY

KEY FINDINGS/ RECOMMEDATIONS

(An assessment of Flood Resilience and Vulnerability)

**REPORT OF FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH DOCUMENTARY
EXECUTED IN COMMUNITIES IN ISOKO NORTH AND SOUTH LGAs**



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1.0 BACKGROUND

Lincgreen Prospects, a dedicated Climate Action movement committed to creating actionable frameworks for vulnerable communities to adapt to the challenges of climate change, undertook a mission to conduct comprehensive studies on the impact of the 2022 flood disaster and the preparedness for the upcoming 2023 flood season. This endeavor aimed to gather critical data for both short-term and long-term flood mitigation strategies, as well as to create a sustainable framework for local farmers in these communities. This sustainable approach entails partnering with these communities to establish mechanisms that reduce the loss and damage they experience due to climate-related events. Our methodology embraces Participatory Learning and Action, and Participatory Livelihood Analysis, aiming for community engagement and empowerment.

The research and documentation process commenced on September 14, 2023, with an initial meeting held at the Local Government council community center in Oleh, Isoko South LGA. This pivotal meeting involved interaction with community leaders and representatives of the Community Development Council (CDC). The scope of the study extended to encompass seven distinct communities, representing both Isoko South and Isoko North Local Government Areas.

The assessment, based on data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), unveiled the extent of the 2022 flood disaster. Notably, Isoko South LGA bore the brunt of this catastrophe, recording the highest number of displaced individuals in the state, with 18,836 individuals representing 24 percent of the displaced population. Isoko North LGA experienced its share of the disaster, with 9,257 individuals, constituting 12 percent of the displaced population in Delta State. Collectively, Isoko North and Isoko South LGAs accounted for 36 percent of the total 78,640 individuals and 12,070 households displaced by the floods in Delta State.

This background information sets the stage for a comprehensive needs assessment report on Isoko South and Isoko North Local Government Areas, providing a contextual understanding of the communities, their unique challenges, the impact of climate change, and the urgent need for sustainable development and community resilience.

1.0.1 The Isoko Ethnic Group

The Isoko people represent one of Nigeria's minority groups, sharing common ancestry, a distinct culture, a shared language, and a set of values, norms, and beliefs. They reside in the tropical rainforest of the Western Niger Delta of Nigeria, and the Isoko nation comprises nineteen clans, each contributing to the rich tapestry of the region's identity.

1.0.2 Climate and Vegetation

The Isoko region experiences a tropical climate characterized by a dry season and a rainy season. The geography of the area is flat, marked by alluvial basins and levees formed by creeks. Flooding is influenced by local heavy rainfall (evo) and floodwaters from the Niger River (owhe).

The region's vegetation is characterized by a light forest with dominant palm species. The rivers and wetlands are home to freshwaters, offering a valuable source of fish for local consumption and potential contributions to the fishing industry.

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1.1 The Objective

The overarching goal of the project undertaken by LINC GREEN PROSPECT is to create a needs assessment documentary that identifies the issues to be resolved and underscores the imperative for intervention in light of the upcoming flood, as predicted by NIMET. This entails visiting farmlands, fishponds and conducting interviews with the locals of every strata to get insight on their preparatory activities and conduct a mini Needs assessment in other to establish a framework to help reduce loss and damage as the communities in Isoko North and Isoko South LGA prepare for flooding.

1.2 Target (affected) Communities

The target communities consist of 7Communities; 5 communities in Isoko South and 2 communities in Isoko North

Table 1: Names of Egi and Ogba Cluster communities

S/N	Name of Communities	
	Isoko South LGA	Isoko North LGA
1.	Irri	Oyede
2.	Idheze	Okpe
3.	Utue-Irri	
4.	Aviara	
5.	Orie	

1.3 Terms of Reference

LING GREEN has come up with the scope of work for this exercise which is divided into three sections. Section one is the planning activities carried out prior to the arrival of our team and commencement of our visits to the communities. This aspect was carried out already by our contact team on ground in Isoko North LGA and we used the reports from his initial entry to design our action plan.

Section two, which is the main concern of this report, deals with activities carried out from the point of the arrival of our team, interviews, findings and recommendations as embedded in the video documentary to be presented.

Section three deals with post-crisis restoration plan, the report of which is available after our team consulted experts and NGOs that have worked in these field which will give a guideline on what must be done to help communities recover. Specific TOR under this phase are as follows:

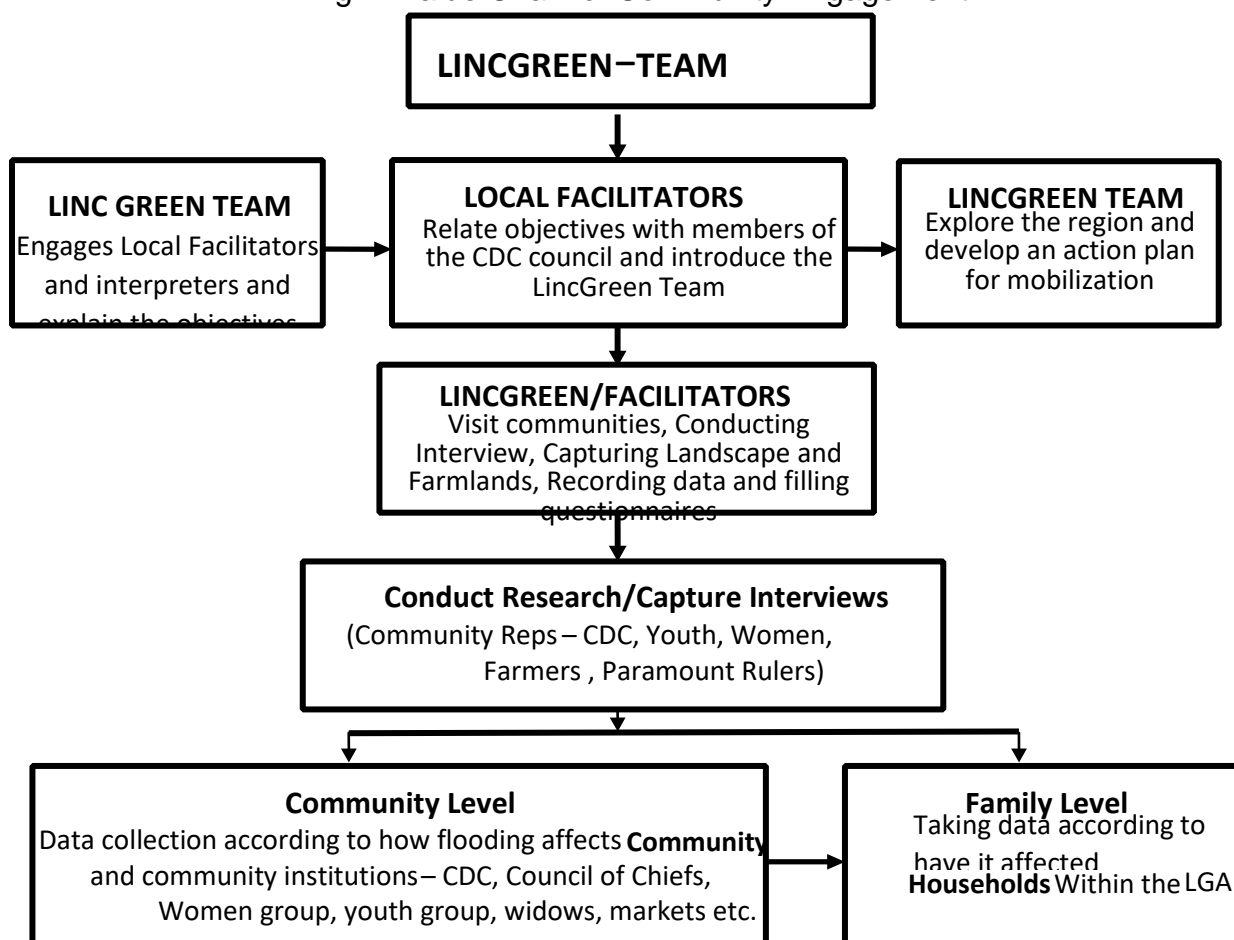
1. Community Entrance and Declaration of Intention to Stake Holders and CDC council in Isoko South LGA
2. Supervised Visits to the community leaders and focused groups to Ensure complete representation
3. Ensure Adequate data were collected and community elders and leaders were allowed to freely express their frustrations and tell their stories without interruption
4. Ensure Proper safety measures were taken and permission adequately granted before filming in any location
5. We ensures that every section in the livelihood value chain was well captured, from farmers, processing, retailers and consumers all had input in the documentary

6. Ensure every person or group captured gave recommendations and appeals so as to enable stake holder understand their specific needs and concerns as it relates to the flooding they experience

1.4 Value Chain Effect of Heartbeat Documentary exercise

The comprehensive process, including internal training and project implementation planning, was seamlessly integrated into Lincgreen's value chain. Community facilitators, who have strong connections within the Isoko community, played a pivotal role in facilitating this process. They acted as bridges, connecting us with the local community and ensuring a smooth entry, execution, and conclusion of this documentary project. Their local knowledge and relationships were instrumental in building trust and fostering collaboration between our team and the Isoko community. Their involvement greatly contributed to the success and effectiveness of the project.

Fig 1: Value Chain of Community Engagement



1.5 Project Implementation Timeline

During the implementation of the Isoko South and Isoko North Heartbeat Documentary/Livelihood assessment Project, a detailed project timeline was developed to guide our activities in the seven selected communities within Isoko South and Isoko North Local Government Areas. This timeline served as a crucial tool to ensure organized and effective project execution.

The timeline includes specific dates, corresponding activities, and expected project outputs, monitoring indicators, and ensuring that every session is well captured. This systematic approach not only helped us in coordinating our efforts but also provided a framework for partners to monitor and verify the activities conducted by our team. By maintaining a well-structured timeline, we aimed to enhance project efficiency, accountability, and the overall success of our flood mitigation and community resilience initiatives in the Isoko South and Isoko North LGAs. This timeline was a valuable resource in keeping our project on track and ensuring that all stakeholders were well-informed and engaged in the process.

2.0 OUTCOME OF THE ACTIVITIES

2.1 Focus on Community Resilience and Livelihood

In our approach, we aimed to comprehend the flooding trends, their link to climate crises, and the extent of loss and damage experienced by these communities. We observed how these floods affected their livelihoods and assessed what could have been done differently. The ultimate goal is to develop flood-resilient communities and promote economic empowerment among the local and indigenous farmers. Our approach includes engaging with key stakeholders, partnering with local professionals, and providing mentorship and guidelines to advocate for sustainable development in these communities.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS AND WAY FORWARD

3.1 Key findings

1. **Flood Vulnerability:** Isoko South and Isoko North LGAs are highly susceptible to flooding, and local farmers, predominantly women, have initiated premature harvesting of cassava and crops, processing them for storage in anticipation of the impending flood.
2. **Disrupted Education:** The flood threat has disrupted the education system as students have joined their parents in mass harvesting activities, ceasing their attendance in schools.
3. **Population Displacement:** Due to the impending flood, some teachers, youth corps members, and individuals with means have started leaving the communities, leading to outmigration.
4. **Challenges in Fish Farming:** Fish farmers in the area face significant challenges. Some are relocating their fish to safer communities, while others await support to make their fish ponds flood-resistant.
5. **Vulnerable Families' Dependency on Government Assistance:** Widows and vulnerable families heavily rely on government assistance, as they did in 2022, to survive the flood. However, there are complaints about conditions in the IDP camps.
6. **Mismanagement in IDP Camps:** Reports indicate dishonest practices in the management of IDP camps. Some individuals responsible for distributing relief supplies steal or politicize aid, compromising assistance to the displaced.
7. **Disrupted Transportation:** Major roads become impassable during flooding, hindering the import and export of goods. Farmers are forced to rely on expensive alternatives such as speed boats or caterpillars to transport their products.
8. **Need for Sensitization:** Some community members have not fully accepted the reality of flooding and require more sensitization on the potential hazards and the importance of evacuation.
9. **Vulnerable and Handicapped:** Some individuals, including the handicapped, lack the support necessary for evacuation and have resigned themselves to the uncertain outcomes of flooding, even if it risks their lives.

10. Food Shortages: Food shortages are a common issue during flooding, and there is a lack of provisions for healthcare in IDP camps, exacerbating the plight of displaced individuals.
11. Inadequate Evacuation Resources: There is a shortage of boats and personnel for effective evacuation. This inadequacy can lead to loss of life, particularly due to the speed and current of floodwaters.

3.2 Way Forward

1. Flood-Resilient Agriculture: Provide training and resources to support flood-resilient agricultural practices, enabling farmers to safeguard their crops.
2. Alternative Education Options: Implement alternative education programs to accommodate students during flood-related disruptions.
3. Community Engagement: Engage with community members, teachers, and local leaders to encourage them to stay and contribute to community resilience efforts.
4. Support for Fish Farmers: Provide assistance to fish farmers, including technical training and resources to fortify fish ponds against floods.
5. Transparent Aid Distribution: Ensure transparency in the distribution of relief supplies in IDP camps to prevent mismanagement and corruption.
6. Alternative transportation: Make provision for local speed boats and subsidize the price to mitigate transportation challenges during flooding, reducing reliance on costly alternatives.
7. Public Awareness Campaigns: Conduct public awareness campaigns to sensitize the population about the risks of flooding and the importance of evacuation.
8. Special Assistance for Vulnerable Individuals: Develop plans to specifically assist vulnerable and handicapped individuals in evacuation and support their needs.
9. Food and Healthcare Provision: Increase the availability of food and healthcare resources in IDP camps to address shortages and health concerns.
10. Strengthen Evacuation Resources: Invest in additional boats and personnel for more efficient and safe evacuation processes, reducing the risk of loss of life

GOALS

These goals aim to address the multifaceted challenges posed by flooding and contribute to the safety, resilience, and livelihood protection of the communities in Isoko South and Isoko North LGAs.

GOALS Create, Train, and Equip a Flood Emergency Response Team:	Acquire Speed Boats and Training for Efficient Evacuation	Establish Well-Equipped IDP Camps in Isoko North/South LGA	Livelihood Protection for Fish Farmers:	Conduct Comprehensive Post-Flood Evaluation
OBJECTIVES	To procure 20 speed boats, 10 for each LGA, and train capable handlers to ensure the efficient and effective evacuation of people trapped in flood-affected areas, prioritizing life-saving efforts	To create secure, well-equipped IDP camps capable of providing shelter, medical care, food, and education to displaced families during flood incidents, with local personnel and volunteers facilitating camp operations.	To safeguard the livelihoods of 10 fish farmers by equipping their fishponds with mechanisms to prevent fish escape during floods, enhancing their capacity to install protective barriers.	To evaluate and document the loss and damage incurred during flooding through a post-flood assessment, contributing to effective post-flood management.

3.3 Goals Based on Key Findings

1. Create, Train, and Equip a Flood Emergency Response Team:

Objective: To establish a well-trained and equipped emergency response team capable of effectively managing flood-related incidents and ensuring the safety and well-being of affected communities.

Activities:

- ❖ Identify and recruit individuals with the necessary skills for rescue operations, first aid, childcare, records management, sensitization, organization of IDP camps, and reporting.
- ❖ Provide comprehensive training to response team members, equipping them with the knowledge and skills required for various emergency scenarios.
- ❖ Supply the team with the essential equipment, including life-saving devices, communication tools, and medical supplies.

Expected Outcomes: A highly proficient flood emergency response team ready to undertake swift and effective rescue and support operations in times of flooding.

2. Acquire Speed Boats and Training for Efficient Evacuation:

Objective: To procure 20 speed boats, 10 for each LGA, and train capable handlers to ensure the efficient and effective evacuation of people trapped in flood-affected areas, prioritizing life-saving efforts.

Activities:

- ❖ Procure 20 speed boats and maintain them for readiness.
- ❖ Train handlers in the safe and effective operation of the speed boats for rescue and evacuation purposes.
- ❖ Develop evacuation plans and coordination mechanisms with local authorities and stakeholders.
- ❖ Expected Outcomes: A fleet of operational speed boats with trained handlers ready to evacuate and rescue individuals in flood-prone areas.

3. Establish Well-Equipped IDP Camps:

Objective: To create secure, well-equipped IDP camps capable of providing shelter, medical care, food, and education to displaced families during flood incidents, with local personnel and volunteers facilitating camp operations.

Activities:

- ❖ Set up IDP camps in strategic locations, considering community accessibility and safety.
- ❖ Equip the camps with medical facilities, shelters, food distribution centers, and educational resources.
- ❖ Collaborate with local personnel and volunteers to ensure efficient and compassionate camp management.

Expected Outcomes: Functional IDP camps with the capacity to accommodate and support displaced families during flooding, including essential services and community engagement.

4. Livelihood Protection for Fish Farmers

Objective: To safeguard the livelihoods of 10 fish farmers by equipping their fishponds with mechanisms to prevent fish escape during floods, enhancing their capacity to install protective barriers.

Activities:

- ❖ Collaborate with fish farmers to assess their specific needs and develop flood-resistant fishpond solutions.
- ❖ Provide training to fish farmers, enhancing their knowledge and skills in installing flood-protective measures.

Equip fishponds with barricades and mechanisms designed to secure fish during flooding.

Expected Outcomes: Ten fish farmers with improved capacity and flood-resistant fishponds, reducing the risk of financial loss during flood events.

5. Conduct Comprehensive Post-Flood Evaluation:

Objective: To evaluate and document the loss and damage incurred during flooding through a post-flood assessment, contributing to effective post-flood management.

Activities:

- ❖ Engage in post-flood evaluation to assess the extent of damage and losses in affected communities.
- ❖ Document findings and data on damages to infrastructure, agriculture, property, and livelihoods.
- ❖ Generate a comprehensive report highlighting the impact of the flood and providing insights for post-flood recovery and management efforts.

Expected Outcomes: A detailed report outlining the losses and damages incurred during the flood, serving as a foundation for post-flood recovery and management strategies.

3.4 Conclusion

In light of the extensive findings obtained through our documentary, interviews, and engagements with diverse community members in Isoko South and Isoko North Local Government Areas, it is evident that the looming threat of flooding poses substantial challenges to the well-being, livelihoods, and education of the local population. The situation demands immediate and comprehensive action to address these pressing concerns.

Our response to this critical situation is guided by a set of multifaceted goals that aim to mitigate the impact of flooding and ensure the resilience of these communities. The identified objectives underscore the importance of collaboration, training, and equipping a flood emergency response team to safeguard lives, manage IDP camps, and coordinate rescue and relief efforts efficiently. The acquisition of speed boats and the training of handlers are essential to expedite evacuations and save lives during flood emergencies.

The establishment of well-equipped IDP camps is crucial for providing shelter, healthcare, food, and education to displaced families, especially the vulnerable and those unable to evacuate. Furthermore, protecting the livelihood of fish farmers is a priority, as we work with them to equip their fishponds with mechanisms that prevent fish escape during floods. Additionally, conducting a post-flood evaluation will contribute to effective post-flood management and recovery efforts.

Our commitment to these goals is rooted in the belief that by addressing these challenges, we can foster community resilience and help safeguard the well-being of the people of Isoko South and Isoko North LGAs. These findings emphasize the urgency of our response and the imperative to act swiftly, collaboratively, and comprehensively to ensure the safety, security, and livelihoods of these communities in the face of imminent flood threats.

As we move forward, our dedication to these objectives remains unwavering, guided by the principle that collective action and community engagement are essential to overcoming the challenges posed by flooding and working towards a more secure and prosperous future for all. We are committed to a participatory approach and look forward to partnering with local communities and stakeholders to implement these vital initiatives effectively.

A more detailed report and proposal for intervention with budget is available on request.

PICTURES



Reps of CDC with Lincgreen Research Team, giving insight on the extent of 2022 flood and current preparation efforts



Motivating the NYSC youth corps members as we set up a flood emergency response team of volunteers



Widows in IRRI and OVIE communities with Lincgreen Research Team, giving insight on the extent of 2022 flood and current preparation efforts



Building in IDHEZE community (Isoko North) brought down by flood



Interview with Mrs Samuek Eruore Katherine, a poultry farmer (Sarah Classy Collection)



Interview with community Leader, IRR community, Isoko south



Premature cassava harvested in view of the incoming flooding



Out of school children helping with the processing of cassava to garri, as they prepare to store it up in preparation for the flooding