



Monitoring & Evaluation Report

Quarter Four
Oct. – Dec., 2023

Youth Employment Pathways Program (YEP)
Implementing Partners' Grant Signing Ceremony
Ondo State

About PIND Foundation

The Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) is a Nigerian non-profit organization working to promote peace and equitable economic growth in Nigeria's Niger Delta region by forging multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships at the regional, national and international levels. With the humble admission that no single organization can solve the complex and interconnected development challenges in the Niger Delta, PIND works closely with numerous partners to implement collaborative market-driven, community-based programs to mitigate conflicts and boost economic opportunities for local businesses. This ensures that economic progress occurs in a systemic, inclusive, and sustainable manner.

PIND's projects span all the nine states in the region: Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers, with special focus on the underserved and hard to reach coastal communities of the region that are most forgotten in development programming.

Since 2010, PIND and partners have been contributing to strengthening and stabilizing the region by *reducing poverty, powering coastal communities, nurturing employment, fostering stability, and enabling development*. Learn more about [PINDfoundation.org](https://pindfoundation.org).

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AEAS	Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Activity
BMP	Best Management Practices
BoT	Board of Trustees
BSPs	Business Service Providers
CAPABLE	Capacity Building for Local Empowerment
CB	Capacity Building
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CNL	Chevron Nigeria Limited
CPPs	Crop Protection Products
CSEs	Cassava Seed Entrepreneurs
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DoC	Day-old Chicks
DPO	Divisional Police Officers
DYEP	Delta Youth Employment Program
FFB	Fresh Fruit Bunches
FSPs	Farm Service Providers
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GIZ	German Development Agency
GMoU	Global Memorandum of Understanding
GPP	Good Poultry Practices
HCDT	Host Communities Development Trust
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPDU	Integrated Peace and Development Unit
IP	Implementing Partners
LGA	Local Government Area
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIPs	Most Impactful Practices
MFB	Micro Finance Bank
MNDA	Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs

MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
MSD	Market Systems Development
MSP	The Warri Multi Stakeholder Platform
NIOMR	National Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research
NDLink	Niger Delta Link
NDYEP	Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIFOR	Nigerian Institute for Oil-Palm Research
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
P4P	Partners for Peace
PGPA	Policy, Governments and Public Affairs Unit, Chevron
PIP	PIND Integrated Platform
PPCD	Participatory Partnerships for Community Development
PSPs	Poultry Service Providers
PV	Photovoltaic
PWD	Persons Living with Disabilities
Q1	Quarter 1
Q2	Quarter 2
Q3	Quarter 3
RDC	Regional Development Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHS	Solar Home System
SK	Sombreiro Kapital
SMS	Short Message Service
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Centers
TWG	Technical Working Group
UK	United Kingdom
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAWG	Violence Affecting Women and Girls
VLD	Village Level Dealers
YOY	Year-on-Year

Background

Our goal at PIND is to identify, catalyze, and leverage opportunities, jobs and incomes for our target beneficiaries. In these roles, we robustly engage in identifying our multi stakeholder partners, and then act as a catalyst for the establishment of an enabling environment for socio-economic growth in the Niger Delta region. The goal of these partnerships is to reduce poverty, increase welfare benefits, and reduce conflict by implementing interventions that result in stability and equitable increase in employment and incomes of beneficiaries in the nine Niger Delta states of Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers. To deliver on this goal, we seek to understand the root causes of economic instability, conflict, and fragility concerns to forge community-based market-driven, sustainable results.

PIND's activities fall under two distinct but interrelated program areas:

1. An **economic development program** focused on generating opportunities for pro-poor market development and employment generation.
2. A **peace building program** that strengthens conflict resolution mechanisms for enabling integrated peace and economic growth.

Additional initiatives designed to support, enable and communicate the achievements of the two program areas include:

- **Capacity Building** that builds the service delivery and engagement capacity of business membership organizations, civil society organizations and communities.
- **Advocacy** that seeks to influence policies, practices and programs underpinned by in-depth analyses and understanding of systemic constraints to growth in the Niger Delta region.
- A robust **communications** and outreach effort that enhances PIND's reputation through clear and consistent messaging via multiple channels, of its unique selling points, transformative approaches, impacts and learning.

Together with **Monitoring and evaluation** that independently tracks, verifies and measures program results.

STRATEGIC PLAN TARGETS

For the third phase (2020-2024), PIND Foundation aims to achieve the following targets:

Expand program to reach 300,000 with 200,000 farmers and small-scale enterprises to increase their income by 40%. Facilitate the creation of 45,000 new jobs of which 50% will be youth and other vulnerable groups.

Deliver economic benefits to 10,000 people in GMoU communities through job creation and income generation interventions and facilitation of clean energy.

Strengthen the effectiveness of 5 regional development committees as grassroots development organizations in the GMoU/coastal communities.

Enable active engagement of 5,000 peace actors in conflict mitigation and reduction and positively affect up to 3 million individuals with peace building interventions.

Influence US\$ 25 million spend by donors, federal and state governments in new projects that reduce conflict and poverty in the Niger Delta; and

Raise US\$ 6.5 million from private sector and donor community for PIND programs.

Introduction:Q4 2023 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Report

This fourth quarter (October – December) 2023 report is intended to keep our donors, Board of Trustees, and partners aware of project achievements and constraints, share lessons learned, and seek deeper levels of collaborations to consolidate our impact, and advance our collective effort on business development and sustainability. Also, to showcase the nexus between our impact and a peaceful and more stable operating environment in the Niger Delta

Through this, we intend to share successes and challenges for learning and for further collaborations with our Partners. These include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), The Ford Foundation, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Executive Summary

This report highlights our program intervention achievements in the Niger Delta from October – December 2023 (Quarter 4, 2023), and provides relevant information about program management, lessons learned, and plans for the next quarter. The report demonstrates how we are driving change to ensure broad-based economic growth in the Niger Delta. Our activities are designed to promote and sustain a culture of learning and adaptation, and build a process where evidence plays a significant role in determining policy direction and interventions in economic development, peace building, advocacy, and capacity building of both government institutions and civil society.

1.1 Achievements

In 2023, several macroeconomic issues affected the ease of program delivery by service providers and the participation of farmers and MSMEs. Such issues and their attendant indices include rising inflation and foreign exchange rate dynamics which negatively impacted inputs purchasing capacity of farmers and MSMEs, first noticed in Q1 and, which continued till the last quarter of the year. This was further exacerbated by the May 2023 removal of subsidy on petroleum which had led to increased fuel prices and other commodities, thereby causing unprecedented hardship to farmers and MSMEs within the region, and the country in general. These, to a certain degree, reduced the activities of the service providers, and farmers' mobilization for training on Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs). In spite of these, PIND still recorded significant progress in its initiatives and the achievements, as highlighted below:

Market Systems Development:

The market system development project support farmers and small enterprises in key sectors to improve their productivity, leading to an increase in income and reduction of poverty. The project utilizes the market systems development approach that relies on a sound initial analysis of market systems to pinpoint the underlying causes of market weaknesses, and inform the design and implementation of interventions that address the underlying causes, rather than symptoms, of market failure. To ensure the sustainability of our interventions, the development activities are further anchored on a service providers' model that equips local service providers with the right skills, tools, and connections to sustainably provide viable market solutions that address the root causes of poor performance by farmers and enterprises in the region. This approach is used to support poor farmers in aquaculture, cassava, cocoa, palm oil, poultry and MSMEs. Its outputs for Q4 are summarized below:

- With PIND's market development projects continuing to demonstrate progress towards widespread economic prosperity within the reporting period, a total of 65 service providers continued to support farmers/MSMEs in Cassava, Cocoa, Palm oil, Poultry and MSMEs with training in GAP.
- In Q4, these 65 service providers reached a total of 15,532 farmers/MSMEs with improved services. The 2023 cumulative outreach for MSD as at Q4 2023 was 65,443 (46% females), representing 94% of the annual 2023 target of 69,500 farmers/MSMEs. Over 300 Service Providers were active in 2023.
- Also recorded over 90% adoption of improved practices across cassava, Cocoa, Palm oil, Poultry, and MSMEs linkages projects. In quarter four alone, farmers/MSMEs invested a total of ₦2.50billion using both equity and debt financing in adopting improved practices this brought the 2023 cumulative investments by farmers/MSMEs to ₦12.67billion (118%), surpassing the 2023 annual target of ₦10.7billion - excluding investment by the clean energy providers. Farmers' investment span through agricultural technology adoption and the purchase of necessary inputs for good agronomic practices (GAP) adoption by farmers/MSMEs.
- As farmers and MSMEs continued to adopt the improved practices, their productivity and income increased. Within the reporting period, the estimated net additional income of the adopting farmers and MSMEs was ₦5.22billion, while the overall income for 2023 was ₦21.15billion (representing 116.5% of the 2023 annual target of ₦18.14billion), which in turn has created a net additional 12,709 jobs (FTE).

Access to Energy:

Access to energy is a fundamental requirement for human development and well-being. However, in many rural Niger Delta communities, access to electricity is still limited. A lot of the MSMEs and households around the coastal Niger Delta in particular still lack access to electricity, often relying on alternative self-generation to power economic activities. The lack of access to modern energy services has far-reaching consequences, such as reducing economic growth, and compromising welfare and safety. As part of PIND's overarching strategy to amplify its impact and extend outreach across the region, a key focus lies in collaborating with private sector developers equipped with rural enterprise adaptive solutions. This strategic approach is pivotal to the success of the Access to Energy (A2E) programming.

- In the previous quarter, PIND commenced implementation of a six-month watershed healthcare electrification partnership project hinged on a tested business model based on productive use of power. Under the Healthcare Electrification and Telecommunications Alliance (HETA), local solar energy cabins provide reliable, affordable

solar power to last mile healthcare facilities and complimentary business connections to communities across 12 communities in the Niger Delta. The strategic objective of the project was to showcase the adaptability of the energy cabin for dedicated healthcare electrification initiatives. This involved interventions in existing partner mini-grid locations in select communities to boost supply around base mini grid locations.

In Q4 2023, the pilot phase of HETA in Nigeria was successfully executed in the Niger Delta region. It is a five-year cooperative agreement that invests USAID resources to leverage more than \$150 million of additional private sector resources to install reliable, renewable power and provide mobile network and Internet access for at least 10,000 health facilities across sub-Saharan Africa.

PIND leveraged \$219,389 from USAID to galvanize a public-private partnership that implemented a six-month access-to-energy project in about 12 communities in the region. The collaboration between PIND and its partners, bolstered by indigenous power developer interest and investment, showcased innovative approaches to healthcare electrification and capacity building for the energy-healthcare nexus. HETA was innovative and particularly contributed to the implementation of PIND's 2023 operating plan.

These interventions not only powered healthcare facilities but also delivered additional connections to households and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the respective communities. The partnerships with private sector entities such as Solaviva, A4&T, Vectis, and BCIS Limited played a pivotal role in driving the project's success. While PIND has no program pillar in healthcare, the incentive for communities to benefit from enterprise-driven power projects that would power businesses, households and importantly a community healthcare center lies at the heart of the collaboration under the HETA project.

- The embrace of clean energy translated into a substantial environmental impact, saving a total of 890.4 tCO₂ equivalent in emissions. This resonates with global sustainability objectives and underscores the pivotal role of renewable energy in climate change mitigation. This emissions displacement came from a combined 481.8kWp of clean energy infrastructure generating 1,618,848 kWh of electricity. This spike in numbers highlights the increasing contribution of the partners' scale-up projects through adaptation while also representative of the sectoral vision for clean energy goals.

Youth Employment Pathways:

The aims of the Youth Employment Program (YEP) are to map the ecosystem of skills development, analyze opportunities for employment creation and develop models of youth job readiness or workforce development that provide disadvantaged young men and women in the Niger Delta opportunities to secure sustainable jobs and enterprises. PIND's approach involves innovative and quality technical occupational training which prepares selected youth with market-relevant skills, and supports their transitioning into work or entrepreneurship.

- **Implementing Partners:** A total of 18 implementing partners and private Technical and Vocational Entrepreneurship Training (TVET) institutions effectively managed 19 projects, emphasizing the integration of soft skills and conflict sensitivity. The breakdown of the implementing partners (IPs) per sector is as follows: Agriculture (4), Building construction (3), ICT (5), and Services (6). By the end of Q4, 18 sessions (technical vocational skills training with the mainstreaming of soft skills) were successfully completed, leading to the graduation of 1,428 youths (Males: 807; Females: 621; PWD: 26). These comprehensive training sessions , spanning approximately 6 months, were specifically designed for implementing partners who had signed their grants in May 2023.
- **Youths with applicable skills:** The cumulative number of youths with applicable skills in 2023 is 2,157 (97%) against the target of 2,229. Some of those who enrolled in the 2023 YEP program will continue till Q1 2024, when they will complete their training. The total enrolment in 2023 was 2,438 (908 females) - 1,709 new ones, plus 729 carried over from 2022. The training covered four sectors: Agriculture, ICT, Building Construction and Services including finished leather.
- **Youths' Access to income generation:** As at Q4 2023, 1,876 (1,061 females) youths out of the 2,157 with applicable skills for employment had access to income-generating opportunities – 22% linked to jobs and 65% established their own businesses. The performance was 135% which surpassed the 2023 annual target of 1,389. The Services sector emerged with the highest number of job placements and business startups, followed by the ICT sector, while Construction and Agriculture sectors came lower.
- **Internship/Apprenticeships:** A total of 668 trained youths has been strategically placed in various internship and apprenticeship positions with the Aquaculture sector having the highest. Efforts are diligently underway to

facilitate the transition of the remaining 422 youths, as well as those currently on internships or apprenticeships, into waged employment or entrepreneurial pursuits.

- **Challenge Funds:** The 2023 Business challenge funds were disbursed successfully to 62 businesses, with over 50% of the grantees strictly adhering to their allocated budgets. Among the grantees who implemented the grant, some supplemented it with personal funds, contributing up to N1,696,000 to cover all items on their budget. Notably, businesses that fully implemented their grants reported significant sales growth and increased revenue to be evidence in the next quarter.
- **Akwa Ibom State Adoption of YEP:** During this quarter, a significant milestone was achieved with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Akwa Ibom State's Ibom Leadership and Entrepreneurial Development Centre, 'Ibom-LED.' This collaboration aims to foster the adaptation of the NDYEP model in the state's youth development initiatives. The envisioned outcome is the socio-economic development and advancement of both Akwa Ibom State and the broader Niger Delta Region.
- **Ondo State Adoption of YEP:** Four grant agreements have been formalized and signed with successful implementing partners after a technical assessment in accordance with PIND's guidelines. The four implementing partners who signed their grant agreements with the YEP program are as follows: Green Shield Integrated Technologies Lt. (Agriculture to reach 120 youths in Akure); Micafotoy Technologies Ltd./Board for Adult Technical Vocational Education (ICT/Building Construction to reach 120 youths in Akure and Ile-Oluji & Owo); AMY6015 Global Enterprise/Board for Adult Technical Vocational Education (Services to reach 60 youths in Ile-Oluji); and Solar World Gesellschaft Ltd (Services to reach 60 youths in Akure). These agreements are a scale -up intervention of the NDYEP business model into more states, paving the way for the program's implementation across four sectors, spanning three locations in Ondo State.

Peace Building:

The strategic thrust of the peace building program is to achieve regional and lasting peace in the Niger Delta. To achieve this, PIND is creating sustainable peace partnerships, encouraging collaboration and cooperation amongst peace actors, providing support for economic development, and strengthening indigenous structures for peace, while also creating and building interfaces with larger state-level or regional peace efforts; thereby creating an enabling environment for sustainable broad-based economic development.

- Conflict risks and insecurity were elevated slightly in the Niger Delta in Q4 2023. According to data uploaded on the P4P Peace Map, lethal violence increased by 7.5% from 161 fatalities in Q3 to 173 in Q4 of 2023. There was an increase in reported incidents of organized criminal violence including kidnap for ransom and clashes between hoodlums and government security forces during the period compared to the third quarter of the year. However, there was a decrease in lethal violence associated with cult gangs in the Niger Delta during the period, with a 30.3% decrease from 33 fatalities in Q3 to 23 fatalities in Q4. Also, there was a decrease in reported incidents of communal violence over land and boundary disputes during the quarter. Data shows that incidents of communal violence declined by 33.3% from 18 incidents in Q3 to 12 in Q4, while fatalities increased by 113.3% from 15 reported in Q3 to 32 in Q4.
- Conflict risks and lethal violence during the quarter were mainly-driven by a myriad of factors: political tensions, clashes between rival cult gangs, clashes between hoodlums and government security personnel, communal conflict, separatist agitation (Abia and Imo), and organized criminality including kidnap for ransom. However, PIND in collaboration with our allies is relentlessly undertaking interventions in conflict prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding in the Niger Delta region as part of the plan of action aimed at keeping the level of violence low, particularly in key communities of interest.
- PIND has continued to build the social infrastructure and social capital of peace actors across the region for long term sustainable peace through training and mentoring of peace champions to design and implement peacebuilding activities in the region. PIND's peace building strategy recognizes the need for an integrated and comprehensive approach to tackling the complex causes and drivers of conflict; adopting innovative approaches to work on problems of militancy, election violence, gang/cult violence, communal violence, and the cross-cutting issue of Violence Affecting Women and Girls (VAWG).
- In Q4 2023, PIND produced and disseminated 13 data-driven and research-based conflict early warning products to update peace and security stakeholders, and facilitated several preventive interventions. In total, 57 data-driven research and analytical products were disseminated in 2023 to local, national and international peace actors to create situational awareness, stakeholder's update, conflict mapping/analysis, and to share information, knowledge and best practices on conflict mitigation and peacebuilding in the Niger Delta. These conflict reports spotlighted key thematic conflict issues in the region including organized criminality, gang violence, communal conflict, mob violence, and human rights including sexual violence.

- Analysis of the utilization of PIND’s data products revealed that 655 stakeholders utilized its peacebuilding data and analysis during the review period, and 2,449 cumulatively in 2023, exceeding the target of 2,000. Also, 31 stakeholders whose capacities had been strengthened through PIND/P4P facilitated training sessions and workshops, applied the skills they had acquired to promote peace and tackle conflict in their communities increasing the number of stakeholders to 215 for the year. While 301 peace actors (P4P members) constructively resolved emerging conflicts in various communities in the Niger Delta, they utilize 23 ‘quality actions’ to resolve these conflicts within the reporting period.

PIA implementation support for takeoff of HCDDTs

PIND secured grant funding from the Ford Foundation to explore realistic models of community development in which different actors – communities, NGOs, oil and gas companies, and government (particularly the upstream regulator, and state governments), work in concert towards a successful implementation of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA). This is to ensure the active involvement of the community stakeholders in particular and build their capacity to represent their interests adequately in the implementation process. This effort now referred to as “The Bridges Project” is being implemented in five Niger Delta states - Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Ondo and Rivers, and comprises a Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) that will coordinate proceedings, awareness creation and knowledge sessions on the PIA requirements for community stakeholders, and building the capacities of CSOs and NGOs to help in the implementation processes.

- In Q4, the Bridges Project Multi-Stakeholder Platform was held, on 25th October 2023, with a representative from Ford Foundation participating. The discussions at the meeting provided insights into issues and learnings arising from the PIA implementation process. Some of these issues relate to the gender composition of the members of the Host Communities Development Trusts (HCDDTs), the need for more inclusivity in the regulator’s communication to community stakeholders; the Settlers fund disbursement processes, and the implementation of the Needs Assessments and the Community Development Plans. The outcomes from this meeting included the compilation of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) data of established HCDDTs.

Communications:

PIND’s communication activities aim to increase its visibility by getting people to know about PIND, talk about it, and engage with it and its programs. They also aim to strengthen PIND’s reputation and attract target stakeholders to support its cause, partner with it, fund its programs, and replicate its proven models.

- Within the reporting period, we intensified our communications efforts, with 178,731 people gaining new or increased awareness about us and our activities through our various platforms: newsletters, social media, website, email inquiries, forums and traditional media. The cumulative media reach in 2023 was 1,703,808. Also, in the quarter, we garnered 36 positive media mentions of our work (146 cumulative for 2023) and activities and attracted 64 public endorsements (131 cumulative for 2023) from stakeholders who interacted with our content on the website, newsletters, and social media posts.

Advocacy:

PIND’s advocacy focus continued to be on three key work areas: influence spending and funding from government, donors, and the private sector organizations on new projects in the Niger Delta; address issues of inadequate access to arable land for smallholder farmers, and constraints on small businesses brought about by multi-taxation and illegal levies; and support institutionalizing strategies in peacebuilding efforts that will promote conflict prevention across the Niger Delta.

- Equitable access to land by smallholder farmers: As part of PIND’s effort to influence state governments to establish a more sustainable policy framework to better manage land for agricultural activities, PIND influenced the establishment of the Arable Land Committees in Delta, Edo and Ondo states. In Q4, PIND conducted meetings with the Ministries of Agriculture in Edo and Ondo states to assess the progress of implementation and supported ongoing initiatives. Progress recorded included: The Delta State Government having fully adopted the recommendations to open up more agricultural land for oil palm and cassava farmers, while the Edo state government has established and communicated a well-defined procedural framework for land acquisition in the State. PIND is currently leveraging these experiences and insights to aid the implementation of components of the Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Program (FOLUR-IP) in the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria (Ondo and Cross Rivers States) that it is implementing.
- Multiple Taxation and Illegal Levy Intervention: In 2022, PIND completed an assessment on the impact of multiple taxations and illegal levies on small businesses in Abia, Delta, and Rivers States. The report showed that

out of 82 business sector respondents, 90% decried the effects of multiple taxes and illegal levies on their businesses. In Q4, 2023, the report was completed having passed through various stages of validation by participants from the government, the private sector, advocacy organizations for small businesses, CSO and the media. The completion of the validation sessions enabled the provision of an updated and finalized report that incorporated all the valuable feedback received.

- PIND further successfully collaborated with the Tax Justice and Governance Platform to conduct a Stakeholder Roundtable on the effects of multiple taxation and illegal levies on small businesses and recruit tax advocates that will further help to push for a review and reform of government policies. This partnership enabled the amplification of PIND's advocacy in this regard, with participation on the TaxWatch Radio Show on Wave 91.7 FM, Port Harcourt in October 2023, further strengthening the partnership and enabling the two organizations to jointly plan and execute a stakeholder roundtable on.
- In Q4, PIND consolidated progress in the multiple taxation and illegal levies interventions, creating more awareness, forging strategic collaborations and gaining viable inroads with policymakers and influencers. Further report validation session of the multiple taxation and illegal levies was held in Asaba, with representatives from the Delta State Government, CSO and representatives from the trade associations and businesses in attendance. A valuable outcome of the report validation sessions was PIND's collaboration with the Tax Justice and Governance Platform and a key member of the Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee.
- PIND also featured on the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Port Harcourt weekly highlight: FOCUS ON MULTIPLE TAXATIONS, for an extensive conversation on the effects of multiple taxation and the need for tax reform in Niger Delta states. PIND equally actively engaged with the newly constituted Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee to which it submitted a memo advocating for Tax Reforms, and also actively participated in the Stakeholder Engagement & Public Consultation forum organized by the committee. The highlight of the engagement was the discussion around key issues for consideration which include some aspects of PIND's memo on the effects of multiple taxation and illegal levies. The memo submissions included the harmonization of (taxes and levies, revenue administration, reporting) and setting up of a single National Revenue Window; revamping of the tax agent's function and emphasis on competence and ethics and Data4tax initiative, VAT fiscal processes and electronic invoicing.

Capacity Building:

As one of PIND's key enablers, the Capacity Building program is designed and positioned to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of government, civil society, and business associations/service providers; "for effective socio-economic engagement, inclusive governance for growth, and peaceful co-existence in the Niger Delta". It directly contributes to both PIND's long-term objective and overall goal of peace and economic growth of the Niger Delta. The Program was designed to focus on two major areas, the first being to strengthen the capacity of local development organizations in the Niger Delta to adopt the market systems approach through the Capacity Building for Local Empowerment (CAPABLE) Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) project. The second area of focus is to strengthen Chevron's host community development trust organizations (previously referred to as Regional Development Councils [RDCs]) that carry out developmental projects in the host communities in line with the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA).

- This quarter, the MSD program has designed and commenced preparations for series of capacity-building programs to strengthen couple of NGOs to implement market systems projects in the region.
- Also, as part of its plan to provide capacity-building support on economic development program to the established HCDTs, PIND finalized engagements to commence a baseline assessment to determine their current organizational index, and develop and implement capacity-building plans for their upgrade to effectively deliver economic solutions to the CNL communities. The assessment and capacity-building support will begin next quarter.
- Peacebuilding Training of CNL Host Community Development Trusts: In Q4, PIND intensified its strategic response to current conflict trends and patterns which require a more concentrated operational-level support that can respond quickly in a targeted manner to rapidly changing dynamics on the ground with key activities. One of the activities was the Conflict Early Warning and Early Response (CEWER) for five Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL) Host Community Development Trusts (HCDTs) in Delta and Ondo states. The central purpose of the training was to enable them to purposefully contribute to peacebuilding and economic development processes in their communities.
- Based on the participatory partnership principle, the HCDT committees nominated community members and youth leaders for the engagement and capacity building trainings which further engendered local ownership. A

total of 43 participants were selected from Warri Kingdom Onshore, Oghulagha, Egbema OPUDIS and Gbaramatu HCDTs in Delta State, while 33 individuals were selected from Ugboland HCDT in Ondo State. The participants were trained on volunteerism, cooperation, leadership, peacebuilding, conflict analysis and conflict management styles. They were also introduced to PIND's SMS-based EWER system as a tool for conflict reporting and managing peace.

Business Development

In line with its effort to diversify and expand its funding base, PIND continued to engage potential partners to explore new opportunities across its program areas by strengthening and facilitating internal collaboration and coordination to deepen business development efforts. The collective effort on business development and sustainability has yielded significant milestones since the fourth quarter of 2022. Following the establishment of the business development committee and subcommittee, PIND has witnessed an unprecedented level of internal cooperation both at the board, management, and technical levels to sustain its drive for increased funding, partnerships, and investments for the implementation of development interventions in line with its vision.

- To continually strengthen and facilitate internal collaboration and coordination to deepen business development efforts, the BDS Committee and subcommittee meetings were held and discussed the progress of PIND's sustainability efforts, funds gained, and projects in view or being implemented.
- During the quarter in review, the inception workshop of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization Project-Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Program (FOLUR-IP) awarded to PIND for implantation in Ondo and Cross Rivers States was launched. The workshop was organized to present the project to the public, familiarize with the consortium partners and technical details of the project, as well as discuss the commitments and operational strategies for delivery.
- Impact Investment Activities: In Q4, PIND Teams and representatives of Cross-Boundary and Total Impact held work sessions as part of internal capacity-building for PIND consultants on impact investing, preparatory to advancing work in this respect.
- During the quarter in review, PIND was nominated by the Impact Investment Foundation (IIF) for the Innocent Chukwuma Award for Social Impact Award. PIND participated at the IIF 6th Annual Convening in Lagos, Nigeria. At the event, opportunities to catalyze capital boost SMEs and development initiatives were shared. The event was organized by the Impact Investors Foundation (IIF) in partnership with the European Union and UNDP and supported by LEAP Africa, Impact Ventures, AVPA, Circular Economy Innovation Partnership (CEIP), and GIZ. PIND also participated at the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA) networking event in Lagos.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

PIND's commitment to gender and social inclusion underpins its efforts to achieve greater gender equality as a key pathway towards sustainable poverty reduction and shared security and prosperity in the Niger Delta. At the center of PIND's 2020–2024 strategic plan is the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of poor women and girls, persons with disabilities and the most vulnerable population. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) mainstreaming as a cross cutting theme, is embedded within PIND's programs and projects to ensure that its activities are inclusive, reflect equitable participation and access to benefits.

PIND has a strategic target of enabling at least 60,000 women (40% of the overall target) to increase their incomes, thereby positioning women's economic empowerment at the core of its economic development implementation activities.

In Q4 2023, 8,610 males and 6,922 females (45% of the total beneficiaries) benefitted from various economic development interventions, with an aim to increase their incomes and improve their livelihoods. Similarly, a total of 211 women (34% of the total beneficiaries), 404 (66%) men and 110 (18%) youths participated in various peacebuilding interventions including: peace actors taking action to mitigate conflict, persons trained and/or mentored in conflict management, and persons attending roundtables, seminars or forums and events for the advancement of sustainable peace in the region.

For the entire 2023, out of the cumulative outreach of 67,881 farmers/MSMEs reached, 31,151 (46%) females benefitted from various economic development interventions. Similarly, under peace building, out of 3,112 participants, 1,211 (39%) were women participants in various peacebuilding interventions including: peace actors taking action to mitigate conflict, persons trained and/or mentored in conflict management, and persons attending roundtables, seminars or forums and events for the advancement of sustainable peace in the region. In summary, the organization-wise gender mainstreaming in 2023 was 32,369 (45.59%) surpassing the 2023 annual target of 40%, while persons with disabilities (PWDs) were 136 from PB and YEP – See Annex 2.

1.2 Challenges, Mitigation, and Plans for the Next Quarter

Challenges

Market Development Projects:

- Mobilization and participation of farmers for training continued to experience difficulties occasioned by the high transportation costs. Service Providers attested to spending more to mobilize farmers for training, and seeing reduced numbers of farmers turning out for training.
- Also, in Q4, 2023, purchasing capacity for agricultural inputs by farmers and MSMEs participating in the agricultural productivity improvement program went down, stemming from continued hikes in the costs of inputs, technologies for harvesting and processing, and overall transaction costs due to rising inflation and foreign exchange rate dynamics. This has negatively affected the depth of adoption of various innovations within the quarter. The low turnover experienced by the agro-dealers was also a disincentive to them.

Youth Employment Pathways Program:

- High Inflation rate: Increased transportation costs resulted in decreased attendance and drop-offs of some participants even with the prior adjustments made to learning schedules by partners.

Advocacy:

- Government funding of development projects is tempered by a lack of adequate resources. Most of the states are currently deficit-financing their budgeted activities. This is making government spending on development activities declining.

Lessons Learned

Market Development Program:

- Increased patronage of Service Providers: More farmers are paying for improved services learned from their peers who were directly impacted by the adoption of the improved practices in their farms and businesses. One example is the increased adoption of quality Cassava stems thereby changing the demand landscape for Cassava Seed Entrepreneurs (CSEs) business driven by increased farmers' demand.

Youth Employment Program:

- Building Project Management Skills: Incorporating sessions on project planning, scheduling, and prioritization enabled participants to understand the importance of planning and managing their time effectively.

1.3 Program Management

Meetings of the following PIND sub-committees held in Q4 2023: Project and Programs; Audit and Compliance; Business Development and Sustainability (BDS); Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI); and Advocacy and Partnerships. Key agreements reached at these sub-committee meetings, along with M&E updates on program implementation were reported out to the PIND Board M & E Committee at its Q4 2023 meeting.

PIND also conducted its annual retreat for 2023 performance review, and commenced plans for its 2024 activities, with the lessons learned being shared to enhance the development of its 2024 operating plan. These meetings are key for PIND's internal governance, optimized program implementation, and accountability to its board.

Also, within the quarter, PIND completed its Mid-term Impact Evaluation undertaken by Dalberg Consulting firm. . The initial findings of the evaluation covering the last seven and a half years were presented to PIND's management and Board.

Summary of progress against 2023 targets

The summary below presents a view of progress against PIND's 2023 target.

Economic Development Program Indicators	2023 Targets	Cumulative Results as at Q4 2023
Outreach	69,500	65,443
<i>Cassava value chain</i>	27,500	28,560
<i>Cocoa value chain</i>	12,000	9,060
<i>Palm oil value chain</i>	15,000	12,223
<i>Poultry value chain</i>	8,000	8,444
<i>MSME development</i>	7,000	7,156
Farmers/MSMEs with increased productivity or sales	42,977	37,084
<i>Cassava value chain</i>	14,974	15,145
<i>Cocoa value chain</i>	8,400	5,125
<i>Palm oil value chain</i>	9,706	7,372
<i>Poultry value chain</i>	7,102	5,192
<i>MSME development</i>	2,795	4,249
Net attributable income change [Naira value]	₦18.14 billion	₦21.15 billion
<i>Cassava value chain</i>	₦5.95 billion	₦6.56billion
<i>Cocoa value chain</i>	₦2.30 billion	₦2.23billion
<i>Palm oil value chain</i>	₦4.85 billion	₦5.54billion
<i>Poultry value chain</i>	₦2.21 billion	₦3.49billion
<i>MSME development</i>	₦2.83 billion	₦3.35billion
Net attributable income change [% change]	40%	85% ¹
New jobs facilitated	11,394	14,643
<i>Cassava value chain</i>	1,700	3,200
<i>Cocoa value chain</i>	1,200	1,669
<i>Palm oil value chain</i>	895	1,518
<i>Poultry value chain</i>	2,136	2,948
<i>MSME development</i>	3,254	3,374
<i>Skills development for youth employment</i>	1,389 ²	1,876 ³
<i>Access to Energy</i>	80	98

¹ YOY Percentage change in income, was 1% when compared with the 2022. However, the cumulative change in income, compared with 2020 as base year, was 85%

² In 2023, YEP set a job access target of 660 from 1,650 trainees + 729 trainees who had their skills in Q1 2023. Therefore, the effective 2023 access to job target = 1,389

³ From the outcome monitoring, 22% of the trained youths got employment, 65% established businesses= 87% of the 2,157 (729+1428) trained in 2023

Value of investments by economic development actors [Naira value]	₦10.70 billion	₦13.79 billion Equity (₦10.60billion) Debt financing (₦3.19billion)
<i>Cassava value chain</i>	₦2.47 billion	₦4.51billion
<i>Cocoa value chain</i>	₦710.85 million	₦1.26billion
<i>Palm oil value chain</i>	₦1.35 billion	₦2.41billion
<i>Poultry value chain</i>	₦1.67 billion	₦1.30billion
<i>MSME development</i>	₦4.00 billion	₦3.19billion
<i>Access to Energy</i>	₦500 million	₦1.11billion
States adoption of PIND's model for youth employment	3	-
Youths with applicable skills for employment	2,229	2,157 ⁴
Peace Building Program Indicators	2023 Targets	Cumulative Results as at Q4 2023
Stakeholders with applicable skills in conflict management	210	215
Stakeholders utilizing PIND's peace data and analysis	2,000	2,449
Peace actors taking action to mitigate conflict	1,310	1,248
Quality actions taken to mitigate conflict	100	108
Population that feels safe in the area they reside (%)	2%	2.1% ⁵
Coastal Community Development Indicators	2023 Targets	Cumulative Results as at Q4 2023
<i>Access to Energy</i>		
Businesses with access to clean energy	900	244
Households with access to clean energy	1,500	2,612
People with access to energy technologies	10,500	15,976
Financial benefits accruing to users of energy solutions	₦1 billion	₦1.68billion ⁶
<i>Capacity Building</i>		
Net change in capacity index of HCDTs/other Organizations	2.4 (average score)	- ⁷
Organizations accessing funds/grants	7	3
Total value of funds raised with PIND's support	₦50 million ⁸	₦168million ⁹

⁴Total enrollment for 2023 was 2,379. Those who graduated were 2,157 as at December 2023.

⁵ 639,839 people from the activities of the prevent council, prevent committee and farmers-herder's interventions across the 9 States. This was compared with the 3 million targets set in the current strategy

⁶ Cost savings by households and additional income of the micro-businesses who accessed clean energy supplies in about 18 locations

⁷ Delay by the Settlers in constituting the HCDTs led to the postponement of this measurement

⁸ Low Target was due to the assumption that it will take the CSOs and NGOs longer time to access funds to carry out development work in the new HCDTs

⁹ CAD consulting (₦520million) and Genius Hub(₦20million) Okerewa community trust (derived from royalties received from Indorama and other companies) to support the construction and set-up of a smart farm in Okerewa community in Eleme, Rivers state. ₦20m to support MSMEs and in developing proposals

Organizations providing improved services to beneficiaries/Communities (HCDTs and other implementing Partners).	5	7 ¹⁰
General Enabling Program Indicators	2023 Targets	Cumulative Results as at Q4 2023
<i>Advocacy</i>		
Total value of public spending by governments and other institutions	₦500 million	2.74billion ¹¹
Total value of financial and technical assistance committed by donors and private sectors	₦800 million	₦1.06billion ¹²
Total value of investments in energy solutions by public and private sectors	₦500 million	₦894.501 million ¹³
Change in policy in relation to multiple taxations on small-scale businesses	Qualitative description of progress	With the Multiple Taxation and Illegal levies, PIND held a stakeholder validation workshop in Asaba in Q4 with all relevant stakeholders represented. The completion of the validation sessions enabled the provision of an updated and finalized report that took into account the valuable feedback from the session. PIND further successfully collaborated with the Tax Justice and Governance Platform to conduct a Stakeholder Roundtable on the effects of multiple taxation and illegal levies on small businesses in the Niger Delta. This enabled the recruitment of tax advocates that will further help to push for a review and reform of government policies. PIND also engaged with the Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee, to which it submitted a memorandum on tax reforms and participated in its consultative forum on Tax reform. We also participated in two media engagements on radio and television on the issue of multiplicity of taxes and illegal levies.
Level of responsiveness that facilitates access to land by smallholder farmers	Qualitative description of progress	In Q4, PIND continued to engage with the arable land committees across three focal States in a bid to support the finalization of the policy and legislative processes in the three States. Delta: In Delta State, the Access to Land Committee finalized its work, and has enhanced and adopted the existing arable land policy which is now fully in operation. It was on this basis that the former Governor approved an additional 6,422 hectares for Cassava production in the State. PIND support to the arable land committee enabled the implementation of a land policy that now guides the land distribution of access to land for agricultural purposes for smallholder farmers. In this regard, Advocacy met with the Ministries of Agriculture in Ondo and Edo states in Q4 to assess the progress and provide support for ongoing initiatives. Edo State: Following the 2022 report validation workshop, in January 2023, and at the request of the Executive Governor of Edo State, PIND had collaborated with the Access to Land Policy Drafting Committee established in Edo State to produce a draft policy document which provided opportunities for key stakeholders in the agriculture sector to articulate implementable processes on how farmers in the State can gain access to arable land. This draft policy is currently awaiting the executive assent. In Q4 2023, PIND continued to support access to arable land committees to develop well-defined procedural frameworks for land.
Change in policies and strategies conducive for building peaceful/	Evidence of coherence and	PIND undertook extensive stakeholder consultations and facilitated the finalization of the draft Niger Delta Peace and Regional Strategy (NDPRS) framework, having developed strategies for engaging with the newly-appointed Minister of Niger Delta

¹⁰ CARA Development Foundation, Kolping Society of Nigeria, Genius Hub, and MacJim Foundation continue to provide services using funds raised from other donors, SHERDA, BEFCAD and CAD consulting.

¹¹ Funds leveraged from 2020 – 2022 implementation of projects under the Growth and Development Strategy of Cross River State, facilitated by PIND

¹² This amount was from NGOs from Capacity building and leveraged funds from Access to Energy as at Q4 2023

¹³ Scale ups and installation of commercial solar mini-grids in 5 different Niger Delta rural communities - Evbuwa; Iguemokhua; 1Orisunbare; Oloruntedo; Fagbo in Edo and Ondo State.

nonviolent society.	coordination of interventions	Development (MNDD) to ensure continuity in the implementation of the NDRPS. This culminated in a stakeholder engagement meeting between the minister, PIND and partners scheduled for January 2024. even as plans for the final review and launching of the NDPRS framework continue.
<i>Business Development</i>		
Funds raised from other sources for PIND's programs	₱1billion	₱771.82 million ¹⁴
<i>Communications</i>	2023 Target	Cumulative Results as at Q4 2023
Forums to share PIND's work and lessons from implementation	15	47
Public endorsements of PIND's work	20	131
Media reports with PIND mention	200	146
Level of awareness of PIND and its programs:		
Newsletter subscribers	700	899
Website new visitors	80,000	42,104
Social media reach	1.9 million	4,510,530
Mainstream media reach	3million	1,703,808
Email enquiries	800	308

¹⁴ The amount was from the following: The Bridges from Ford Foundation, HETA, FAO, search for common ground, and Propcom+

2. Context Analysis

2.1.1 Socio-economic environment - A review of 2023 dynamics

2023 was challenging for farmers and businesses in Nigeria, and specifically the Niger Delta, who were unwittingly exposed to a very harsh operating environment. It all began with the scarcity of cash due to poor implementation of a Cash Swap program in Nigeria between January and March, which prevented farmers and business owners from having free access to cash for business transactions. At that time, businesses such as poultry productions which rely heavily on repeated purchase of inputs per cycle, had a shock from an astronomical rise in prices of feeds and other inputs. Consequently, many poultry farmers barely broke even in Quarter one of 2023 and MSMEs and other agri-businesses were also negatively affected, having struggled to operate optimally.

Another problem was the increase in the pump price of premier motor spirit (PMS) which came into effect on 18 July 2023. The pump price of petrol was reviewed again from N537 per liter to N617 per liter. The removal of the petrol subsidy and the floating of the naira against the dollar again, resulted in an increase in the prices of goods and services, which further heightened the debilitating conditions of the farmers /MSMEs. It was also evident that the rising inflation and foreign exchange rate dynamics impacted negatively on the input purchasing capacity of farmers/MSMEs.

Consequently, Nigeria's annual inflation rate climbed to 28.89% in December 2023, up by 7.07% from 21.82% in January 2023, reflecting the impact of the removal of fuel subsidies, the devaluation of the official exchange rate and security issues in food-producing regions - (source: National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria).

In spite of the harsh macroeconomic effects on purchasing capacities of farmers and MSMEs' lean resources, the effectiveness of PIND's business models became increasingly evident in 2023 with the successes recorded by the trained Business Service Providers who supported farmers and MSMEs. There was increased reliance by farmers/MSMEs on the Service Providers' linkages to market and cheaper sources of inputs. Also, farmers/MSMEs had easier access to improved business/farm information through the service providers, and co-facilitation processes across several interventions.

2.1.2 Security

In Q4 2023, the insecurity situation persisted as violent crimes across the nine states of the Niger Delta region continued. While the security situation across different states recorded occasional periodic declines in incident frequency and casualties, it did not necessarily translate into a decline in the general threat level. Kidnapping and robbery remained major security threats. The financial gains derived by criminal gangs from ransom payments have remained the motivation for kidnapping.

3. Economic Development Program

The economic development program comprises three projects: Market Systems Development, Access to Energy, and the Youth Employment Pathways (YEP). The overarching objective of the program is poverty reduction through increases in the number of men and women experiencing positive changes in income and attaining gainful employment. This is achieved through the facilitation of interventions with sustainable outcomes.

The market systems development project portfolio is made up of five agricultural value chains (aquaculture, cassava, cocoa, palm oil, and poultry) and three cross-cutting interventions (access to finance, access to inputs, and business linkages). The project aims to identify binding constraints in the sectors and seek sustainable solutions that can increase the income of thousands of poor men and women. Note: *Impact indicators for the project are typically tracked once or twice a year, to give sufficient time for the adoption of the new practices which would enable effective monitoring. As a result, no quarterly targets were set, however impact indicators' results are reported in Q3 and Q4 against the annual targets.

The Access to Energy project focuses on energy efficiency and renewable energy such as the energy cabin and solar refrigeration. While Access to Energy identifies and tests technological solutions, the market development project facilitates activities to develop market systems for uptake and adoption of such technologies.

The Youth Employment Pathways featured the Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) project between 2018 and 2021 which was funded by the Ford Foundation and implemented in Abia, Akwa Ibom, and Rivers States. It focused on agriculture, construction, finished leather goods and ICT sectors, and was built on PIND's economic development strategy, which emphasizes sustainable interventions that result in full-time employment for youths. Following its successful piloting of being market-led, and demand-driven, the NDYEP model is being scaled up to other states and kicked off in Delta State in January 2021. This edition under the name, Youth Employment Pathways (YEP) project is funded by the Chevron Corporation. PIND's Economic Development Program contributes to the following global Sustainable Development Goals:



3.1.1 Market Systems Development

This section highlights key achievements of all initiatives implemented under the Market Systems Development (MSD) project in Quarter 4, 2023.

PIND's Market Systems Development project supports farmers and small enterprises in key agricultural sectors in the Niger Delta, aiming to improve productivity, increase income levels, and reduce poverty in the region. The project focuses on addressing underlying causes of market under-performance through interventions informed by market structure analysis to pinpoint the underlying causes of the market under-performance that inform the design and implementation of interventions that address those underlying causes rather than symptoms.

To ensure the sustainability of our interventions, the development activities are further anchored on a service providers' model that equips local service providers with the right skills, tools, and connections to sustainably provide viable market solutions that address the root causes of poor performance by farmers and enterprises.

3.1.2. Q4 2023 Key market system changes through services provision

Solving farmers and MSMEs' lack of access to business services and other support functions is key to boosting productivity. The focus for 2023 market system development activities was to strengthen adaptation strategies such as training, field demonstrations, information sharing, etc. developed by PIND's supported network of market actors to increase reach to 69,500 additional farmers and SMEs, out of which about 43,000 are expected to increase their incomes.

In Q4 2023, 65 out of over 300 Service Providers supported by PIND through direct training and crowding-in, continued to provide support services to farmers/MSMEs in Cassava, Cocoa, Palm oil, Poultry and Business linkages with training in Good Agronomic Practices (GAP). Highlights of the services provided by the SPs are shown below:

- **Cassava Sector:** In Q4 alone, 2,878 farmers were reached through 25 Service Providers support services. Also, a total of 1,806 indirect farmers adopted as at Q4, bringing the cumulative cassava outreach to 28,560 (57.6% females) farmers in 2023 as against the target of 27,500. These Service Providers mobilized and provided smallholder farmers access to quality inputs and information on good agricultural practices through training and the establishment of 5 demonstration plots as embedded services.
- **Cocoa Sector:** A total of 2,879 farmers were reached through four Farm Service Providers (FSPs) who organized training programs and on-farm demonstration activities such as spraying, pruning, harvesting and breaking/fermentation of cocoa pods. The cumulative cocoa farmers outreach for 2023 was 9,060 (22.03% females) as against the annual target of 12,000.
- **Palm oil Sector:** A total of 4,139 farmers/MSMEs, participated in BMP demonstrations and other events through seven Farm Service Providers (FSPs) and nine lead farmers who organized 25 on-farm demonstrations in best management practices, and adoption of two high capacity processing Technology (HCPT). The cumulative outreach for 2023, is 12,223 (36% females) against the annual target of 15,000.
- **Poultry:** A total of 2,156 poultry farmers were reached through 14 service providers (11 PSPs & 3 VLDs) in Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers. Some of the farmers were supported with technical and business skills training, linkages to inputs (feed & vaccines), market, and finance. The cumulative outreach for 2023 is 8,444 (45% females) surpassing the 2023 target of 8,000 farmers.
- **MSMEs:** A total of 1,674 micro and small enterprises were reached in Q4 2023, and the cumulative for 2023 was 7,156 (48% female owned). They were reached through six BSPs who provided support to enterprises on business management, business plan development, loan application, and linkages to finance. These MSMEs cut across various sectors of Aquaculture, poultry and livestock, agro-services, retailing, ICT, footwear, etc.

3.1.3. Q4 2023 Key outputs, from the activities of the Service Providers

Within the reporting period, 15,532 direct and indirect farmers/MSMEs were reached with improved services through the activities of the 65 service providers, as shown in Table 1 below. The 2023 cumulative outreach for MSD was 65,443 (46% females). This outreach represents 94% of the annual 2023 target of 69,500 farmers/MSMEs, – see table 1

Table 1. MSD 2023 progress against 2023 annual targets

Indicators	Target	Results Achieved	Performance (%)	Female	PWD	Target	Achieved	Performance	Female	PWD
	Q4	Q4	Q4 %	Q4	Q4	2023	YTD	YTD (%)	YTD	YTD
Number of farmers/MSMEs reached	10,800	15,532	143.8%	6,922	-	69,500	65,443	94%	30,111	-
Number of jobs facilitated	*	12,709	-	5,743	-	9,925	12,709	128.1%	5,743	-
Value of investment leveraged	*	₦2.5b	-	₦1.17b	-	₦10.70B	₦12.67b	118%	₦5.91b	-
Number of farmers/MSMEs with increased income	*	9,492	-	4,337	-	42,977	37,084	86%	16,953	-

Change in the income of farmers (direct + indirect)	*	₦5.22b	-	₦2,34b	-	₦18.14B	₦21.15b	116.5%	₦9.49b	-
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* Impact indicators are usually tracked once or twice a year, depending on sector dynamics and through assessments or surveys. As a result, they do not have quarterly targets.

3.1.4. Q4 2023 Key Outcome and Productivity of farmers

The training on productivity provided by the service providers stimulated adoption of various modules by the farmers and MSMEs across all the sectors, which signified a change in knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP). As they change their practices through adoption and adaptation, we track their investments in their businesses. This section explains how investments by farmers/MSMEs were leveraged, as well as their incomes.

Farmers/MSMEs' Outcome Through Investment: In 2023, we recorded over 90% adoption of improved practices across Cassava, Cocoa, Palm oil, Poultry, and MSMEs linkages projects. In quarter four alone, a total investment of ₦2.51billion was recorded by farmers/MSMEs bringing the 2023 cumulative investments by farmers/MSMEs to ₦12.67billion, 118% of the 2023 annual target of ₦10.70billion. Farmers' investments span fees for labor, technology adoption and the purchase of necessary inputs for the adoption of good agronomic practices (GAP) by farmers/MSMEs.

Farmers/MSMEs' increased productivity (Net attributable income): As the farmers and MSMEs adopt improved practices, they see increased productivity and income in their businesses which is tracked and reported quarterly through outcome monitoring and assessments. As at Q4 2023, the estimated net additional income of farmers/MSMEs who adopted improved practices in their businesses was ₦21.15billion, representing 116% of the 2023 annual target of ₦18.14billion, and as well, created a net additional 12,709 jobs (FTE), through engagement of workers in their farms/businesses.

3.1.5. Building partnerships to enhance access to improved seeds in the Niger Delta

This section explains PIND's facilitations and collaborations with other key partners to mitigate the farmers' risk, attributed to poor access to seeds.

Cassava: Improving farmers' access to quality cassava stems through CSEs:

The transformative strategy of PIND was to support Cassava Stem Entrepreneurs (CSEs) with inputs for cultivation of at least one hectare of land using improved stems, and to facilitate the certification of their multiplication plot by the National Seed Council (NASC). To implement this strategy, beginning from Delta, Abia and Akwa Ibom states, PIND had collaborated with Umudike Seeds, a private company established by the National Root Crop Research Institute, (NRCR).

In Q4 2023, some farmers have joined the business of stem multiplication as well as training other farmers in their localities on stem multiplication, however, this quarter being an off season for cassava planting, only 111 bundles of stem were recorded, as the farmers awaited the planning season from March 2024.

Oil Palm: Improving farmers' access to quality oil palm seedlings:

To mitigate the effect of aging oil palm trees and sustain availability of fresh fruit bunches in the region, PIND is prioritizing partnerships in the palm oil sector to scale up the activities of improved seed producers. For instance, PIND's partnership with two seed companies, Allisee Seeds and Ghana Sumatra to carry out a seed coordination workshop is yielding desired results. During this quarter, N11,850,000 was invested in the purchase of 20,000 sprouted nuts by nursery operators in Ondo state; a purchase of 10,000 seedlings was supplied by Allisee Seeds to NPPAN farmers, Ondo State chapter. Also, 10,000 seeds from PalmElit were supplied to nursery operators in Ondo State. In the coming year, more farmers and nursery operators will access improved seeds available for sale from the two seed companies.

3.1.6. Building partnerships to enhance access to finance and markets in the Niger Delta

PIND continues to actively explore opportunities to enhance market access for smallholder farmers, particularly through collaborations and partnerships. In this quarter, we bring you a cross-cutting view of these partnership initiatives in the Market System Development projects below:

Linkages to market: This quarter, PIND continued its engagement with stakeholders to facilitate linkages to market for businesses. We collaborated with CAD Digital Farm Limited and other BSPs, and continued engagements with, and facilitated market linkages for MSMEs to bulk buyers such as SPAR, Market Square, Ponitec Markets Limited (BuyPlus),

Hyper-City Market, DGIT Supermarket in Port Harcourt, and several open markets, leading to over 20 MSMEs successfully carrying out market transactions worth N157.7m.

In previous quarters, PIND in collaboration with CAD, provided support to the Okerewa community in Rivers State to design and set up a smart farm comprising various units: livestock, crop farming, processing, and water factory. So far, the technical and business support provided from the previous quarter has resulted in the setup of the farm structure, NAFDAC approvals for the water factory, and equipment to be procured. The setting up of the crop-farm unit is ongoing. The completion of the smart farm will further promote a cluster farming model for sustainable farming, provide employment, and meet market demands for farmers and MSMEs

MSMEs/Business Linkages: Linkages to finance/market for MSMEs:

As part of its objectives to support MSMEs to access finance for business expansion, PIND supported BSPs to provide advisory and financial linkages to MSMEs. These MSMEs were supported with business skill training and linkages to loans from Homeland Microfinance Cooperative Society Limited, Okerewa Cooperative Society in Eleme, and the Federal Government PACOSOL program. This support during the quarter resulted in 35 MSMEs (17 Female) linked to loans worth N51,730,000, and a total of N3,186,130,000 against the target N3.5b set for the year.

Poultry: Facilitating linkages to market and finance for poultry farmers:

As poultry farmers strive to adopt and implement good poultry practices to enhance productivity and expand their businesses, the demand for reliable and stable markets to sell their products becomes crucial. In this quarter, PIND supported Kingdom Obuza Ventures in organizing a market linkage workshop in Bayelsa state. The workshop was a platform for large buyers to network with poultry farmers and facilitate business transactions. Over 100 poultry farmers and two large buyers (Elohim Professional Farms and Chicken Palace) participated in the event.

3.1.7. Building partnerships to enhance the quality of Cocoa beans in the Niger Delta

The Nigerian cocoa industry has been associated with producing low-quality cocoa beans due to subpar practices by farmers during production and post-harvest stages. The lack of clear incentives for farmers to enhance their practices and produce high-quality beans further exacerbated this issue. In 2020, PIND introduced an incentive-based model in collaboration with off-takers to address the challenges surrounding poor-quality cocoa beans. This model incorporates incentives such as higher prices or premiums for farmers who produce superior-quality cocoa beans. The pilot phase of this intervention involved reaching out to over 1,000 farmers in Ondo State, in partnership with Subjugate Nigeria Limited and Nivik Investment Limited. After concluding the pilot and assessing things, PIND initiated engagements with additional cocoa processors and exporters in 2022 to replicate the successful model and expand its impact.

In 2023, the intervention focused on partnering and providing support to at least two cocoa off-takers to network new farmers into their quality improvement program, and invest in improving the capacity of their network of service providers.

Within the reporting period, 3 off-takers: Nivik, John Vents, and Oluji Industries intensified support to farmers on cocoa quality improvement through training in good post-harvest practices. Specifically, John Vent limited implemented the Rainforest Alliance Standard (RAS) certification program in Ondo and Cross River states. Various training programs, including harvesting, drying, fermenting, sorting and grading including child labor awareness, etc., were conducted for farmers across these regions. The training initiatives successfully reached a total of 3,686 farmers who have agreed to abide by the practices to deliver the RA standard. John Vents (JV) group farmers would receive their incentives before the upcoming audit season even as JV is expanding its producers' network to 10,000.

Also, within the quarter, Nivik trained lead farmers and new Farm Service Providers (FSPs) to enhance their understanding of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and expand their outreach to producers.

3.1.8. Expansion of business development support to MSMEs, fisherfolks, and processors in CNL coastal communities.

PIND, in the previous quarters, entered into a partnership with National Institute for Oceanography Marin Research (NIOMR) as part of activities to improve the efficiency of MSMEs, Fish processors, and fisherfolks in the CNL host communities. This quarter, through this collaboration, NIOMR and Marich Agro, a service provider, organized technical training for fisherfolks on better fishing practices and technologies and also established a linkage platform through

Cooperatives. Beyond the training, these fisherfolks were also supported with linkages to off-takers and fishing equipment. The training was held in Tsekelewu, Ugbo-Oluegin, and Oboghoro with a total of 100 participants (71 males, 29 females).

Also, following the training and existing linkages to off-takers for fisherfolks in Awoye in Ilaje LGA, Ondo State from previous quarters, PIND in collaboration with CAD Consulting Limited and Mr. Ilawole Odunwale, a service provider continued to facilitate market linkages for fisherfolks and processors and tracked the transactions from those linkages. This quarter, 75 of these fisherfolks were linked to the market through off-takers and they made sales worth N18m.

3.2.0 Skills Development for Youth Employment (YEP)

The aims of the Youth Employment Program (YEP) are to map the ecosystem of skills development, analyze opportunities for employment creation, and develop models of youth job readiness or workforce development that provide disadvantaged young men and women in the Niger Delta with the opportunities to secure sustainable jobs and enterprises. PIND's approach involves innovative and quality technical occupational training which prepares selected youth with market-relevant skills and supports their transitioning into work or entrepreneurship.

In 2018, with funding from the Ford Foundation, PIND started the implementation of the Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) Project in 3 states - Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers. The pilot project provided market-driven vocational skills training for 4,355 youths in economic growth sectors such as Agriculture, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Building Construction with most of them linked to employment opportunities. With the completion of the Ford Foundation's funded pilot phase, NDYEP scaled up in the pilot states and in Delta State with funding from Chevron Corporation. The scale up project is replicating the model and providing technical skills training and linkage to jobs or enterprise development in the same sectors with the inclusion of Finished Leather and Services sectors.

3.2.1 Q4 2023 Key Achievements in YEP – Update on ongoing training

Number of youths with applicable skills: This quarter witnessed a successful completion of training by 1,428 youths out of the 2023 enrollment of 2,438 (908 females) - 1,709 new ones, plus 729 carried over - across Abia, Akwa Ibom, Rivers and Delta. The training was in four sectors (Agriculture, ICT, Building Construction and Services including finished leather). With this 1,428 graduated youths plus 729 who had graduated in Q1, 2023, the cumulative number of youths with applicable skills in 2023 is 2,157 (97%) against the target of 2,229¹⁵. Some of those who enrolled in the 2023 batch will continue till Q1 2024, with several of them yet to complete their training – see table two below.

Number of youths accessing income opportunities:

From the internal assessment carried out to determine the proportion of graduated youths accessing income opportunities after their training, it was revealed that 22% of the youths were successfully linked to jobs, while over 65% established businesses using their own equity financing, especially in ICT, agriculture, Fashion and finished leather goods. The estimated number of youths having access to income opportunities out of the 1,428 that graduated in Q4 stood at 1,242 youths. This brings the cumulative number of youths with access to income opportunities in 2023 to 1,876¹⁶ as against the target of 1,389. The Services sector emerged with the highest number of job placements and business startups, followed by the ICT sector, while Construction and Agriculture sectors came lower.

Number of job-to-job internship, apprenticeship placements: A total of 668 (422 in Q4 + 246 in Q1) trained youths with need for skill enhancement have been strategically placed in various internship and apprenticeship positions with the Aquaculture sector having the highest. Efforts are diligently underway to facilitate the transition of the remaining 422 youths, as well as those currently on internships or apprenticeships, into waged employment or entrepreneurial pursuits.

¹⁵ 729 carried over from previous year plus 1,500 originally target set for 2023

¹⁶ 634 was reported in Q3 2023

Table 2. YEP progress against 2023 annual targets

YEP Indicators	Target	Achieved	Performance (%)	Target	Achieved YTD	Performance (%)	Female	PWD
	32 2023 Targets	Q4 2023	Q4%	2023	2023	2023(%)	2023	2023
Number of youths with applicable skills (Completed)	*	0	*	2,229 (HCDT 100)	2,157	97%	908 (42%)	26
Number of youths accessing employment and other income-earning opportunities	*	0	*	1,389 ¹⁷	1,876 ¹⁸	87%	788 (42%)	12 ¹⁹
Number of job-to-job internship, apprenticeship placements	*	0	*	800	668	84%	345 (53%)	0
States adoption of PIND's model for youth employment	*	0	*	3	0	0%	NA	NA

3.2.2 Update on the Implementing Partners (IPs) 3rd Year Service Delivery

A total of 18 implementing partners and private TVET institutions effectively managed 19 projects, emphasizing the integration of soft skills and conflict sensitivity. The breakdown of the implementing partners (IPs) per sector are as follows: Agriculture (4), Building construction (3), ICT (5), and Services (6). By the end of Q4, 18 projects (technical vocational skills training with the mainstreaming of soft skills) were successfully completed, leading to the graduation of 1,428 youths (Males: 807; Females: 621; PWD: 26). These comprehensive training programs, spanning approximately 6 months, were specifically designed for implementing partners who had signed their grants in May 2023.

The training structure emphasized a 70% practical and field-based approach, aiming to enhance participants' occupational skills capacity. The incorporation of soft skills training, running parallel to technical skills, was strategically implemented to foster behavioral change among youth participants and to prepare them for the demands of the work or business environment. Successful completion and qualification for recommendations to partner organizations for apprenticeships, job linkages, and, in some cases, certification examinations required a minimum attendance of 80%.

3.2.3 Update on start-up business challenge fund plans

Subsequent to the award ceremony, fund disbursements took place between July and October 2023. In Q4 2023, funds were successfully disbursed to 62 businesses, with over 50% of the grantees strictly adhering to their allocated budgets. Among the grantees who implemented the grant, some supplemented with personal funds, contributing up to N1,696,000 to cover all items on their budget. Others prioritized their purchases, leading to a reduction in the number of items. Notably, businesses that fully implemented their grants reported significant sales growth and increased revenue. In the Agriculture sector, there was a notable increase in the amount of produce they stock or rear. Some businesses have experienced over a 100% increase in their capacity, with examples ranging from 7,000 to 25,000 fingerlings and a shift from a 500 to a 1,000-capacity farm. From the businesses that have fully or partially implemented their grants, a total of 22 employment opportunities have been generated. The YEP team is still closely monitoring the progress of these businesses operated by the participants and offering guidance whenever required.

3.2.4 State governments' adoption of YEP

At the completion of the Niger Delta Youth Employment Program (NDYEP) piloted in Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, in 2019 and reaching over 4000 youths, the YEP team embarked on several promotional activities to States to woo them to adopt or adapt the YEP model in their States being proven to be a more sustainable approach. For this phase, 2020 – 2024, a target of five States was set, which however is yet to be achieved.

¹⁷ In 2023, YEP set a job access target of 660 from 1,709 trainees + 729 trainees who had their skills in Q1 2023. Therefore, the effective 2023

¹⁸ From the assessment carried in Q3 2023, 22% of the trained youths were linked to jobs, and 65% established businesses – i.e., 87% of the 729 trained as at Q3 2023 had livelihood means.

¹⁹ PWD – 9 males and 3 Females had access to income opportunities

Akwa Ibom State: During this quarter, we achieved a significant milestone with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Akwa Ibom State's Ibom Leadership and Entrepreneurial Development Centre, 'Ibom-LED' to foster the adaptation of the YEP model in the state's youth development initiatives. The envisioned outcome is the socio-economic development and advancement of both Akwa Ibom State and the broader Niger Delta Region. PIND and Ibom-LED share common interests in the socio-economic transformation of the lives of people and communities and the overall prosperity of the Niger Delta region through training, knowledge sharing, hosting professional forums, innovative technology competitions, entrepreneurial support, etc. The agreement will begin a joint effort to promote the YEP model and framework for adaptation on their technical/soft skill training, leadership, and entrepreneurial development programs for youth development and such other activities that may result in the socio-economic development and advancement of Akwa Ibom State.

Ondo State: Sequel to the screening of the applications this quarter, four grant agreements have been formalized and signed with the implementing partners who were successful after PIND's technical assessment of their proposals. The four are: Green Shield Integrated Technologies Ltd. (Agriculture to reach 120 youths in Akure); Micafotoy Technologies Ltd./Board for Adult Technical Vocational Education (ICT/Building Construction to reach 120 youths in Akure and Ile-Oluji & Owo); AMY6015 Global Enterprise/Board for Adult Technical Vocational Education (Services to reach 60 youths in Ile-Oluji); and Solar World Gesellschaft Ltd (Services to reach 60 youths in Akure).

These agreements pave the way for the program's implementation across four sectors, spanning three locations in Ondo State. The partners are now poised to initiate the YEP Program in Ondo State, contributing to its expansion and reach. Current efforts are focused on selecting and onboarding eligible unemployed participants for the YEP training program in 2024, reflecting the program's commitment to expanding its impact. Subsequent to this, a call for applications was diligently executed to identify eligible participants who will actively engage in the program within Ondo State. The program's target objective is to provide training and job-linkage for a minimum of 360 unemployed or underemployed youths.

To facilitate this, a targeted publicity campaign was launched through various channels, including an online link prominently featured on PIND's website and disseminated through physical means. The selected eligible participants are scheduled to commence their training in January 2024, marking a crucial step towards the program's commitment to upskilling the youths in Ondo State.

3.3.0 Access to Energy

The coastal rural communities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria suffer poor rural electrification, with many of the communities not having access to regular electricity supply to power basic economic assets and household needs, leading to reduced economic activities. Expectations for connection to the National grid anytime soon are unlikely due to high-cost implications and the difficult terrains. Since 2018, PIND has been addressing this gap through alternative and affordable off-grid solutions, capable of targeting not only basic energy needs (i.e., lighting and cooking energy), but also productive use of energy at both household and rural enterprise levels (such as use in barber shops and beauty salons).

Community access to clean energy expanded significantly in Q4 2023, with 177 businesses and 444 households gaining access across various riverine communities. This strategic initiative not only facilitated sustainable energy solutions but also fostered overall community development and resilience to commercial and domestic entities. Consequently, 2,841 people gained access to clean energy. This comprises 177 business proprietors and 2664 persons from 444 households across Awamba, Obaghoru, Odun Igor, Ojumole, Jirinwo, Deghele, Ogbudugbudu, Odo-Nla and Odofado

3.3.1 Economic Impact: Empowering Communities in the Niger Delta through Clean Energy

The financial landscape witnessed a notable upswing, with a total of N1,150,655,179.76 realized as financial benefits by rural businesses and households utilizing clean energy. A monitoring assessment conducted by PIND in Q4 2023 revealed that financial benefits totaling N714,706,969.76 were specifically realized across 11 communities over the 12-month monitoring period as well as a computation of N435,948,210 attributed to solar refrigeration use at Koluama 2 by 250 fisherfolks over the same monitoring window, demonstrating the positive economic transformation brought about by clean energy interventions.

Financial benefit includes net additional incomes earned by businesses which had energy cost reduced as a result of cheaper solar energy and the net additional cost saved by the households who are connected to solar mini-grids

compared to generators use. The third part of financial gains comes from the adoption of Solar Refrigerators by fisherfolks, who preserve daily excess fish products in the Solar Refrigerators, and later sell at normal prices as opposed to smoking the excesses and losing income on them before the intervention.

Renewable energy projects became catalysts for job creation, offering employment opportunities to 98 individuals. This included 31 full-time positions and 53 seasonal jobs, adding a significant socio-economic dimension to the development of these distinctive last mile communities. The M&E report also showed that employment opportunities flourished at partner-operated scale up sites in Fagbo, Laosho and Orisumbare (Ondo State), while Awamba, Ogbudugbudu, Obaghoro, Ojumole, Jirinwo, Deghele and Odun Igo communities – all HETA project sites had 14 FTE as energy cabin operators, thus contributing their own quota to the socio-economic development of the region.

3.3.2 Driving “Energy-for-Enterprise” models through Healthcare facilities electrification collaboration

PIND commenced implementation of a healthcare electrification partnership project hinged on a tested business model based on local solar energy cabins that provide reliable, affordable solar power to last mile healthcare facilities and complimentary business connections across 12 communities in the Niger Delta. Through this partnership, PIND leveraged about \$220,000 as grant from USAID through its consultants, Abt Associates. The strategic objective of the project is to showcase the adaptability of the energy cabin for dedicated healthcare electrification initiatives. This involved interventions in four existing partner mini-grid locations in select communities to boost supply around base mini grid locations and seven new locations.

The Health Electrification and Telecommunication Alliance (HETA) is a five-year cooperative agreement that invests USAID resources to leverage more than \$150 million of additional private sector resources to install reliable, renewable power, and provide mobile network and Internet access for at least 10,000 health facilities across sub-Saharan Africa. The collaboration between PIND and its partners, bolstered by indigenous power developer interest and investment, showcased innovative approaches to healthcare electrification and capacity building for the energy-healthcare nexus. HETA was innovative and particularly contributed to the implementation of PIND’s year 2023 operating plan.

These interventions not only powered healthcare facilities but also delivered additional connections to households and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the respective communities. The partnerships with private sector entities such as Solaviva, A4&T, Vectis, and BCIS Limited played a pivotal role in driving the success of these projects. While PIND has no program pillar in healthcare, the incentive for communities to benefit from enterprise-driven power projects that would power businesses, households and importantly a community healthcare center lies at the heart of the collaboration under the HETA project.

HETA contributed to the implementation of PIND’s year 2023 operating plan. The collaboration was aligned with PIND’s plan and it leveraged N259,762,812 as the total value of investments by public and private sectors. This leverage funds include N175,291,811 from Abt Associates contribution to HETA, as well as N84,471,001 from HETA private sector partners' contribution.

A closeout to the PIND HETA partnership on healthcare electrification:

The 6-month implementation of the HETA project pilot came to completion in Q4 2023, culminating in a closeout workshop with 149 participants across 12 communities, and 67 international participants at the virtual HETA close-out workshop (134 males and 82 females in total).

Seven new energy cabins were deployed under the aegis of the HETA partnership, bringing the total number of clean energy solutions facilitated by PIND to 12 for the year. Simultaneously, capacity-building efforts advanced by PIND through the power developers ensured that 76 individuals with clean energy skills training on clean energy solutions, and this allowed and fostering a skilled workforce within the local communities. This was achieved because of the power developers’ interest in downstream operations of the clean energy business value chain. The companies include Ashdam Energy responsible for the training of 30 village level technicians across Ojumole and Odo-NIa; Renergy Limited responsible for training 20 technicians across Odun Igo and Deghele, Consistent Energy responsible for training 10 persons and BCIS limited responsible for training 16 members of Obaghoro and Ogbudugbudu communities as village level technicians.

Beyond the technical assistance rendered to the power developers collaborating on HETA, PIND recognizes that business

support for developers is critical to derisking the investments and stimulating the flame of entrepreneurship in small scale power projects. In this quarter, PIND supported a new power developer - Renergy limited - to develop stake by co-investing in some power projects linked to the HETA collaboration. This broadly increased the number of clean energy focused businesses supported by PIND in year 2023, bringing the annual number of players who began their journey during the year to 5. These new entrants are 'greenhorns' with investments interests in the unique business opportunities that the coastal communities may offer power developers and remain critical to the vision to grow the sector

3.3.3 Environmental Stewardship:

The embrace of clean energy translated into a substantial environmental impact, saving a total of 890.4 tCO₂ equivalent in emissions. This resonates with global sustainability objectives and underscores the pivotal role of renewable energy in climate change mitigation. This emissions displacement came from a combined 481.8kWp of clean energy infrastructure generating 1,618,848 kWh of electricity. This spike in numbers highlights the increasing contribution of the partners' scale-up projects through adaptation while also representative of the sectoral vision for clean energy goals.

3.3.4 Social Impact at the intersection of Energy and community welfare.

The significance of the intervention is holistically socio-economical for PIND. The HETA project will help healthcare centers in the rural Niger Delta to cut their energy bills and decarbonize their operative power processes through crosscutting benefits of energy efficiency and adoption of efficient technologies. It also supports the use of cooling technologies and other electrical equipment that can boost the quality of healthcare delivery to wider catchment of these communities particularly around the HCDDT communities. Overall, the HETA project stands as a beacon of progress in the electrification journey of rural/coastal Niger Delta, supporting community power, enhancing healthcare delivery, and fostering sustainable development in the region.

3.4.0 SOMBREIRO KAPITAL (SK)

Over the years, poor or no access to finance has consistently hampered the productivity of businesses in the Niger Delta due to systemic constraints (existing laws, infrastructural deficit, and knowledge gap), which influence the demand and supply of financial services. To address these constraints, Sombreiro Kapital (SK) was incorporated in 2020 to facilitate lending to businesses by issuing credit guarantees to partner Commercial banks to de-risk lending, thereby unlocking the flow of finance to intended beneficiaries.

SK Mandate:

At Sombreiro Kapital, we innovatively develop and integrate target focal crops/livestock value chain in addition to the issuance of partial credit risk guarantee to partner financial institutions, as a de-risking mechanism against credit default by smallholder Farmers (SHFs) and SMEs, thus incentivizing and stimulating financial institutions, and unlocking the flow of funds along the value chains.

In 2023, SK's target is to facilitate loans worth ₦100,000,000 to 100 Agric business in the priority value chains of aquaculture, poultry, cocoa, oil palm, and cassava across the focal states of Delta, Edo, Bayelsa, Imo, and Ondo through risk sharing with partner commercial banks. In Q1 and Q2, 2023, SK's efforts were geared towards its sustainability plan that would deliver profitable financial returns to Small Holder Farmers/MSMEs and create positive value for stakeholders. SK prioritized remedial asset management to safeguard the company's core capital. Also, due diligence was carried out over 100 farmers in cooperatives, associations, and agro companies (MSMEs) for possible loan advancement and credit guarantee cover with partner banks.

In the third quarter (Q3) of 2023, SK was able to facilitate the disbursement of loans worth ₦67,000,000 to 322 smallholder farmers. In addition, SK aggressively followed up/stepped up monitoring activities to keep the default rate on guaranteed loans within 5%, the company-approved benchmark.

In Q4, 2023, SK received loan applications of over N100 million for intervention. Given the growing volume of loan requests and to ensure the interest of applicants is sustained in line with the core mandate of SK, it took steps to enhance relationships with partner banks such as Unity Bank and Sterling Bank Plc. New financial products such as credit system of financing, were also considered with the overall objective of improving access to finance by small holder farmers (SHF) and MSMEs within the focus area, the Niger-Delta region. We also succeeded in entering strategic alliance with a major cassava processor; the relationship offers opportunity for collaboration in upscaling production with guaranteed access to market.

Strengthening SK Strategic Operating Framework

To ensure sustainability, the following measures have been put in focus:

- Supporting unregistered self-help groups to formalize as a cooperative society through registration with the relevant government agency (ies). This will give them legal status, making them attractive for financing. Formalization will also: facilitate ease of monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the SK model; ensure establishment of leadership structure to ease project monitoring and reporting.
- Capacity building on risk management and loan monitoring for SPs. The SPs will, in turn, carry out a step-down training in each project location for a monthly consideration to be agreed upon by management. Since the SPs will be on retainers, they will also support the monitoring of projects.
- Remodeling of partner's deliverables with SK last mile in focus.
- Funding is channeled through major players and off-takers with the financial capacity to offtake. Still, it must have a pool of smallholder farmers as a base for local impact in line with SK's strategic objectives.
- Channeling funding through major players will also ensure ownership of credit, which is a credit default risk mitigation strategy, minimizing capital erosion.
- Access to finance by input providers with internal financing arrangement with a group of farmers or SMEs, the preceding being the basis for SK financing intermediation role.
- Non-financial intermediation (Access to finance) through value chain development services and linkages to fund service providers (Broker services) without guarantee cover. (Development Financial Institution, Govt Agencies, Impact Funds).
- Reduce risk exposure by partnership with other developmental companies for risk syndication.

Key Outcome: Beneficiaries accessing Finance Post SK Intervention

Over 120 members of various cooperatives successfully accessed funds from MFBs totaling ₦30Million post SK intervention. Profiling of impact is still ongoing – Refer to Annex 2 for SK Partnership/Sustainability.

3.5.0 Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Activity (AEAS) – Q1 FY24

The Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) Activity is jointly-funded by USAID and PIND over a five-year period (May 25, 2020 – May 24, 2025). Like PIND, the Activity utilizes a facilitative approach to market development by partnering with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and key market actors within the aquaculture, cowpea, maize, rice, and soybean value chains to pilot proven technologies, scale up successful ones, and promote the adoption of improved production practices. It also aims to improve service delivery that will rapidly, effectively, and sustainably provide access to agro-inputs and disseminate extension messaging to at least two million smallholder farmers in Benue, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Kaduna, Kebbi, and Niger states.

The Extension Activity uses Lean²⁰ production principles and tools to develop a deep understanding of the existing production systems to identify the most promising opportunities (also known as most impactful practices- MIPs) and the most important constraints to improve efficiency and increase return on investment for farmers. The Extension Activity leverages MSMEs as change agents around the identified on-farm opportunities. These MSMEs are strategically placed intermediaries for upstream and downstream movement of inputs and commodities through the market system; and their businesses depend on and can grow with the enhanced competitiveness and profitability of their core customers, the smallholder producers.

Cross River State and Delta State Update - Extension Activity's Interventions and Results in Q1 FY24

For the period under review (Q1FY24), the Extension Activity has continued to build the capacity of MSMEs using some reinforcing strategies to expand extension services to smallholder famers. In line with the Activity's expansion and networking phase, emphasis was on consolidation of past achievements, networking of MSMEs, strengthening of partnerships, expansion of buy-in, scaling of adoption and partnership innovation fund (PIF) support in Cross River and Delta States. As a result, it influenced 19 MSMEs (Table 3) in Cross River and Delta to reach 20,746 (Table 5) smallholder farmers with improved extension and advisory services in FY24 Q1.

²⁰ Lean is a process-driven analytical and management set of principles and tools the Activity will use to develop a deep understanding of the existing production systems to identify the most promising opportunities and the most important constraints to improve efficiency and increase return on investment for farmers. Lean principles emerged from the Toyota Production System, known for efficiency and high net margins within its industry, and have been applied in agriculture as well as other sectors and industries in the recent decades.

Table 3: Number of MSMEs in Cross River and Delta states

State	Cross River			Delta			Aggregate		
	Total	Female-owned	Youth-owned	Total	Female-owned	Youth-owned	Total	Female-owned	Youth-owned
MSMEs in cohorts	55	8	-	131	18	5	186	26	5
MSMEs deploying MIPs	9	1	-	10	4	-	19	4	-

During this period, the AEAS continued to champion the use of sustainable strategy to drive implementation, this includes the Demand stimulation, ICT for extension (digital apps and video extension), and Use of biofertilizers. The Demand stimulation strategy was adopted by the Extension Activity in response to the initial skepticism by the MSMEs in playing the role in extension service delivery. A good marketing strategy aimed at increasing and deliberately arousing interest or enthusiasm of potential customers for products.

Demand stimulation enables MSMEs to effectively deliver extension messaging that will stimulate interest in their products (Most Impactful Practices (MIPs)) with the small holder farmers. It also facilitates farmers understanding, use and adoption of the MIPs. It creates a sustainable market linkage between the MSMEs and the SHFs and enhances business performance. This has helped MSMEs increase their customer base and has led to increased investment.

In FY24 Q1 MSMEs in Cross River and Delta invested \$407,301.95 (Table 5) especially on facilities expansion, upgrades and inputs purchased. In terms of volume of production of juveniles, there has also been a reported marginal increase. Sales volume also increased marginally marking a gradual improvement in demand which fell drastically in the same period of 2022 because of the impact of the 2022 flood, as well as the naira redesign and cashless policy of the Federal government, which affected a lot of farming households.

ICT for extension

In ICT for extension (digital apps and video extension), Extension Activity continued to promote the integration of practical farmer-responsive information, communication, and technology solutions into MSME's business models to increase farmer awareness and drive adoption of MIPs. 10 partner MSMEs integrated a suite of digital apps (RiceApp, Field Areas Measure, and Plantix) into their extension services and provided 1,965 farmers with integrated information on improved seeds, farm size, weather, and disease solutions within the quarter. Extension Activity successfully continued to collaborate with the Cross River and Delta state Agricultural Development Program to disseminate extension videos demonstrating the value and practice of MIPs. A total of 2497 SHFs were reached this quarter through Delta and Cross River state ADP extension agents. Some of this dissemination was also done in partnership with MSMEs dealing on improved seed. The Activity in partnership with the CRADP and LIFE-ND provided technical support to the State Ministry of Agriculture on the on-going digital soil mapping in the State. The soil mapping took place in the 3 senatorial zones with the CRADP capturing key activities with the ICT equipment support from the Extension Activity.

With the persistence of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, farmers are finding it extremely difficult to apply fertilizer to their farms. The situation escalated in 2023 and led to an abysmal drop in productivity. The Extension Activity introduced alternatives to the use of fertilizer to mitigate the impact of non-availability of inorganic fertilizer and the exorbitant prices. A total of 2,729 participated in the demonstration of the use of organic fertilizer in the out-going season. The result coming in from the field was amazing in terms of farmers assessment of the vegetative influence of the product on crops during the greenfield days conducted in cross river state. We will conclude this with brownfield day to assess the yield and compute the Economic of Production when compared with the inorganic fertilizer.

Table 4: Number of farmers accessing MIPs/Intervention

MIP/Intervention	Cross River			Delta			Gross Total
	Total	Female	Youth	Total	Female	Youth	
Use of Juveniles	-	-	-	86	31	11	-
Extension messaging through Demand Stimulation	10,142	5,178	488	6,056	2,904	103	10,142
ICT for extension (digital apps and video extension)	3,352	1,779	35	1,110	533	152	3,352

Collaborations/partnership for sustainability

The Extension Activity used multi-stakeholder platforms to coordinate inter-sectoral efforts, simplify processes, and scale the use of MIPs. A state-level CoP was launched in Cross River and Delta states jointly with the state Ministry of Agriculture, ADP, and development partners. The CoP has members such as the state Ministry of Agriculture, development projects, MSMEs, lead farmers, ADP, research institutes, and universities. It serves as a platform for learning and sharing experiences on agriculture solutions.

In keeping with the Extension Activity’s mandate of strengthening linkages between research institutions, public and private extension service providers, and other agricultural value chain stakeholders for increased access to extension advisory services, the Extension Activity is promoting a partnership between the Cross-River State ADP and Brain & Hammers. To this end, Cross River state government allocated a total of 5,000 hectares of land to Brains and Hammers in Bansara and Ntara farm belt.

The Activity also provided technical support for the development of the implementation framework for the Project Grow program in the state. Project Grow is a six-year project initiative by the Cross-River State Government that intends to de-risk lending for commercial Agriculture (Agric Business Players) where the state government will serve as credit guarantors and put in NGN 30 billion (37,532,700 USD) into the project. The key value chains in line with Extension Activity commodity are maize, aquaculture, and rice. A digital portal will be developed to offer extension messaging and services to smallholder farmers and Agribusinesses. The Government has approved a total of 150 million Naira for the project take-off and solicits that Extension Activity provide technical support to ensure the project succeeds as it kicked off in January 2024.

Output Level Results

Table 5: Output indicators for Cross River and Delta states (Q1FY24)

Performance Indicator	Cross River	Delta	Aggregate (C. River & Delta)	Overall portfolio
Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs (EG 3-2) <i>smallholder farmers</i>	13,494	7,252	20,746	295,752
Number of private sector firms providing new or improved extension and advisory services as a result of USG assistance (output; custom)	9	10	19	84
EG.3.1-14: Value of new USG commitments and private sector investment leveraged by the USG to support food security and nutrition	\$268,767.54	\$138,534.41	\$407,301.95	\$9,850,982.07

Outcome Level Results

The FY23 annual survey was conducted in November/December 2023 to establish the status of the seven outcome indicators and one output indicator (EG.3-2) that the Extension Activity was yet to report at the end of FY23. The survey has been concluded the analysis and report is ongoing. The annual survey will estimate farmers’ productivity and sales, the hectares of land under improved management practices/technologies as well as land under improved practices that contribute to climate risk reduction and natural resources management.

4.0 Peace Building Program

The strategic thrust of the peace building program is to achieve regional and lasting peace in the Niger Delta. To achieve this, PIND is creating sustainable peace partnerships, encouraging collaboration and cooperation amongst peace actors, providing support for economic development, and strengthening indigenous structures for peace, while also creating and building interfaces with larger state-level or regional peace efforts; thereby creating an enabling environment for sustainable broad-based economic development.

The peace building program consists of two interrelated and interdependent projects: The Integrated Peace and Development Unit (IPDU) and Partners for Peace (P4P) Network. The IPDU focuses on undertaking research and providing training to local and international stakeholders to implement innovative pilot projects that show promise of making a difference on the ground. Responding quickly in a targeted manner to rapidly changing dynamics, the IPDU promotes collaboration and synergy amongst existing local, regional, and national efforts of actors in both public and private sectors to develop/deploy early warning and response mechanisms to address conflict, with a focus on gender and youth.

The P4P Network is PIND's strategy towards establishing social infrastructure and capital across all nine states of the Niger Delta. In the last five years, PIND has established a network of self-identified agents of peace that have deployed the power of grassroots networking towards building peace in the region. Using conflict analyses and early warning as key instruments, P4P identifies, and supports existing initiatives, and creates new ones to address the conflict risk factors. The P4P Network currently has chapters and subchapters in all the 9 States and 119 LGAs of the Niger Delta.

In the current strategic phase (2020-2024), the Peace Network is focusing on establishing and strengthening grassroots conflict resolution initiatives that promote a more enabling, integrated, and peaceable environment conducive for economic growth and development in the region.

PIND's Peace Building Program contributes to this global Sustainable Development Goal:



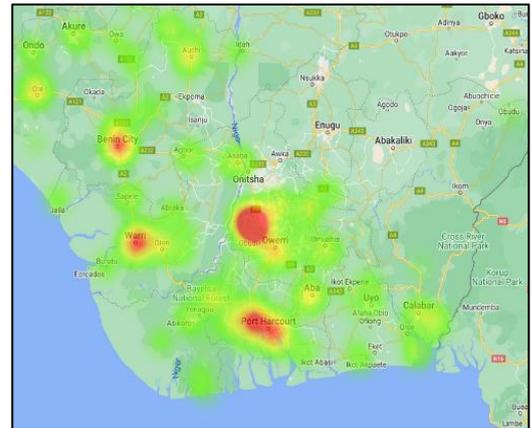
This section highlights key achievements of the Peace Building program in Q4,2023.

4.1 Niger Delta Peace Outlook in Q4 2023

Conflict risk and insecurity were elevated in the Niger Delta in Q4 2023. According to data uploaded on the P4P Peace Map, lethal violence increased by 7.5% from 161 fatalities in Q3 to 173 in Q4 of 2023, with an increase in reported incidents of organized criminal violence (including kidnap for ransom and clashes between hoodlums and government security forces) during the period, compared to the third quarter of the year. According to data, incidents of criminal violence increased by 10.4% from 96 in Q3 to 106, and caused over 190 fatalities in the Niger Delta during the quarter. Reported fatalities caused by these elements increased by 44% from 134 fatalities in Q3 to 193 in Q4. However, there was a decrease in lethal violence associated with cult gangs in the Niger Delta during the period. According to data, fatalities associated with cult gangs decreased by 30.3% from 33 fatalities in Q3 to 23. Also, there was a decrease in reported incidents of communal violence over land and boundary disputes during the quarter. Data shows that incidents of communal violence declined by 33.3% from 18 incidents in Q3 to 12, while fatalities increased by 113.3% from 15

reported fatalities in Q3 to 32.

Conflict risk and lethal violence during the quarter were mainly driven by political tensions, clashes between rival cult gangs, clashes between hoodlums and government security personnel, communal conflict, separatist agitation (Abia and Imo), and organized criminality (including kidnap for ransom). Clashes between rival cult gangs were prevalent during the quarter, particularly in Rivers and Edo states. Gang violence caused over 20 fatalities during the period. Also, many incidents of communal violence were reported during the quarter, mainly in Cross River and Delta states. According to data, communal violence caused 32 fatalities during the quarter. Separatist agitation and associated violence caused more than 30 fatalities during the period.



Niger Delta Conflict Fatalities Heat Map, Q3 2023

However, PIND is relentlessly undertaking interventions in conflict prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding in the Niger Delta region as part of the plan of action aimed at keeping the level of violence low, particularly in key communities of interest. PIND has continued to build the social infrastructure and social capital of peace actors across the region for long term sustainable peace. PIND's peace building strategy recognizes the need for an integrated and comprehensive approach to tackling the complex causes and drivers of conflict; adopting innovative approaches to work on problems of militancy, election violence, gang/cult violence, communal violence, and the cross-cutting issue of Violence Affecting Women and Girls (VAWG).

4.2 Peace building highlights of activities in Q4 2023

In Q4 of 2023, PIND produced and disseminated numerous data-driven and research-based conflict early warning products: 13 data-driven research and analytical products including 12 weekly conflict briefs and 1 quarterly (2023 Q3) conflict tracker, to update peace and security stakeholders, and facilitated several preventive interventions in the Niger Delta. This brings it to a total of 57 data-driven research and analytical products disseminated in 2023 to local, national and international peace actors to create situational awareness, update stakeholders, map and analyze conflicts, and share information, knowledge and best practices on conflict mitigation and peacebuilding in the Niger Delta. These conflict reports spotlighted key thematic conflict issues in the region including organized criminality, gang violence, communal conflict, mob violence, and human rights including sexual violence during the period.

During the quarter, the P4P peace actors completed most of their planned interventions ranging from resolution of conflicts between herders and farmers, settlement of domestic and gender-based violence, leadership tussles with traditional institutions, and management of gang and cult related activities. Considering the negative political and socio-economic implications of conflicts, emphasis was placed on prevention of conflicts with several conflict management and peacebuilding strategies to prevent occurrence and even escalation where it occurred.

Apart from individual interventions by P4P peace actors, 18 other peacebuilding interventions (9 by States and other 9 by Prevent Committees) were completed during the period. Some of the key interventions from States were as follows: addressing communal armed conflict between Uko Akpang Ewang and Ukonteghe Uda in Mbo LGA of Akwa Ibom State; addressing the lingering Land Conflict between Oyadema community in Obubra LGA, Nko and Inyima communities in Yakurr LGA of Cross River State; mitigating the negative impact of cultism in Ovia North East and Oredo; mitigating herder-farmer clashes and criminal violence in Owo & Ose LGAs; and strengthening the relationship between citizens and the Police in Port Harcourt, Obio/Akpor, and Emohua in Rivers State.

During the quarter, P4P deepened its resource mobilization efforts and the network sustainability strategy, having developed its work plan containing four objectives and sixteen activities. Its Central Working Committee (CWC) implemented key activities which included an engagement with Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC), the outcome of which was the recognition of P4P contribution to peace and security in the region, and SPDC's readiness and willingness to contribute to P4P peacebuilding and conflict management processes in the Niger Delta region.



Association of Coastal and Waterways Communities participant in Warri

Warri Multi Stakeholders Platform (MSP): PIND facilitated a capacity building session for members of Association of Coastal and Waterways Communities (ACWC) of Nigeria, Delta State chapter in preparation for peacebuilding and conflict management interventions in the 3 Warri LGAs of Delta State. The rationale for the training was based on the understanding of violent conflict as a key constraint to peace, security and economic development in coastal and waterways communities in Delta State. Peacebuilding skills and the existence of an integrated community-based conflict early warning system would ensure proactive response to prevailing and emerging conflict issues through peace messaging, early warning/analysis, and conflict mediation and consensus-building by local stakeholders and partners. Participants’ capacities were enhanced in understanding conflict and peace, conflict analysis, peacebuilding, volunteerism, cooperation and leadership, and Early Warning and Early Response System.

4.3 Key/immediate peace building outcomes in Q4 2023.

Analysis of the utilization of PIND’s data products revealed that 655 stakeholders²¹ utilized PIND’s them during the review period. Cumulatively, 2,449 stakeholders utilized PIND’s peacebuilding data and analysis products in 2023, about a quarter above the target of 2,000. Also, 31 stakeholders whose capacities had been strengthened through PIND/P4P facilitated training²² sessions and workshops, applied the skills they had acquired to promote peace and tackle conflict in their communities, increasing the number of stakeholders to 215 for the year. While, 301 peace actors (P4P members) constructively resolved emerging conflicts in various communities in the Niger Delta, utilizing 23 ‘quality actions’²³ to resolve these conflicts within the reporting period. During the year, 1,284 peace actors resolved emerging conflicts which is 98% of the annual target.

4.5 Behavior changes by peace actors to tackle conflict and promote peace in Q4 2023.

PIND’s peace efforts are geared towards preventing violence as a means of resolving conflicts, reducing fragility as a breeding ground for violence, and creating opportunities for long-term development. As conflicts are a natural part of social processes of change for sustainable development, PIND is relentlessly promoting a culture of peace by providing relevant data for early response and facilitating collaborative efforts for implementing conflict management and peace building interventions. Through its Integrated Peace Development Unit (IPDU) and the Partners for Peace (P4P) network, PIND has continued to facilitate training and workshops to enhance capacities of peace actors to constructively mitigate conflict. An example of a peace actor who has applied skills gained to promote peace and tackle conflict in Q4, is given below.

Resolving intra-communal conflicts in Akpabuyo, Cross River State

Edem, a youth leader in Ikot-Asuquo, Akpabuyo LGA, was trained on peace advocacy for stakeholders in 2023. He resolved a conflict between the village heads and the youth group over access to the community palm fruits income. He noted that, “the village heads refused to give the youths access to the community palm fruits and the situation was almost resulting to a crisis before the intervention of the youth leader.” He called the village heads and appealed to them to give the youths a proportion of the income from sales of the community palm fruits. In September 2023, he also advised the aggrieved youths to be calm for the issue to be resolved. After much deliberations, the issue was resolved and there was peace in the community.

²¹ Local/international organizations and individuals who used conflict tracker as a source of security information to support their program planning and works in the Niger Delta region.

²² Training areas: capacity to provide further training to others; engage in conflict mitigation efforts in their communities; write proposals to receive funding for their organizations; enable them to become better leaders in their communities; report conflict issues to the PIND/SMS platform; engage in peacebuilding awareness campaigns against electoral violence; empowerment to make a difference as regards conflict issues in the community; and ability to analyze conflict trends and patterns.

²³ Actions have to meet at least three of five criteria to be considered as ‘Quality actions’. 1. All key stakeholders consulted. 2. Intervention focuses on identified risk. 3. Intervention contributes to risk reduction/ mitigation of group-based violence. 4 Intervention affects a significant number of people positively. 5 Impact of the intervention is long lasting (based on the context and nature of the problem).

5. General Enabling Program

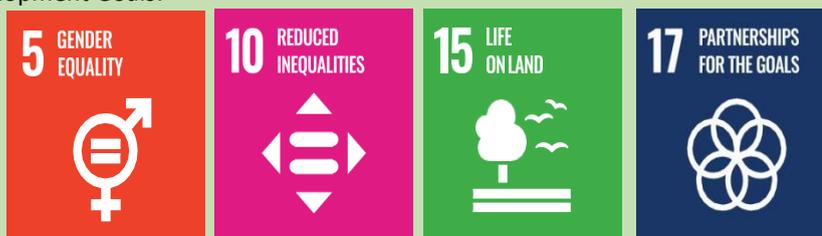
PIND's interventions fall under two distinct but interrelated program areas: (1) an Economic Development program focused on generating opportunities for pro-poor market development and employment generation; and (2) a Peace Building program that strengthens conflict resolution mechanisms for enabling integrated peace and economic growth.

Additional initiatives designed to support, enable, measure, and communicate the results and achievements of the 2 core pillars of Economic Development and Peace Building include:

Capacity building that will build the service delivery and engagement capacity of business membership organizations, civil society organizations and communities.

Advocacy that seeks to influence policies, practices and programs underpinned by in-depth analyses and understanding of systemic constraints to growth in the Niger Delta region.

A robust communications and outreach effort that enhances PIND's reputation through clear and consistent messaging via multiple channels, of its unique selling points, transformative approaches, impacts, and learning. PIND's General Enabling Program contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals:



This section shows key achievements in Quarter 4 of 2023 for all initiatives implemented under the General Enabling Program.

5.1 Capacity Building

As one of PIND's key enablers, the Capacity Building program is designed and positioned to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of government, civil society, and business associations/service providers, "for effective socio-economic engagement, inclusive governance for growth, and peaceful co-existence in the Niger Delta". It directly contributes to both PIND's long-term objective and overall goal.

The Program was designed to focus on two major areas, the first being to strengthen the capacity of local development organizations in the Niger Delta to adopt the market systems approach through the Capacity Building for Local Empowerment (CAPABLE) Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) project. M4P is an overarching approach to development that provides agencies and governments with the direction required to achieve large-scale sustainable change by focusing on underlying constraints that prevent the poor from participating effectively in markets. As part of its continued support to CAPABLE organizations this year, PIND is providing direct mentorship to selected organizations to implement projects using the market systems approach, and handholding on proposal writing and fund mobilization to diversify their funding base.

The second area of focus for the project is to strengthen the institutions that support the Host Communities Development Trusts (HCDTs) and enable them to carry out developmental projects that improve the livelihood of people living in the communities. Between 2020 and 2021, PIND carried out a series of activities aimed at strengthening the institutions that support the defunct Chevron GMoU and Regional Development Committees (RDCs), including supporting the

implementation of the recommendations from the 2018 Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) conducted on the defunct RDCs. These include coaching, mentoring and training conducted for various committees of the RDCs including those in Video production and photography, Sustainable Project Management, and on gender equality and social inclusion.

In 2023, PIND's focus is on supporting CNL's transition from RDCs to HCDTs by developing appropriate Capacity building activities to support the various structures of the HCDTs including the Board, Advisory, and management committees. Chevron, in compliance with the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) of 2021, is establishing Host Community Development Trusts (HCDTs) to drive community development projects in its host communities. This legally-backed structure replaced the GMOU and its RDCs, and PIND will support the HCDTs' organizational capacity for effective operations, as it did with the RDCs.

As part of its plan to provide capacity-building support to the established HCDTs, PIND finalized engagements to commence a baseline assessment to determine their current organizational index, and develop and implement capacity-building plans for their upgrade to effectively deliver economic solutions to the CNL communities. The assessment and capacity-building support will begin next quarter.

In the previous quarter, the capacity building program commenced implementation of the roadmap developed to expand the pool of co-facilitators for the next strategic phase while implementing a graduation plan for older co-facilitators. The team organized two virtual engagement meetings with NGOs in the region to create awareness about the selection process and also commenced shortlisting a pool of potential co-facilitators who would participate in a capacity-building program and from which co-facilitators would be engaged for the various project areas. 28 participants from 18 organizations participated.

This quarter, the MSD program designed and commenced preparations for series of capacity-building programs to strengthen over 13 NGOs to implement market systems projects in the region. In the coming quarter, training on market systems will be organized for the selected organizations and other partners within PIND's Economic Development Program.

5.1.1 Organizations accessing funds and grants

One organization, Better Living Foundation, supported by PIND with capacity building in the past, applied the skills from the proposal writing training and was awarded a contract worth over ₦3m to implement activities under the Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (ATM) project in Ondo state. The project was implemented across over 24 communities in the state. The cumulative number of the organizations who received funds for local services was three.

5.1.2 Organizations providing services

As part of its continued support to CAPABLE organizations, PIND continued to monitor the performance of the local organizations who benefitted from the PIND's direct mentorship to implement projects using the market systems approach, and handholding on proposal writing and fund mobilization to diversify their funding base.

Continuing from last quarter, three organizations: SHERDA, CAD consulting and Genius Hub, that have been supported through PIND's capacity building activities in the past continued to provide various forms of services this quarter, applying skills and learnings gained. While SHERDA continued to provide conflict sensitivity training to organizations, leveraging on funds received from NLNG in 2021, CAD consulting provided several services and training including supporting businesses to develop bankable business plans and company diagnostics using the picking sound company tools for 50 businesses. It also trained 190 members of Okerewa community in Rivers including youths to gain skills in the agric. sector and be involved in the smart farm to be set up in Okerewa community. On its own part, Genius Hub organized step-down training on proposal writing for 8 participants.

This quarter, Better Living Foundation, applied the knowledge gained from previous capacity-building support in implementing activities under the Aids, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (ATM) Project in Ondo state. The project which is being implemented in over 24 communities in the state is focused on community health strengthening, working through advocacy, partnership, and government engagement to promote sustainable solutions to strengthen their welfare and the health systems. The cumulative number of the organizations offering improved services is 7 – two out of the three above have been reported in the previous quarters.

5.2.0 Advocacy

PIND's advocacy focus continued to be on three key work areas: to influence spending and funding from government, donors, and the private sector organizations on new projects in the Niger Delta; address issues of inadequate access to arable land for smallholder farmers, and constraints on small businesses brought about by multi-taxation and illegal levies; and to support institutionalizing strategies in peacebuilding efforts that will promote conflict prevention across the Niger Delta.

5.2.1 Equitable access to land by smallholder farmers.

As part of PIND's effort to influence state governments to establish a more sustainable policy framework to better manage land for agricultural activities, PIND influenced the establishment of the Arable Land Committees in Delta, Edo and Ondo states. In Q4, PIND conducted a meeting with the Ministries of Agriculture in Edo and Ondo states to assess the progress of implementation and provided support for the ongoing initiatives relating to accessing arable land for smallholder farmers. By Q4 2023, the Delta State Government had fully adopted the recommendations of the Arable Land Committee to open up more agricultural land for oil palm and cassava farmers in the state; and in Edo state, the government has established and communicated a well-defined procedural framework for the land acquisition process in the State. PIND is leveraging these experiences and insights to aid the FAO FOLUR agricultural projects.

5.2.2 Multiple Taxation and Illegal Levy Intervention

In Q4 PIND consolidated progress in the interventions of multiple taxation and illegal levies, creating more awareness, forging strategic collaborations and gaining viable inroads with policymakers and influencers.



Multiple taxation study reports validation meeting, Asaba

Further validation session of the report from multiple taxation and illegal levies was held in Asaba, on the 12th of October 2023 with representatives from the Delta State Government, CSO and representatives from the trade associations and businesses in attendance. A valuable outcome of the report validation sessions was PIND's collaboration with the Tax Justice and Governance Platform and a key member of the Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee.

This partnership enabled the amplification of PIND's advocacy in this regard, PIND's participation on the TaxWatch Radio Show on Wave 91.7 FM, Port Harcourt in October 2023, further strengthened the partnership and enabled the two organizations to jointly plan and execute a stakeholder roundtable on "Strengthening Tax Administration". A major outcome of that was the

development of a [10-point tax reform communique](#), with 10 key recommendations for the establishment of a multi-stakeholder network to be referred to as the "Tax Justice League" to interface with both state and non-state actors involved in tax collection and administration. Some of the key recommendations in the communique include:

- States and Local Governments to support and key into the recommendations of the Presidential Committee on Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform to simplify the tax code and harmonize and streamline taxes and levies collected across the tiers of government to eliminate multiple taxation in the State.
- State governments should cause legislation to be passed or formulate and implement fair progressive tax frameworks that will stimulate economic growth and increase their revenue base.
- State governments should deepen the application of information technology in the tax administration value chain through the digitization of the taxes and levies system at the state and local government levels to optimize the revenue potential of the state, and,
- A multi-stakeholder network is to be established in the form of a Tax Justice League that will be interfacing with both state and non-state actors involved in tax collection as a means of safeguarding the tax system in Rivers State.



NTA Port Harcourt discussion on Multiple Taxation

PIND was featured on the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Port Harcourt weekly highlight program, for an extensive

conversation on the effects of multiple taxation and the need for tax reform in Niger Delta states. PIND actively engaged with the newly constituted **Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee** by submitting a memo advocating for Tax Reforms and also actively participating in the Stakeholder Engagement & Public Consultation forum organized by the committee. The highlight of the engagement was the discussion around key issues for consideration which include some aspects of the PINDs memo on the effects of multiple taxations and illegal levies such as the harmonization of (taxes and levies, revenue administration, reporting) and setting up of a single National Revenue Window; revamping of the tax agent's function and emphasis on competence and ethics and Data4tax initiative, VAT fiscal processes and electronic invoicing.

PIA “Bridges Project” Implementation

In Q4 the third meeting of Bridges Project Multi-Stakeholder Platform was held, on 25th October 2023, with a representative from Ford Foundation participating to experience and learn from the deliberations of the platform. The discussions at the meeting provided insights into many issues and learnings arising from the PIA implementation process. Some of these issues relate to the gender composition of the members of the HCDDTs, the regulator’s communication strategy that is perceived to largely exclude the community stakeholders; the inconsistencies in Settlers fund disbursement processes, and the implementation of the Needs Assessments and the Community Development Plans. The outcomes from this meeting included the compilation of GESI data of established HCDDTs. The Bridges Project was also featured in PIND Foundation’s knowledge-sharing session in December 2023, the momentum of progress would be sustained, with the next MSP meeting scheduled for Q1 2024.

Government Engagement

On the 4th of October 2023, PIND met with the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning in Cross Rivers State to assess and review the progress made in implementing the State's Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) supported by PIND in 2019. A total of 25 senior civil servants (including Permanent secretaries, planning and statistics Directors and Deputy Directors) were drawn from the economic, social, and governance sectors of MDAs. The aim was to assess the progress of implementation of GDS since 2019; capture and verify government spending in implementing projects and programs in the GDS; Disaggregate spending related to implementing the GDS by other stakeholders such as Donors and private sector organizations; ensure that the annual budget and planning is majorly based on the recommendations in the GDS; Collect data that relates to other values that have been triggered by the implantation of these spendings such as additional jobs, growth of complementary businesses that contribute to the expansion and absorption capacity of the states’ economy. This engagement session resulted in the verification and validation of the government’s spending aligned to the plan, and on development activities in the state to the tune of over N2.7 billion and counting. This represents the quantum of investment influenced by PIND as a result of supporting the State’s GDS. The Chairman of the review session and permanent secretary of the ministry for budget and planning, Reverend U.J. Ugbe in his speech acknowledged PIND’s contribution to the GDS and reiterated the importance of the meeting, which he said was to enable accurate reporting on the implementation of the GDS. He appreciated the continuity/follow-up by PIND to ensure the success of the program. He highlighted the State’s financial downturn as a key challenge to the implementation of the GDS while expressing positivity about its successful implementation

5.2.3 NDLink

NDLink disseminated relevant news and resources and continued to amplify the reach of awareness on PIND activities and knowledge resources. In Q4, there were notable milestones recorded in PIND’s online advocacy platform, NDLink (www.ndlink.org). With better data tracked due to improved analytics software, it incorporated concise data in its monthly reporting with a compilation of its 2023 data. As of Q4 2023, this software had tracked 22698 visits and 21,434 total downloads on the platform since its incorporation in April 2023 using organic marketing strategies. This highlights NDLink’s role in amplifying the reach of PIND reports and resources hosted on the platform.

In Q4 2023 NDLink produced a special report on the off-cycle elections in the Niger Delta, in Imo and Bayelsa States featuring lists of participating candidates in various parties and notable GESI data which highlighted the number of female candidates participating in both elections. This report was unique as its scope focused on election data useful to stakeholders in the Niger Delta which was unavailable on other news platforms. This report recorded good engagement with over 2000 reads from various visitors. Within the period, NDLink’s successful collaboration with the GESI unit and A2E project for the HETA close-out meeting helped amplify the successes of both projects by contributing to the marketing design and publicity for the events.

Also, NDlink developed and disseminated new marketing materials to target new partners, and clients and spread awareness to stakeholders, to aid the platform’s marketing and publicity efforts. NDLink’s result for the three target indicators in Q4 2023 showed that there were 3,116 downloads of development resources; 2,497 people became aware of development programs implemented in the Niger Delta via NDLink and 5 persons commented, and provided positive feedback on issues catalyzed by the PIND NDLink platform. As of Q4 2023 NDLink had successfully revived engagement across all platforms, and with improved data analytics, and valuable feedback from user engagement, it is poised to leverage data-backed strategies to consolidate these results in 2024

5.3 Communications

PIND’s communications’ activities focus on boosting visibility and engagement, and strengthening its brand to attract partnerships and encourage the adoption of PIND’s models of sustainable development.

Sharing Knowledge on PIND’s Development Models

In Q4 2023, PIND participated in or hosted 9 forums where it shared its models for socio-economic development in the Niger Delta, evidence of its work, and lessons learned to 559 target stakeholders of the Foundation. These forums sought to stimulate increased visibility, promote the Foundation’s business development objectives, possible replication of the Foundation’s development models, and foster opportunities for new partnerships. Full details of these forums can be found in Annex 1.

PIND also showcased all programs and activities of the quarter on social media. Highlights of the quarter were the 12 days of activism campaign against gender-based violence (GBV) and the Health Electrification and telecommunication Alliance (HETA) project close out workshop.

1. Social Media

PIND shared 343 social media posts on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, which reached 928,429 individuals during the quarter, and a total of 4,510,530 for the year.

S/N	Social Media Platform	Number of Persons Reached
1	Facebook	884,132
2	Instagram	15,046
3	LinkedIn	11,858
4	Twitter	13,132
5	YouTube	4,261

1. Newsletter

In Q4, we sent out three newsletters (**8,010** emails) that notified subscribers of PIND’s events and achievements. Overall, in 2023, we sent out 12 newsletters, with **30,764** emails, to more than **2,680** subscribers out of which **999** were new subscribers this year. There was an overall average open rate of 28% for the year 2023. (The opening rate is the percentage of subscribers who opened the newsletter from the email inbox).

2. PIND Website

In Q4, we actively posted content on the PIND website and strategically used social media to drive traffic to the web posts. This attracted 8,353 individuals to PIND’s website for the first time, exposing them to PIND’s work, results, and models

Table 7. PIND’s website performance summary in 43 2023.

Website Performance Summary for Q4 2023
8,353 new visitors learned about PIND for the first time.
9,042 repeat visitors returned to the website to learn more about PIND;
53.2% were male, and 46.8% were female users reached by the website
34 new content about PIND, and partners shared

7,767 new views of posted content. PIND pages that increased awareness of PIND
18,474 total page views of posted content, and PIND pages that increased awareness of PIND
73.6% of visitors searched directly to access the website
54,568 downloads of PIND's knowledge products to learn more, making PIND a thought leader
The website had most of the new and repeat visitors attracted from high donor countries like the USA, United Kingdom, South Africa, Netherlands and our Nigerian audience.

3. Email Enquiries

PIND received 79 emails and 11 social media inquiries in Q4. Most of these inquiries sought information on partnerships or collaborations, job opportunities, and questions by farmers about our MSD Programs, A2E, and access to PIND-promoted technologies and services, among others. Inquiries also included more information on our YEP Program.

These inquiries indicate increased visibility and better positioning of PIND as a thought leader and go-to organization on issues of socioeconomic development in the Niger Delta.

4. Mainstream Media

Some of PIND's target stakeholders are individuals with little digital media presence or activities. These stakeholders are usually not subscribed to our digital platforms. However, PIND reaches these stakeholders through different mainstream/traditional media: print and broadcast.

As the year drew to a close in Q4, we recorded 36 mainstream media mentions, bringing to a total of 146 for 2023. We reached an estimated 178,731 people with information about PIND's events, partnerships, and achievements via targeted mainstream media in Q4 – cumulative mainstream media reach for 2023 was 1,703,808. Of the 146 mentions in the year, 31 were earned media mentions i.e. third-party references due to its work. An example of an earned media mention was a special access to energy feature on The Cable titled How low-carbon, cost-effective energy is empowering coastal communities in Niger Delta written by Yekeen Akinwale on May 27, 2023, which was also the winning article of this year's PIND Prize for Niger Delta Reporting at the Diamond Awards for Media Excellence (DAME)

6 Public Endorsements of PIND

PIND received 64 public endorsements, appreciating, acknowledging, or commending the Foundation's work in the region. These endorsements are public statements by key stakeholders: government, partners, the media, project participants, and the general public.

PIND received various endorsements from partners across our platforms in the Peacebuilding, YEP and MDS projects. *Example, from Search for Common Ground Nigeria: We express our sincere appreciation to our esteemed donors, including USAID/Nigeria, European Union Nigeria, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs,.....Our heartfelt thanks extend to our invaluable implementing partners – IOM-UN mitigation, Mercy Corps – Nigeria.....**Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta- PIND.**with your continued support in 2024, Search for Common Ground will undoubtedly expand its impact empowering more communities and imparting knowledge about our common ground approach (CGA).....*

5.4 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

PIND's commitment to gender and social inclusion underpins its efforts to achieve greater gender equality as a key pathway towards sustainable poverty reduction and shared security and prosperity in the Niger Delta. At the center of PIND's 2020–2024 strategic plan is the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of poor women and girls, persons with disabilities and the most vulnerable population. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) mainstreaming as a cross cutting theme is embedded within PIND's programs and projects to ensure that its activities are inclusive, reflect equitable participation and access to benefits.

Organizational Gender mainstreaming summary

PIND has a strategic target of enabling at least 81,000 women (40% of the overall target) to increase their incomes, thereby positioning women's economic empowerment at the core of its economic development implementation activities.

In Q4 2023, 8,610 males and 6,922 females (45% of the total beneficiaries) benefited from various economic development

interventions, with an aim to increase their incomes and improve their livelihoods. Similarly, a total of 211 women (34% of the total beneficiaries), 404 (66%) men and 110 (18%) youths participated in various peacebuilding interventions including: peace actors taking action to mitigate conflict, persons trained and/or mentored in conflict management, and persons attending roundtables, seminars or forums and events for the advancement of sustainable peace in the region.

For the entire 2023, out of the cumulative outreach of 67,881 farmers/MSMEs reached, 31,158 (46%) females benefitted from various economic development interventions. Similarly, under peace building, out of 3,112 participants, 1,211 (39%) were women participants in various peacebuilding interventions including: peace actors taking action to mitigate conflict, persons trained and/or mentored in conflict management, and persons attending roundtables, seminars or forums and events for the advancement of sustainable peace in the region. In summary, the organization-wise gender mainstreaming in 2023 was 32,369 (45.59%) surpassing 2023 annual target of 40%. While persons with disabilities (PWDs) were 136 from PB and YEP – See Annex 2 for details.

Outreach - Gender Summary Q1-Q4 2023						
		Total	female	% females	males	males %
MSD	Cassava	28,560	16,454	58%	12,106	42.4%
	Cocoa	9,060	1,996	22%	7,064	78.0%
	Palm oil	12,223	4,446	36%	7,777	63.6%
	Poultry	8,444	3,766	45%	4,678	55.4%
	MSMEs	7,156	3,437	48%	3,629	50.7%
	Total	65,443	30,099	45.99%	35,254	53.9%
YEP	YEP	2,438	1,059	43%	1,379	56.6%
EDP	YEP+MDP	67,881	31,158	45.90%	36,723	54.1%
PB	PB training	3,112	1,211	39%	1,901	61%
Overall average		70,993	32,369			45.59%

2023 Campaign Against Gender Based Violence

Every year, PIND joins the International Community from November 25 to December 10 to campaign against gender-based violence (GBV). The 16-Days of Activism campaign is a strategy used to draw attention to and call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls by individuals and organizations around the world. PIND supports actions addressing GBV by providing small grants to and collaborating with Niger Delta organizations and civil societies to take actions against GBV in commemoration of the 16-Days of Activism.

The UNITE campaign theme for 2023 was ‘**Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls**’. The theme focused on the importance of financing different strategies to prevent or stop violence from occurring in the first place. To commemorate the 2023 16 Days of Activism, PIND supported five Niger Delta based female and PWD headed organizations focused on women, youths and PWDs with small grants to implement activities against gender-based violence in Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo, Imo and Rivers states with the sub-theme “**Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls in the Niger Delta Region**”. A monitoring organization from Ondo State – Better Living Foundation and Capacity Development, was engaged to monitor activities of the other organizations.

The objectives of the 2023 16 Days of Activism were to:

- invest in raising awareness through organizations in the Niger Delta as they carry out targeted/specialized activities and campaigns in their efforts to prevent VAWG in the region;
- support advocacies and life skill activities that will create economic security and safety for women and PWDs.
- take a stand publicly as an organization against VAWG;
- foster the equitable inclusion of People with Disabilities (PWDs); and
- showcase the effectiveness of PIND’s EWER platform in tracking, documenting and proffering solutions to GBV issues in the Niger Delta.

From the activities of the grantees supported by PIND, a total of 9,163 persons including 5,870 female, 3,295 male and 838 PWDs benefitted. Activities carried out include stakeholders’ engagement forums, rallies, school outreaches, advocacy visits, workshop and other skill acquisition programs - See Annex for details of the IWD.

5.5 Business Development

In line with its effort to diversify and expand its funding base, PIND continued to engage potential partners to explore new opportunities across its program areas by strengthening and facilitating internal collaboration and coordination to deepen business development efforts. The collective effort on business development and sustainability has yielded significant milestones since the fourth quarter of 2022. Following the establishment of the business development committee and subcommittee, PIND has witnessed an unprecedented level of internal cooperation both at the board, management, and technical levels to sustain its drive for increased funding for the implementation of development interventions in line with its vision.

In Q4 2023, the pilot of the Health and Telecommunications Alliance (HETA) project was successfully executed. HETA is a five-year cooperative agreement that invests USAID resources to leverage more than \$150 million of additional private

sector resources to install reliable, renewable power and provide mobile network and Internet access for at least 10,000 health facilities across sub-Saharan Africa. PIND leveraged about \$220,000 from USAID to galvanize a public-private partnership that implemented an access-to-energy project in about 12 communities in the region.

Also, during the quarter in review the FAO FOLUR project was launched and the inception workshop was organized by the Forestry Reserve Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) by the project coordinators to kick off the project. The workshop was organized to present the project to the public, familiarize with the consortium partners and technical details of the project, and discuss the commitments and operational strategies for delivery.

Internal collaboration to coordinate Business Development Processes and Outcomes

As part of efforts to strengthen and facilitate internal collaboration and coordination to deepen business development efforts, within this quarter, the BDS Team facilitated the BDS Committee, and subcommittee meetings. These meetings discussed the progress of PIND's sustainability efforts, updates on its impact investment drive, and projects in view or being implemented.

During the quarter in review, PIND was nominated by the Impact Investment Foundation (IIF) for the Innocent Chukwuma Award for Social Impact Award. PIND participated at the IIF 6th Annual Convening in Lagos, Nigeria. At the event, opportunities to catalyze capital boost SMEs and development initiatives were shared. The event was organized by the Impact Investors Foundation (IIF) in partnership with the European Union and UNDP and supported by LEAP Africa, Impact Ventures, AVPA, Circular Economy Innovation Partnership (CEIP), and GIZ. PIND also participated at the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA) networking event in Lagos.

6 Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

Market Development Program:

- Mobilization for, and participation of farmers in training sessions continue to experience difficulties occasioned by the high cost of transportation. Service Providers attested to spending more to mobilize farmers for training, and the number of farmers turning out for training after mobilizations seems to have reduced. PIND is building the capacities of the service providers to deepen their support to farmers/MSMEs through virtual service deliveries to reduce cost of operations. For example, access to GAP information and linkages supports can be delivered through SMS and WhatsApp messages.
- Also, in Q4, 2023, purchasing capacity went down for agricultural inputs by farmers and MSMEs participating in the agricultural productivity improvement program, stemming from continued hikes in the costs of inputs, technologies for harvesting and processing, and overall transaction costs due to rising inflation and foreign exchange rate dynamics. This has negatively affected the depth of adoption of various innovations within the quarter. The low turnover experienced by the agro-dealers is also a disincentive to them. Refresher training to services providers now include information on how to increase business relationships with input companies around bulk purchases aimed at reduction of unit cost of some items. Farmers/MSMEs will benefit from such relationship.

Youth Employment Pathways Program:

- High Inflation rate: The increased cost of transportation resulted in decreased attendance and drop-offs of some participants even with the prior adjustments made to learning schedules by partners. PIND continues to explore new and customized options to recommend to the Implementing Partners so as to reduce the burden of transportation and other ancillary costs of participation in the training program.
- Also, the high inflation rate impacted the cost of consumables for Challenge Fund beneficiaries in the purchase of necessary items to support their businesses. Consequently, some beneficiaries had to save up and add their funds to purchase essential items. To maximize the use of challenge funds, increased business education has been recommended during entrepreneurship and mentoring sessions, immediately after the completion of the technical session of the training. This will help easier business startups.

Advocacy:

- Government funding of development projects is tempered by a lack of adequate resources. Most of the states are currently deficit-financing their budgeted activities. This is making government spending on development activities declining. Also, changes in policies occasioned by the changes in administration at all levels are creating uncertainty in the policy direction of government and the private sector. These dynamics affect PIND's government engagement activities given that many advocacy support border-on policy initiatives. PIND will

continue to explore better advocacy options to influence governments' spending on development projects in the region.

- In states where elections were conducted in 2023, there are situations where sitting political officeholders have resigned their positions, coupled with the dissolution and the reconstitution of the decision-making arm of government. This has muted engagements with government officials in most of the States. Whilst these impacts and slows down advocacy work, to mitigate this we have deepened relationships and engagement efforts with career civil servants who retain their positions much longer and are custodians of the MDAs.

Lessons Learned

Market Development Program:

- Willingness of farmers to pay more for improved services is soaring due to stakeholders' awareness of the benefits of such services. Example, adoption of quality Cassava stem is on the rise which is changing the demand landscape for Cassava Seed Entrepreneurs (CSEs) driven by informed farmers' demand.

Youth Employment Program:

- Building Project Management Skills: Incorporating sessions on project planning, scheduling, and prioritization enabled participants to understand the importance of planning and managing their time effectively.

Program Management

Governance and Accountability: Separate meetings of the following PIND sub-committees held in Q4 2023: Project and Programs, Audit and Compliance, Business Development and Sustainability (BDS), Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), and Advocacy and Partnership sub-committee. Key agreements reached at these sub-committee meetings, along with M&E updates on program implementation were reported to PIND's Board.

PIND also conducted its annual retreat for 2023 planning, and performance review, and commenced plans for its 2024 activities, with the lessons learned being shared to enhance the 2024 operating planning and executions. These meetings are key for PIND's internal governance and accountability, keep its board abreast of PIND programming and receive feedback/inputs for optimizing program implementation.

Also, within the quarter, PIND completed its Mid-term Impact Evaluation, undertaken by Dalberg Consulting firm, covering 7.5 years, and received the final evaluation report. The initial findings of the evaluation were presented to PIND's leadership and Board. A deep-dive session with the Board on the impact evaluation findings is planned for Q1 2024.

Organizational Sustainability: In line with its effort to diversify and expand its income, the last quarter of 2023 saw robust engagement with donors, a deepening of partnerships, and several collaboration opportunities as exemplified below:

- The Cassava Agripreneur Project - PIND continued work with other consortium partners – IDH, and Psaltry International in developing this and securing a prospective donor's approval by the first quarter of 2024.
- FOLUR Project - the FAO FOLUR project was launched and the inception workshop was organized by the Forestry Reserve Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) by the project coordinators to kick off the project. The workshop was organized to present the project to the public, familiarize with the consortium partners and technical details of the project, and discuss the commitments and operational strategies for delivery.
- A Community-Centered Approach to Transforming Criminality and Violence in the Niger Delta: This is a project funded by the European Union through a consortium partnership led by **Search for Common Ground** in collaboration with **Academic Associates Peaceworks**, **PIND**, and **Stakeholders Democracy Network** and its Implementation has commenced. PIND received a grant award of **\$820,000 for this**.

Organizational effectiveness, health, safety, and security:

PIND continued to invest resources to promote wellbeing and safeguard employees' lives. This quarter, Operations provided optimal and seamless services to consultants and stakeholders which invariably contributed to the overall quality and value addition to PIND's operations. In addition to seamless logistics support for the smooth execution of operations and projects implementations, PIND Integrated Platform (PIP) was optimized to enhance IT management.

Also, the Operations team completed training on Flood Safety, and capacity building of PIND support staff; processed utility bills; managed communication equipment and relationships with stakeholders/vendors. Other supports from the

Operations include vehicle maintenance, repairs, general equipment/facility management, management of events and workshops within and outside PIND’s premises, onboarding of new staff and graduate trainees. In summary, the safety and security management components were carried out satisfactorily.

Project support services:

PIND’s procurement and contract administration services ensured that procedures, processes, protocols, and systems were utilized in line with PIND’s policies and procedures. 27 contracts/grants worth ₦261.32 million were awarded in Q4 2023. On an annual lookout (Q1-Q4, 2023), a total of 214 contracts were issued using various contracting instruments valued at NGN1.155 Billion.

Table xxx. Contracts awarded in Q4 2023 in their types, total amount and by type of recipient

Instruments	Number processed	Total Amount committed till date	Total Value Committed by Gender (NGN)			
			Female	Value Committed	Female Headed/Owned Organizations	Value Committed
Professional Services Contract	-	173.16 Million			-	-
Services Order	6	169.26 Million	2	1.9 million	-	-
Purchase Order	2	39.77 Million	-	-	-	-
Master Services Contract	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grants	10	462.10 Million	-	-	7	1.3 Million
MOU	9	310.21 Million	-	-	2	-
Total	27	1.155 Billion	2	1.9 million	9	5.03 million

7 Looking Ahead

Priority actions for next quarter

In Q1 2024, the **market development project** will undertake the following activities:

- **Cassava:** Facilitate training on climate-smart good agricultural practices for farmers, strengthen linkages across the value chain and support farmers’ access to market opportunities while also deepening activities with CSEs to expand production and reach more farmers and monitoring of field activities.
- **Cocoa:** Deepen work with off-takers to implement the quality improvement activities via training and demos, support existing and new partners to deepen productivity improvement, quality improvement, and access to high-yielding seeds interventions in the cocoa-producing states of the Niger Delta. Also, it intends to carry out the identification and onboarding of new FSPs and Agro-dealers to drive access to quality inputs and information and regular monitoring of field activities.
- **MSMEs:** Onboard and undertake capacity strengthening, and certification training of Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) to support MSMEs; strengthen partnership with stakeholders, and facilitate linkages to market and finance for MSMEs and continue the expansion of support to MSME, fisher-folks, and processors in the Chevron host communities.
- **Palm oil BMP:** Strengthen coordination and collaboration among nursery operators; support nursery operators to carry out more promotional activities to increase awareness and demand for improved seeds amongst oil palm farmers in the Niger Delta; support palm oil market actors to adopt best management practices by onboarding and capacity strengthening of FSPs on climate-smart best management practices and the profitability of FSPs/Agro-dealers in the sector.
- **Poultry:** Organize Capacity Building training on climate-smart agriculture for service providers (PSP/VLDs); continue the training of new VLDs in partnership with FDH Nigeria Limited; continue to support PSPs to expand their activities to reach out to new poultry farmers in the region; organize one knowledge sharing workshop; organize market linkages workshops and carry out field monitoring
- **Cross cutting:** Pilot cross-cutting themes which: Expanding access to agricultural inputs (Fertilizers, CPPs, Feed,

Vaccines, etc.), access to agricultural inputs (Seeds), access to technical services: access to business development services and finance, and access to industrial market and agricultural technology. To kick start this, an assessment would be carried out to determine the opportunities and also identify potential new sectors where the cross-cutting themes can be implemented

The **access to energy project** will commence the scoping and needs assessment of new coastal communities where there is potential for commercial energy cabins, solar refrigeration hubs and mini grids; engage with donors and multinational stakeholders to scale up the HETA project; conduct annual model sharing workshop to identify new power developer business partners with business interest in the Niger Delta; and initiate a challenge fund for community energy installations in 5 off grid riverine communities of Delta state.

The **Youth Employment Pathways Project** will do the following:

- **Ondo State Implementation:** Select and onboard eligible participants for technical and soft skills training in Ondo State.
- **Government engagement for the adoption of the NDYEP model and framework:** Engage key stakeholders in target states to share the NDYEP model and provide technical assistance to facilitate its adoption and adaptation.
- **Entrepreneurship Training:** Work with the consultant to offer post-training mentorship and guide participants across 4 states (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, and Delta) to explore available financial facilities for start-up businesses.
- **Call for Applications:** Publish Terms of Reference (TOR) to enable competent organizations to submit proposals for technical vocational and soft skills training in 2024. Qualified applicants will be offered grants for training and post-training support to youths in 4 program states (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, and Delta States)

The **peacebuilding program** will:

- Supervise the execution of the EU/SFCG funded project in selected states;
- Establish Peace Club (Bayelsa State) and strengthen mitigation of youth restiveness in the Niger Delta; Facilitate EWER training in HCDT;
- Jointly integrate Peacebuilding activities with Economic Development (Conflict Sensitivity);
- Carry out quarterly maintenance of database and website; Produce Factsheet, PB Annual Intervention Catalogue, Herders/Farmers interventions compendium;
- Facilitate the development of the Niger Delta Regional Peacebuilding Strategy (NDRPS) in collaboration with Advocacy; Facilitate P4P and MSP activities;
- Produce briefs and trackers; Facilitate the Niger Delta Regional Peace and Security Network activities;
- Facilitate Prevent Council operationalization in selected states;
- Engage with Fund for Peace (FFP) to deliver set 5 KPIs; Operationalize PB Consultancy services to selected firms for a fee.

The **advocacy project** will:

- Review the implementation of PIND-supported programs and projects in the relevant States; Embark on advocacy visit to establish and strengthen ongoing relationships with newly elected government officials;
- Provide advocacy support to prospective programs and projects;
- Continue the next phase of multiple Taxation intervention;
- Track and report stakeholders' engagements across board;
- Continue to support PIND Business Development and fundraising initiatives;
- Engage in NDLink sustainability drive and engagement with clients;
- Continue the implementation of the Bridges Project MSP and the development of an M&E Template and provide advocacy support to the FAO FOLUR project.

ANNEX 1

Communications

These forums as detailed below seek to stimulate increased visibility, promote the Foundation’s business development objectives, possible replication of the Foundation’s development models, and foster opportunities for new partnerships:

Conflict Early Warning and Response System (EWERS) training: PIND organized a workshop for 36 participants from Host Community Development Trust (HCDT) communities where Chevron operates in Ondo State from October 23 -24, 2023. The event provided a platform for PIND to share strategies on how it has utilized its Conflict Early Warning and Early Response system to enhance security and mitigate conflicts within the Niger Delta region. Similar training was also held for 46 participants from Host Community Development Trust (HCDT) communities where Chevron operates in Delta State from October 25 - 28, 2023. The last batch of the series of training was organized for 100 representatives from the Association of Coastal and Waterways Communities in Delta State from November 1 - 3, 2023.

Media Engagement with Press to Commemorate 2023 16 Days of Activism: PIND held media engagement sessions with various media organizations in Port Harcourt to commemorate the 2023 16 Days of Activism. The media rounds took place on November 20, 2023 and focused on sharing PIND stories and models with the press; for visibility on its work on multiple taxation, Peacebuilding, Gender mainstreaming, and 16 days of activism on gender-based violence (VAWG). The session had 19 participants in attendance from state and national media organizations, and photographers.

Poultry Linkage Workshop: PIND organized a workshop for 110 poultry stakeholders in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State on November 22, 2023. The event provided a platform for PIND to provide an avenue for business linkages between Poultry Farmers and Poultry Service Providers (PSPs) with the theme “Food Security - Poultry Place in a sustainable supply chain”.

Poultry Farmers’ Forum: PIND organized a series of workshops for 183 poultry farmers in Ikot Ekpen, Akwa Ibom State on November 30, 2023, Calabar, Cross River State on December 02, 2023, and Owo, Ondo State on December 02, 2023. The event provided a platform for PIND to share information on biosecurity and disease management with the farmers with the aim of improving productivity.

Health Electrification and Telecommunication Alliance (HETA) project Close-out Workshop: PIND organized a close-out workshop to mark the successful conclusion of the United States Agency for International Development-led Health Electrification and Telecommunication Alliance (HETA) project in the Niger Delta. The workshop also provided a platform for PIND to share its collaboration with ABT Associates, the primary implementers of the HETA project in Nigeria and how they adapted the PIND Access to Energy (A2E) model for healthcare facility electrification and complementary business connections across 12 communities in the Niger Delta. The workshop which took place on December 19, 2023 was held virtually and had 65 participants from development and private sector partners in clean energy & solar energy sector, investors, and PIND consultants.

Communications supported these Forums with a range of services, including speeches/talking points development, press releases, social and mainstream media publication or broadcast, photography, videography and video production, live streaming, branding, and other forms of corporate communication support

ANNEX 2

GESI: Table showing key highlights of the 2023 IWD

State	Organization	Key Achievements
Akwa Ibom	Women and Community Livelihood Foundation	Women & Community Livelihood Foundation (WOCLIF) with the support from PIND carried out activities in commemoration of the 2023 16 Days of Activism in Akwa Ibom State. A total of 5,424 persons were reached including 3,646 females, 1,778 males and 35 PWDs through rallies, skill acquisition training among others.
Delta	Development Initiative for Community Impact (DICI)	Development Initiative for Community Impact (DICI) collaborated with two other organizations in Delta State to implement activities to commemorate the 16 days of Activism on VAWG/PWD with support from PIND. A total of 964 persons including 492 female, 472 male and 45 PWDs were reached through school outreaches, training program, rallies, activities to commemorate the International Day for PWDs, and stakeholder’s engagement forum.



Edo	South-South Professional Women Association (SSPWA)	Edo State activities were carried out by the South-South Professional Women Association (SSPWA). A membership organization that comprised women in the professional sector from all walks of life. A total of 1,999 persons including 1,224 female, 775 male and 461 PWDs benefitted from the activities implemented by this organization.
Imo	Women Empowerment Education and Peace building Initiative (WEPB)	Women Empowerment Education and Peace Building Initiative (WEPBI) in collaboration with the Imo State Joint Association of Persons Living with Disabilities (JONAPWD) carried out activities in commemoration the 16 days of activism against women and girls with PWD inclusive. This organization reached a total of 184 persons including 141 females, 43 males and 6 PWDs through their activities.
Rivers	Freky Andrew-Essien Care Foundation (FAECARE Foundation)	<p>FAECARE Foundation, a disability focused organization, collaborated with Rivers State chapter of the Joint Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD) and Amaclare Connect & Development Initiative (ACDI). To carry out activities during the 2023 16 Days of Activism campaign. This coalition reached a total of 598 persons including 367 females, 227 males and 291 PWDs through activities such as school outreaches, skill acquisition program, rallies etc.</p> <p>Ruth Ogele, a polio survivor based in Rumudara, Port Harcourt, after participating in the 2-day baking training became really excited about the fact that she had learnt a lot of new things which she couldn't wait to put to practice. She said that even though she had learned baking before, that the lessons garnered with Fraecare made her improve on pastries which made her snacks a lot tastier. Here was her batch of small chops and chin-chin.</p> <p>Elizabeth Torbor, a young lady with disability, a below the knee amputee based in Rumuolemeni, Port Harcourt, expressed her joy and plans to use the skills she had acquired after the 2-day baking training. Elizabeth said: <i>"I am so grateful for the training. I will add the knowledge to what I already know about baking. I will practice it as I go home because that's what I'm into now and add to make a business."</i></p>



GESI: Tables showing 2023 Gender disaggregation of results

Outreach - Gender Summary Q1-Q4 2023						
	Total	female	% females	males	males %	
MSD	Cassava	28,560	16,454	58%	12,106	42.4%
	Cocoa	9,060	1,996	22%	7,064	78.0%
	Palm oil	12,223	4,446	36%	7,777	63.6%
	Poultry	8,444	3,766	45%	4,678	55.4%
	MSMEs	7,156	3,437	48%	3,629	50.7%
Total	65,443	30,099	45.99%	35,254	53.9%	
YEP	YEP	2,438	1,059	43%	1,379	56.6%
EDP	YEP+MDP	67,881	31,158	45.90%	36,723	54.1%
PB	PB training	3,112	1,211	39%	1,901	61%
Overall average	70,993	32,369			45.59%	

Number with increased productivity - Gender cumulative for Q1 -Q4 2023					
	Total number of farmers/MSMEs with increased income	% female	Number of female farmers/MSMEs with increased income	% males	Number of male farmers/MSMEs with increased income
Cassava	15,145	57.61%	8,725	42.39%	6,420
Cocoa	5,125	22.03%	1,129	77.97%	3,996
Palm Oil	7,372	36.37%	2,681	63.63%	4,691
Poultry	5,192	44.60%	2,316	55.40%	2,876
MSMEs	4,249	49.29%	2,094	50.71%	2,155
Total	37,084	46%	16,946	54%	20,138

Net Attributable Income of Farmers/MSMEs Q1- Q4 2023 (NGN)					
	Total income earned by males and Females (NGN)	% female	Income earned by females (NGN)	% males	Income earned by males (NGN)
Cassava	6,555,702,282	57.61%	3,776,878,483	73.57%	2,778,823,800
Cocoa	2,227,647,164	22.03%	490,770,832	353.91%	1,736,876,332
Palm Oil	5,535,001,361	36.37%	2,013,227,006	174.93%	3,521,774,356
Poultry	3,486,542,788	44.60%	1,554,988,174	124.22%	1,931,554,614
MSMEs	3,345,705,060	49.29%	1,649,008,070	102.89%	1,696,696,991
Total	21,150,598,656	44.84%	9,484,872,564	55.16%	11,665,726,092.00

Contribution to Job (FTE) 2023 - (Q1-4)					
	Total number of jobs created by males and females	% female	Number of Job (FTEs) created by females	% males	Number of Job (FTEs) created by males
Cassava	3,200	57.61%	1,844	42.39%	1,356
Cocoa	1,669	22.03%	368	77.97%	1,301
Palm Oil	1,518	36.37%	552	63.63%	966
Poultry	2,948	44.60%	1,315	55.40%	1,633
MSMEs	3,374	49.29%	1,663	50.71%	1,711
Total	12,709	45.17%	5,741	54.83%	6,967.70

Amount Leveraged (NGN) 2023 - (Q1-4)					
	Total (NGN)	% female	Amount Leveraged by females	% males	Amount Leveraged by males
Cassava	4,513,200,206	57.61%	2,600,149,917	73.57%	1,913,050,289
Cocoa	1,264,695,768	22.03%	278,623,924	353.91%	986,071,844
Palm Oil	2,407,062,966	36.37%	875,512,733	174.93%	1,531,550,233
Poultry	1,300,594,554	44.60%	580,061,475	124.22%	720,533,080
MSMEs	3,186,130,000	49.29%	1,570,357,813	102.89%	1,615,772,187
A2E	1,114,732,031				-
Total	12,671,683,495	47%	5,904,705,862	53.40%	6,766,977,632.99
MSD +A2E	13,786,415,526	43%	5,904,705,862	49.08%	6,766,977,632.99



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