

all in the boundary areas. The delineation of boundaries by the National Boundary Commission has further generated disputes and heightened tension between border communities, claiming historical rights to some fishing communities on the boundaries of the Calabar-Itu River which links both states. The conflict has overtime impacted negatively on environmental resources, thereby affecting the livelihood and development potential of the natural resources in the communities (Emah, 2015).

In Ini LGA, conflict situations are the result of compulsory struggles in their respective day-to-day activities at all social levels aimed at satisfying primordial and universal needs. These needs include security, identity, recognition, and development. They strive increasingly to gain control of their environment to ensure the satisfaction of these needs. Communal conflicts in the study area involve violent struggles among groups typically organized along ethnic, religious, and cultural lines. The issues at stake in such conflicts are not typically cultural but may involve struggles over economic, political, and land/boundary disputes. Aside from the loss of lives and property and the displacement of people usually associated with communal conflicts, its impact on environmental resources cannot be overemphasized. This is the case in Nkari, a clan situated in Ini Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State with ten villages, where three brothers were killed by gunmen in March 2013, after a clash over the construction of a dam in their village (Ikuruekong & Al, 2012). Since 2014, communal violence between the Nkari people in Akwa Ibom and the Arochwuku people in Avia, in Abia State, has resulted in the displacement of people and an unknown number of fatalities as related by Chief Effiong Toliquo, a village head in Nkari (FGD/Male/Village Head/Nkari).

Also, Ibeno LGA, home to one of the largest fishing settlements on the Nigerian coast, has been reportedly exposed to oil spills. Fishing communities have protested on the environmental pollution caused by oil exploration in the area. Apart from oil spills causing environmental degradation, there are reported cases of communal violent clashes with Eket LGA. Several people were reportedly killed, including an elderly villager in October 2012 and the local PDP chairperson in May 2013. In April 2013, a violent land dispute between the Ibeno community and neighboring Eket LGA led to the deaths of five people and the destruction of dozens of homes, displacing several families (The Fund for Peace, 2014). The stigma from this crisis remains between both