



2024

NEW FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER



DR OKEZIE KELECHUKWU

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the NEW Foundation in 2024, I am filled with gratitude and pride for the collective efforts we have made towards fostering community development, environmental conservation, and health awareness. Each initiative we undertook this year has not only strengthened our organization but has also positively impacted the lives of those we serve. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable support of our funders. Their belief in our vision has been instrumental in enabling us to implement a wide array of programs.

This year has been a testament to our commitment to fostering community development, environmental conservation, and health awareness. I want to take a moment to acknowledge the tireless efforts of our staff and volunteers. Your passion and dedication are the backbone of this organization.

Every activity was designed with a purpose to empower individuals and create sustainable change.

Welcome to the NEW Foundation's 2024 Newsletter!

We are excited to share our 2024 activities, which aimed at fostering community development, environmental conservation, and health awareness throughout the year. Below is a detailed outline of our completed activities for 2024.



The Neighbourhood Environment Watch (NEW) Foundation is a registered non-governmental, not-for-profit organization with a focus on climate change, natural resource governance, agriculture, and livelihoods, as well as promoting sustainable wellbeing and social rights for vulnerable populations.

NEW Foundation has grown to become a frontline NGO advocating for a sustainable environment and social justice. Her mission is to empower communities as champions of a sustainable environment, amplify the voices of marginalised and resource-impacted communities in line with the principles of business and human rights.

The organization upholds values of Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Hard Work, and Empathy.

In the Issues :

- Stakeholders consultative workshop on fostering Inclusion.
- Impact Assessment of the 30,000 trees .
- Training of Mining HOST Communities in Ebonyi State.
- Community Dialogue on Forests Conservation
- World Environment Day.
- Strengthening Advocacy for Fiscal Justice in the Extractive Sector in Nigeria.
- Global Week of Action: Climate Finance and a Fossil-Free Future webinar.
- Training OF Smallholder Farmers.
- Summary.

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON FOSTERING INCLUSION

The ID4D (Identification for Development) initiative, spearheaded by the World Bank, aims to enhance global understanding and implementation of digital identification systems. ID4D's mission is to create a secure and verifiable digital identity for all individuals in Nigeria, thereby enhancing governance, service delivery, and socio-economic development globally while ensuring inclusivity and collaboration among stakeholders. This event was held in Abuja, on 28th January, 2024.

The Executive Director of the NEW Foundation, Dr Okezie Kelechukwu actively participated in the workshop, which provided a platform to discuss the difficulties associated with registering for the National Identification Number (NIN) and other issues related to its accessibility for people living in remote areas. It served as an opportunity to learn and share insights on improving access to identification services.



IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF 30,000 TREES



The Neighbourhood Environment Watch Foundation conducted an impact assessment in Ohatekwe village, located in the Edda community within the Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Southeast Nigeria. This village benefited from the planting of 30,000 economic trees in 2011/2012. The assessment was led by the Executive Director of the NEW Foundation, Okezie Kelechukwu, alongside Board member Chief Udenwe Michael and Ms Chinelo Oru, the Gender & Communication Director.

The assessment aimed to evaluate how well the communities have preserved the trees and to identify the benefits these trees have brought to the community. “The power of community ownership is evident, as the trees we collaboratively nurtured and planted in Odede Forest have been well maintained. This local action contributes significantly to global efforts to mitigate climate change” was the remark of the Executive Director.



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE ASSESSMENT

- The active involvement of community members in tree care has ensured the survival and growth of the planted trees.
- The trees has provided the needed environmental and Economic benefits to the beneficiaries
- This support the idea of local action with global impact to mitigating impacts of climate change.

TRAINING OF MINING HOST COMMUNITIES IN EBONYI STATE.

Mining Host communities in Nigeria often lack knowledge and understanding of the regulatory frameworks governing the mining sector. This lack of knowledge exposes them to exploitation, oppression, and various human rights violations. Frequently, their rights and well-being are negatively impacted by decisions made without their involvement. To bridge this knowledge gap, Global Rights organized a two-day capacity training for mining host communities in Ebonyi State.

The Executive Director of the NEW Foundation, Dr. Okezie Kelechukwu, who is also a consultant for Women in Mining in Nigeria, was among the facilitators for the program. Dr. Kelechukwu spoke on the concept of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), providing participants with a comprehensive understanding of FPIC and its significance for indigenous communities. The other topics were on Community Development Agreement (CDA), Community Engagement and Mobilising.

Dr. Kelechukwu emphasized the importance of FPIC as a fundamental principle that ensures communities are fully informed and consent to any mining activities that may affect them.

The training covered the key provisions of the Minerals and Mining Act of 2007, highlighting the rights of host communities and the responsibilities of mining companies.

By gaining insights into regulatory processes, participants learned how to advocate for their rights effectively and engage with mining operators on equitable terms.

This knowledge will enable them to navigate difficult challenges and make informed decisions regarding their rights and interests within the business and human rights intersections.



COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON FORESTS CONSERVATION, AND TRAINING ON PRODUCTION OF EFFICIENT COOK STOVES.

The Neighbourhood Environment Watch Foundation, in partnership with the Women Environmental Programme under the Green Livelihood Alliance, organized a community dialogue on forest conservation and training on the production of efficient cook stoves 17th may 2024. The Eketube Edda community in Abakaliki Local Government Area has demonstrated a strong commitment to safeguarding their remaining Ndiode and Ofia Eze forests.

The dialogue provided a platform for community members to discuss the significance of forest conservation and share best practices for sustainable resource management.

This initiative aligns with our mission to promote environmental justice and sustainable development. Through collaborative efforts like these, we can empower communities to take active roles in protecting their ecosystems for future generations.

On 9th June, 2024, at Ekuma Okposi Autonomous community, Ohaozara LGA of Ebonyi state, NEW Foundation held another community dialogue which aimed at educating local residents about the negative impacts of deforestation and the health implications of using firewood in enclosed spaces.

Understanding the significance of trees and our ecosystem is imperative. Any human activity that affects our forests and ecosystems ultimately has negative consequences for the Earth. Currently, our community is facing alarming rates of desert encroachment into our forests.

Re-educating the community about these issues is not just necessary but a continuous process. Through this dialogue, we aim to foster awareness and inspire action towards sustainable practices that protect our environment for future generations.





WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY.

The Neighbourhood Environment Watch (NEW) Foundation commemorated World Environment Day on 5th June, 2024 with a comprehensive program that included a webinar, NTA outreach, a Legacy FM community forum in Abakaliki, and three community sensitization sessions. This year's event focused on the theme of "Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience," featuring a panel of experts comprising environmentalists, agriculturalists, and a biochemistry lecturer.

World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated annually on June 5th to raise awareness and encourage action for the protection of our environment. Established by the United Nations in 1972, WED serves as a platform to promote environmental consciousness and inspire action globally.

NEW Foundation was proud to participate in this year's event, which aimed to educate and engage millions of people worldwide. By celebrating this day, we had the opportunity to enlighten communities about best practices in preserving our environment and fostering a sense of responsibility for its protection.

- The event featured insightful discussions led by experts who shared their knowledge on land restoration and sustainable practices.
- Through various outreach activities, we connected with local communities to emphasize the importance of forest conservation and environmental stewardship
- Our initiatives aimed to inspire individuals to take action in their daily lives to combat desertification and enhance drought resilience.



STRENGTHENING ADVOCACY FOR FISCAL JUSTICE IN THE EXTRACTIVE SECTOR IN NIGERIA.

On June 25, 2024, Dr. Okezie Kelechukwu, the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Environment Watch (NEW) Foundation, delivered a presentation in Abuja, Nigeria, titled "Strengthening Advocacy for Fiscal Justice in the Extractive Sector in Nigeria."

The presentation emphasized the critical need for mining investors to prioritize the protection of human rights within their operations.

Dr. Kelechukwu highlighted that while mining plays a vital role in economic development, it is essential for investors to respect the rights of host communities. He stressed that mining activities should not lead to human rights abuses or environmental degradation.

Key Points from the Presentation

Human Rights Protection: Dr. Kelechukwu called for a commitment from mining companies to uphold human rights standards and ensure that their operations do not negatively impact local communities.

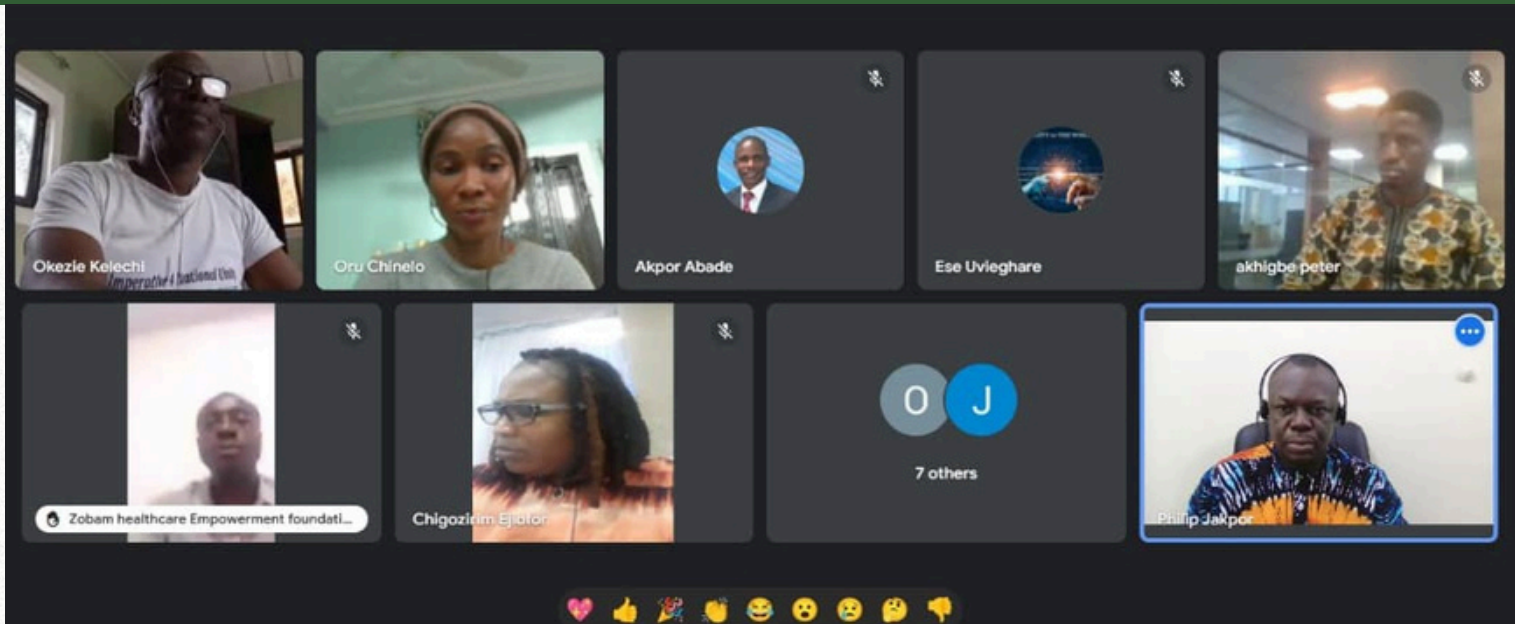
Community Engagement: He emphasized the importance of engaging with host communities to understand their needs and concerns, fostering a collaborative approach to resource management.

Fiscal Justice: The presentation underscored the necessity of advocating for fiscal policies that ensure fair distribution of revenues generated from mining activities, benefiting local populations and promoting sustainable development.

As Nigeria continues to navigate the complexities of its extractive sector, Dr. Kelechukwu's insights serve as a reminder of the imperative to balance economic growth with social responsibility. By prioritizing human rights and community engagement, we can pave the way for a more equitable and sustainable future in the mining industry.



GLOBAL WEEK OF ACTION: CLIMATE FINANCE AND A FOSSIL-FREE FUTURE WEBINAR



In partnership with Renevlyn Development Initiative, NEW Foundation hosted an online webinar to mark the Global Week of Action themed "Climate Finance and a Fossil-Free Future." The event featured engaging discussions on the importance of climate finance in achieving sustainability.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Companies should prioritize renewable energy technologies to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- Achieving a fossil-free future requires collective efforts from individuals, communities, organizations, and governments.
- NGOs play a crucial role in raising awareness about responsible mining operations.
- Regions dependent on fossil fuels must transition to renewable energy sources.

The significant environmental degradation caused by mining operations must be addressed.



TRAINING OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS



November 11-13, 2024

NEW Foundation under the “Strengthening Local Advocacy Against Climate Change,” trained over 40 small-holder farmers in Edda and Enyigba Communities of Abakaliki LGA of Ebonyi state on organic farming, agro-forestry, biogas production, and climate change.

The SLAAC project is one of the small projects of the Independent Global Stocktake (iGST) West Africa and is financed by Climate works Foundation and Coordinated by the West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land use (WASCAL), with technical support of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, (CSIR) South Africa.

This initiative brought together the smallholder farmers majority of whom are women to understand and explore essential agricultural topics aimed at fostering sustainable practices within their communities.

This program is a significant step towards empowering smallholder farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement sustainable agricultural practices.

By focusing on practical applications and fostering community engagement, we aim not only to enhance agricultural productivity but also to build resilience against climate-related challenges



SUMMARY

In 2024, the Neighbourhood Environment Watch (NEW) Foundation made significant strides in promoting health awareness, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment. Through various initiatives, we focused on addressing critical issues such as Lassa fever, mental health, climate change, and agricultural practices.

We successfully engaged with smallholder farmers to foster sustainable agricultural practices and participated in national and regional conferences to advocate for civic space and governance.

As we reflect on our achievements this year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our funders and partners for their unwavering support. To our Board members, Staff and Volunteers of NEW Foundation, your contributions have been instrumental in enabling us to implement these vital programs and make a positive impact in the communities we serve.

Together, we look forward to continuing our work towards sustainable development and social justice in Nigeria.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

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