

# Rebuilding Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to Deliver True Partnerships

## Background

- In Nigeria, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are a statutory requirement for all oil and gas projects.
- Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Nigeria undertakes about 20 EIAs each year.
- In 1999 SPDC, began a review of its environmental impact assessment processes.
- A key focus was on enhancing processes to secure both the formal regulatory approval and the informal social acceptance.

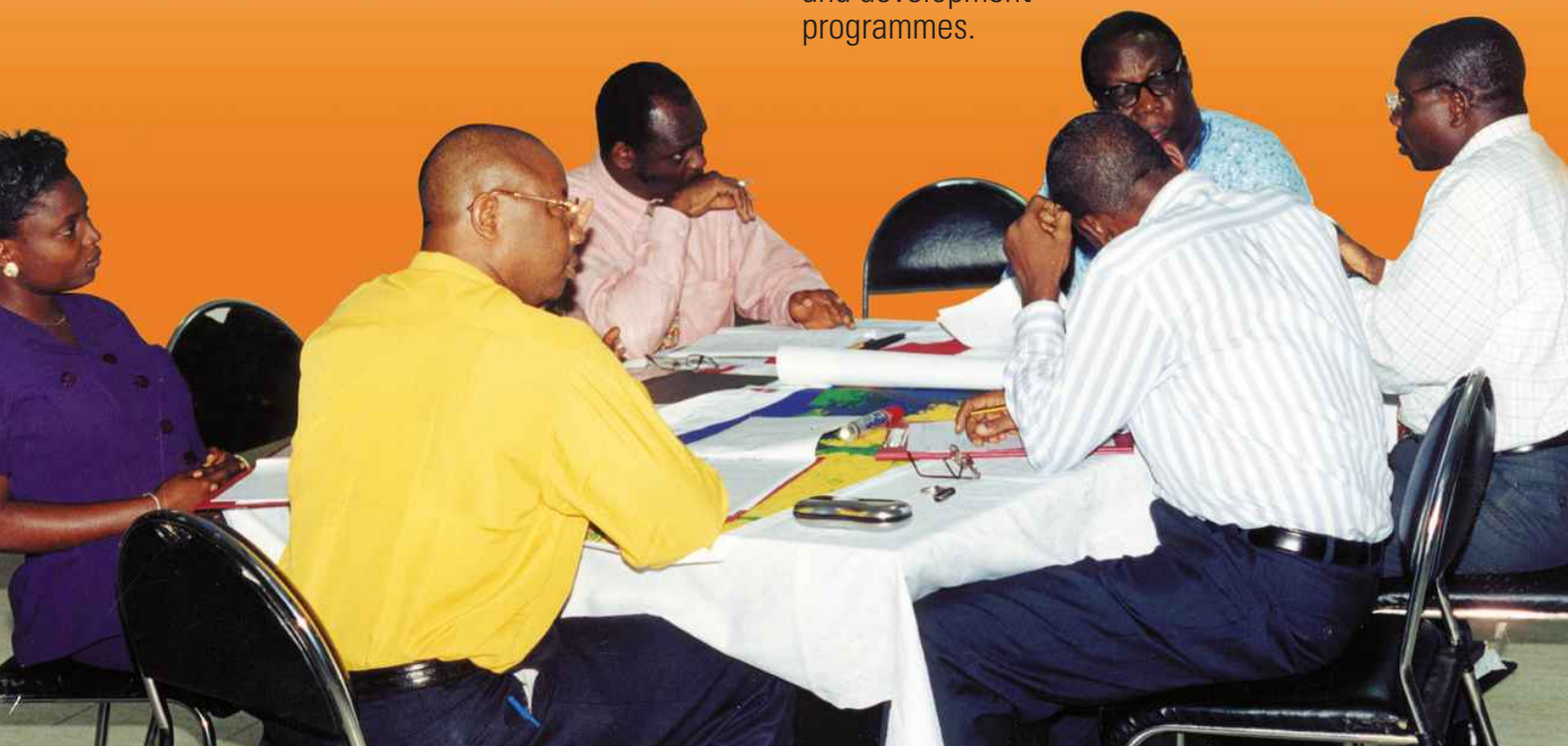
## Areas for Improvement

An inter-functional team consulted with regulators and stakeholders from across the Niger Delta as well as within SPDC. The review identified these areas for improvement:

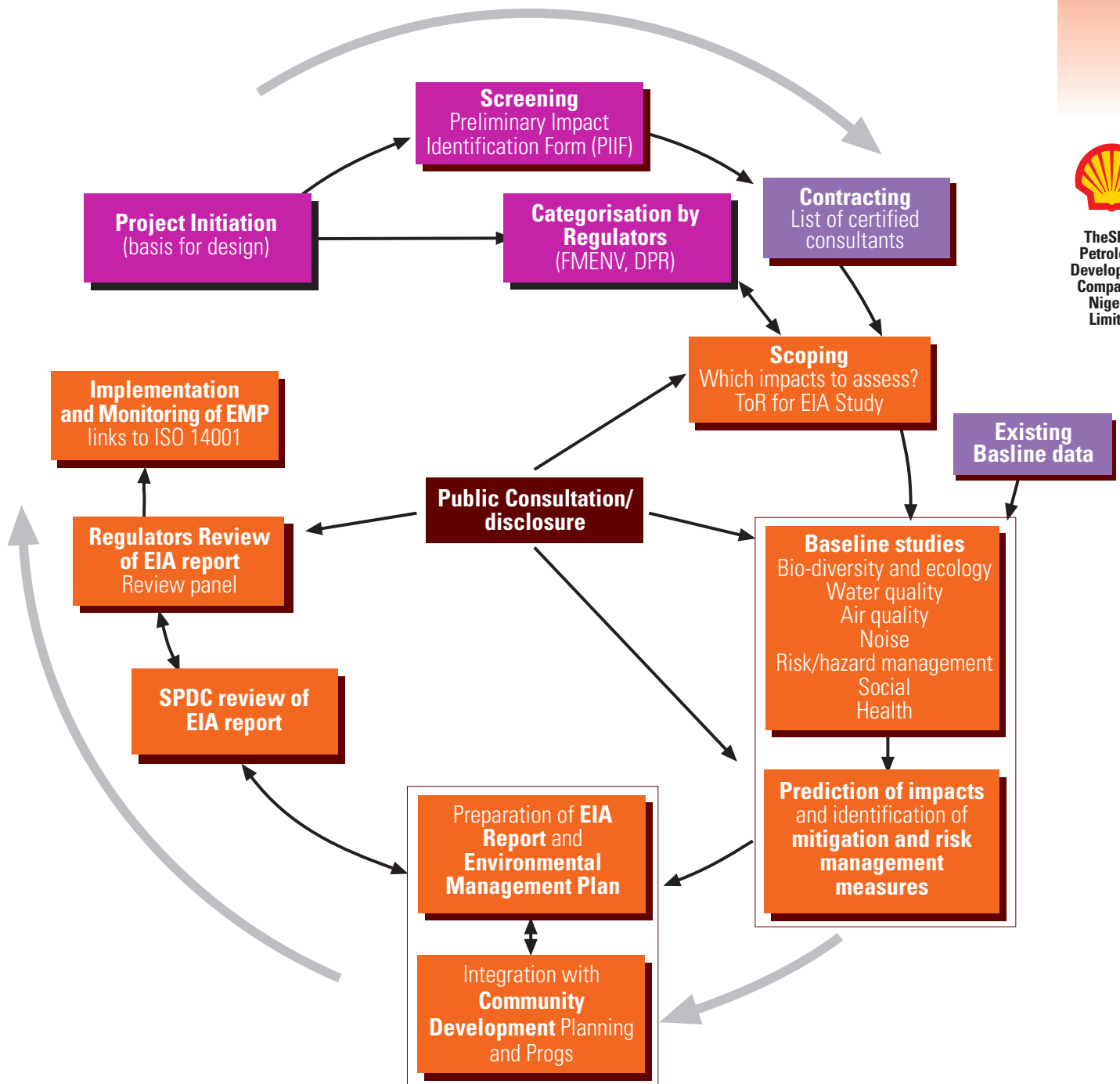
- Better understanding of EIA purpose
- Earlier initiation of EIA in the project cycle
- Expedited preparation of an EIA
- Stronger social and health assessment components
- Improvement in quality and quantity of data
- Higher achievement of standards by consultants and contractors
- More continuous consultation with stakeholders
- Integration of EIA findings in project planning and design
- Enhanced implementation of the Environmental Management Plan
- Stronger linkage between the Environmental Management Plan and the community and health and development programmes.



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# A Perspective of the Improved EIA Process



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A world class EIA must have the following characteristics:

- Be based on strong, open and continuous consultation with key stakeholders.
- Focus equally on the 3 aspects of environmental, social and health impacts.
- State clearly the strategies for management of the identified and assessed impacts.

# Executing EIAs - A Partnership Process

## The New Vision for Environmental Impact Assessment

*"In SPDC an EIA study will be used to bring about two types of project permissions: the permits from the regulators, and the social license to operate from the affected communities"*

**November 2001**

SPDC is committed to working in partnership with the Nigerian government and host communities. As an indication of this commitment, SPDC joined with the Business Partners for Development - to prove out the tri-sector model for partnerships. The BPD helped design and implement workshops for SPDC, civil society and government in the Delta to explore means to improve community involvement and acceptance of a new EIA model.

From these workshops a tri-sector partnership model for executing EIAs emerged. Participants believed that the EIA process could be improved through partnerships during the following stages:

<b>Stage of EIA Process</b>	<b>Nature of partnership</b>
Scoping	Short-term partnerships to set the scope and terms of reference for the EIA.
Baseline data collection	Long-term partnerships to improve accuracy, reliability and credibility of environmental and social baseline data.
Impact mitigation	Numerous small group partnerships based on different impact categories to agree on criteria and mitigation options
Environmental management plan monitoring	Panel partnerships to verify the effectiveness of environmental management plan implementation



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# Benchmarks for Success

Through extensive consultation SPDC identified key indicators of improvement in the EIA process. These include:

<b>Screening</b>	Environmental assessment is completed for all strategic decisions.
<b>Stakeholder Involvement</b>	Views of affected publics are available early in the process.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Sufficient information is available about the actual impacts of implementing the decision.
<b>Timing</b>	Assessment results are available early so that they can be used effectively in the preparation of the decision.
<b>Environmental &amp; Socio-Economic Scoping</b>	Early identification of issues, proposed alternatives and information requirements.
<b>Documentation</b>	Results of the assessment are identifiable and available to all parties affected by the decision.
<b>Quality Review</b>	The quality of both the process and the information is safeguarded by an effective review mechanism.



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# Key Deliverables and Status

SPDC identified key deliverables that would ensure an improved EIA process. These include:

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>EIA Process Manual</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Guidelines for enhanced, cost efficient EIA</li> <li>– Full incorporation of social and health assessment components</li> <li>– Description of EIA deliverables</li> <li>– Enhanced, effective consultation with all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<b>Completed (Dec. 2000)</b>
<b>Pilot EIA Improvement Project</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Process to test the EIA process manual</li> </ul>	<b>Started (July 2001)</b>
<b>Environmental Management Plan linked to community development programmes.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– EIA Partnering and Practices Workshops with Business Partners for Development to explore partnerships for implementation</li> <li>– Partnerships implemented</li> </ul>	<b>Completed (Sept. 2001 Ongoing)</b>
<b>EIA experts exist in SPDC, regulatory agencies and consulting firms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Mentors/Buddies to help develop EIA capacity</li> <li>– EIA Practitioners certification scheme to raise standards</li> </ul>	<b>Ongoing Planned (June 2002)</b>
<b>Process for improved data collection and recording</b>	<b>Planned for Sept. 2002</b>
<b>Template for environmental effects from generic EIAs</b>	<b>Planned (Dec. 2002)</b>
<b>Revisions to EIA Process Manual</b>	<b>Planned (June 2003)</b>



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