Socioeconomic Emancipation and Integration of West Africa: The Role of the West African Gas Pipeline

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Executive Summary

Economic integration became a global concept that every nation in the twentieth and beginning twenty-first centuries tried to partake in as either a model of national or regional development. Countries in the West African sub-region have been part of these phenomena. On May 28, 1975, governments and heads of states in the West Africa converged in Lagos, Nigeria to sign a pact that gave birth to a union in the region known as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The treaty was reaffirmed in 1993 by countries that constitute the union, the essence was revitalization of the main object of ECOWAS—economic integration and establishment of a common citizenship for every individual in member states.

After almost four decades of its birth, ECOWAS is nowhere near achieving its objective as specified in its articles of incorporation; that is establishment of economic union, and integration of citizens among member states. It is therefore in the face of failed and unaccomplished policies that this paper sought to investigate the role the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP) is playing in the socioeconomic emancipation and integration of the region as its major purpose. The paper concludes that WAGP’s project has brought significant changes to the region; it has endured negative consequences on communities around the pipeline areas, such as deforestation and displacement of residents who either depend on the sea or the surrounding lands for their
livelihoods. These are the serious problems that must be addressed by the ECOWAS officials through workable, sustainable policies.
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Introduction

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have witnessed governments and countries all over the globe forming blocs in order to promote their common interest with the object of improving the lives of their citizens. The West African sub-region has been part of this crave—seeking to form a regional bloc in diverse spheres of life so as to improve the living standards of its citizens. On May 28, 1975, governments and heads of states in the West African sub-region converged in Lagos, Nigeria to sign a pact that gave birth to a common union known as the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS). The object of the pact was to enhance a gradual and steady integration of the region in the areas of trade, human movement and settlement. After 18 years of existence from birth, the heads of state and governments of member countries in 1993 reaffirmed the Lagos treaty, the purpose was to reinvigorate the objective of ECOWAS—economic integration of the region, and the establishment of community of citizenship for all member states.

Article 2 of the reaffirmed ECOWAS treaty, states “ECOWAS shall ultimately be the sole economic community in the region for the purpose of economic integration, and realization of the objective of the African Economic Community (AEC).” Article 3 further states that the aims of the community are to promote cooperation and integration leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of its people; and maintain, and enhance economic stability, foster
relations among member states and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent.

The fifteen nation member states include: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote D’ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The member states occupy about 5 million square kilometers of land, and home to about 250 million people. Half of the population lives in poverty with a per capita income of $300 per year. Despite the region’s large energy endowment, the per capita consumption of electricity is about 140 thousand GWh or 160 KWh per capita (World Bank Report, 2006, 6).

To attain its goals, ECOWAS adopted the following:

- The establishment of a common market through:
  1. The liberalization of trade by abolishing custom duties levied on imports and exports across member states.
  2. The removal among member states of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods and services, capital; and the right of residence and establishment.
  3. Adoption of common policies in the areas of economic development, financial and social, and the cultural sector; and the creation of monetary union.

- Harmonization and coordination of national policies, and the promotion of integration programs, projects, and activities in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, industries, transport and communication.

- Harmonization and coordination of policies for the protection of the environment.
• Promotion of the establishment of joint production enterprises.

Article 4 of the treaty states that ECOWAS in pursuance of its objective declare adherence to the “equality and interdependence of member states,” thus placing premium on the fact that ECOWAS’ long term objective is to establish a community of citizenship acquired automatically by all nationals of member states. It also reinforces the preamble to the treaty that outlined the key objective of removing obstacles to the free movement of goods, capital and people, a similitude of a homogeneous society that once existed in the region.

Scope of the Study

This study explores WAGP and delineates available evidence of its role in the socioeconomic emancipation and integration of the West African region. It looks at the political, socioeconomic and environmental implication of WAGP to the region in particular and the world in general. The study also investigates the rationale behind investing such huge resources (money) into the project, and the overall benefits the citizens of the region stand to gain.

(Adepoju, 2002, 13).

Literature Review

After almost 34 years of ECOWAS’ existence, arrangements and commitments to various protocols meant to facilitate the achievement of its vision has been very slow; and implementation targets have never been met—explains dismal trend in the intra-community trade. Granted that regional integration in West Africa is anchored primarily
on trade, any process that impedes intra and extra-regional trade constitute an obstacle to integration and trade development in the sub-region.

ECOWAS possesses large enough a market for member countries to dominate and from there launch out a strong competitive force to other regions of the world, but this has not been the situation, barriers to integration have continued to dominate arrangements and commitments to integration. These barriers include government instruments such as import prohibitions and quota restrictions maintained by member states of the organization. Other impediments include bureaucracy, corruption in custom processes, slow port operations, poor roads and communication infrastructure, wastage and theft (Alaba, 2006, 9).

Furthermore, ECOWAS member states belong to more than one union with different ideologies, aims, and objectives. Member countries are further balkanized along colonial lines: Francophone, Anglophone, and Lusophone. This has hindered rather than promoted free mobility of labor and trade in the region. “Wavering” political support from dominant countries of the world, political instability, and interstate border disputes and wars have retarded progress in the ratification and implementation of protocols designed to facilitate migration, settlements and establishment of community of citizens in member states. The nonconvertibility of currencies has played its part of hindering financial settlements and harmonization of macro-economic policies and procedures (Adepoju, 2002, 13).

*West Africa Gas Pipeline (WAGP)*

As a step toward achieving its policy of economic emancipation of the region, and free movements of persons of member states, ECOWAS in 1982 proposed the
development of a natural gas pipeline throughout West Africa. This dream was realized in 1995 when the governments of four nations: Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo signed what became known as Heads of Agreement (HOA) to construct a natural gas pipeline across the frontiers of the four nations (see Figure 1). HOA further culminated in what became known as the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP).

The WAGP is a regional project intended to export natural gas that was allowed to flare, from Nigeria to Benin, Togo, and Ghana for generation of electricity and distribution to industries and households. According to Alaba (2006), a prerequisite for deepening integration among ECOWAS states involves trade and institutional reforms, since these were not forthcoming; the WAGP project had become the Messiah that would lay the foundation for further cooperation and integration in other fields of endeavors to enhance the wellbeing of citizens of member countries.

As a follow-up to WAGP, an agreement was reached and endorsed by the heads of states and governments at its 28th summit to form an energy coordinating body in the region: the West African Power Pool (WAPP). WAPP was charged with the responsibility of eliminating inefficiencies in the power sector by linking transmissions in the region so that an area with surplus of energy could supply to areas of energy deficit. The driving force behind the formation of WAPP is to effectively distribute the energy that would be generated as a result of WAGP and other existing generating power units, so as to enhance the attractiveness of the entire sub-region to competitive investment capital. It would also facilitate the pooling of risk by increasing the attractiveness of investors in lending to similar projects in the region (Chukwu and Ahiakwo, 2007, 176)
**Intra-ECOWAS Trade**

The magnitude of intra-ECOWAS trade compared to the rest of the world suggests that regional integration is far from the ideal in West Africa. While more than 70 percent of the European Union’s (EU) total trade happens within the community, intra-community trade in ECOWAS remains far less than 15 percent (see Table 1 and 2). This arrangement calls for reforms—dismantling existing barriers to give way to economic and social integration of the community (Alaba, 2006, 4). It also calls for putting in place the necessary resources and measures that will encourage investment into the region. International evidence suggests that regional integration is capable of providing mutual benefits to all countries involved in West Africa; lessons relating to intra-regional
integration commitment have indicated that the CFA zone has been able to transform their economic and monetary cooperation into a powerful driving force for economic policy coordination. These and other integration experience has clearly demonstrated the importance of regionalism for the rapid integration of the world including the West African sub-region.

**Table 1: ECOWAS Trade Structure 1996-2001 (As a Percentage Export Value)**

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intra-ECOWAS</td>
<td>10.86</td>
<td>12.66</td>
<td>14.59</td>
<td>10.08</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>38.47</td>
<td>42.51</td>
<td>31.54</td>
<td>28.81</td>
<td>31.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>23.06</td>
<td>25.81</td>
<td>19.47</td>
<td>26.11</td>
<td>36.69</td>
<td>31.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>11.16</td>
<td>7.52</td>
<td>19.02</td>
<td>17.12</td>
<td>14.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECOWAS Handbook of International Trade 2003 (Abstracted from Alaba, 2006)

**Table 2: ECOWAS Trade Structure 1996-2001 (As a Percentage of Import Value)**

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intra-ECOWAS</td>
<td>11.25</td>
<td>10.93</td>
<td>10.54</td>
<td>12.44</td>
<td>16.79</td>
<td>13.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other African</td>
<td>13.94</td>
<td>13.02</td>
<td>13.01</td>
<td>15.29</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>47.73</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>50.09</td>
<td>51.68</td>
<td>48.31</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>12.46</td>
<td>11.77</td>
<td>10.98</td>
<td>11.26</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>9.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>16.23</td>
<td>19.15</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>21.89</td>
<td>20.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECOWAS Handbook of International Trade 2003 (Abstracted from Alaba, 2006)
The West African sub-region’s energy sector is considered among the least developed in the world. Development of a regional integrated energy infrastructure and clean and reliable energy source is widely viewed as vital to the acceleration of overall economic development in the region. Furthermore, faced with the challenge that electricity supply in the region is inadequate and ECOWAS nations’ attempt to achieve self-sufficiency in electricity supply has been inadequate due to high cost of power generation and transmission infrastructure. Member states of ECOWAS also acknowledge that increasing reliance on hydro-based power system will not provide sufficient regional security of electricity supply. As a result of the inability to generate enough electricity individually to accelerate development for the entire region; and in conformity with article 2 of the ECOWAS treaty, ECOWAS in 1982 proposed the building of a natural gas pipeline to cater for the energy needs of the region. As stated earlier, the efforts of the four nations under ECOWAS culminated in what became known as the WAGP.

WAGP is a major initiative to integrate the regional energy sector of West Africa. Such integration will provide the benefit of increased flexibility, resilience, distribution, abundance and diversity of energy supply. WAGP to date has broken grounds by bringing together governments, private sector enterprises and global institutions by enhancing regional collaboration not only in the four nations but the sub-region as a whole (see Table 3). The project, as executed in the four nations, is on the path of economic cooperation and harmonization on many levels.
Table 3: Institutions involved in WAGP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chevron Texaco</td>
<td>36.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Oil Company</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volta River Authority</td>
<td>16.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societe Beninios de Gaz</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societe Togolaise de Gaz</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WAGP, though in its early stages, has the potential to bring about social and economic benefits at the global, regional, national and local levels. At the global level, WAGP project represents a major investment in infrastructure in a region that is least developed in the world. Regionally, integrated energy infrastructure and clean, reliable energy sources is vital to the economic development of the region. WAGP is providing means of bringing to market gas that was being flared in the Niger Delta—contributing to the Global Flare Reduction Initiative. Eliminating gas flaring has the potential of reducing air pollution and related impact on communities; capturing and providing fuel for power and industry, spurring economic development; and at the global level reducing greenhouse emissions and combating global warming.

For several decades, the population of West African countries has suffered from limited access to electric power and endemic electricity shortages. This situation constitutes a bottleneck to their socio-economic development. The electricity crisis in West Africa has worsened during recent years in spite of the efforts made to construct
new electric power plants and transmission networks. The gap is still large between the present trend of investments and actual needs (see Appendix A). Governments of ECOWAS as a step toward resolving electricity crisis in the region in early 2000 launched a regional strategy seeking to reinforce reforms and integrate the electricity sector to exploit domestic primary energy resources and to improve the electricity interconnections between the national grids (see Figure 2). The aim is to build up a West African Power Pool (WAPP), the objectives of which are defined as follows: to enhance cooperation among West African countries for developing electricity infrastructures, promote investment in the sector, improve electric system reliability, provide a forum for policymakers to share their views concerning the electricity sector, share the benefits of trade and investment and agree upon common rules to protect the public and the environment. After a few years of operation, the WAPP has succeeded in providing a forum for policy issues and in setting up some institutional organizations. Interconnection projects are also in progress (Figure 2), financed by the World Bank and other international financial institutions (Gnansounou, 2008, 23).
During the last decade, the number of electricity supply interruptions increased dramatically in many countries of West Africa. In 1998, the drought and lack of water in the Akossombo reservoir caused electricity crisis in Ghana as well as in Benin and Togo. The latter two countries then suffered from electricity supply disruptions during several months and this led to an economic recession. A similar crisis of less severity occurred from late 2006 to September of 2007. In 2001, Nigeria experienced rolling blackouts due to drought and drainage of Kainji, the largest hydro power reservoir in the country. Senegal, Mali and Guinea have suffered for several years from frequent disruptions of electricity supply due to insufficient generation capacities and the low reliability of power plants. With the notable exception of the Ivory Coast, which somewhat adapted supply to demand, all other countries of the sub-region suffered from under-investment in electricity supply.

Furthermore, the electricity generating systems in the region are structurally imbalanced. In countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Guinea and Mali, electricity supply relies significantly on hydropower, and this is subject to strong multi-annual variability because of fluctuating hydrological conditions. Meanwhile, other countries in the region like Senegal with its electricity generation mainly based on oil have experienced frequent power plant outages due to low reliability and the difficulty of fuel procurement stemming from the international oil price surge. This situation impacted the economic development of West African countries in multiple ways. For example, big companies, especially industrial consumers, had to install self-generation facilities as a complement to the unreliable supply from grids. It resulted in a higher electricity supply costs and entailed a loss of competitiveness. The low quality of electricity supply caused
a direct increase in the companies’ production costs and had a negative effect on capital productivity in comparison with other developing regions such as Asian or South American countries. These factors caused significant losses of economic growth opportunities that resulted both in low capacity use by existing enterprises as well as less attractiveness to new ventures. That makes the deficiency of electricity supply in West Africa a strong barrier to poverty alleviation in the region which has the world’s highest proportion of poor people.

With the exception of Ghana and Nigeria where generating capacities exceeded consumption, the rest of the countries had consumption rates far exceeding generating capacities, therefore relied on other sources of electricity supply that were not forthcoming, or where there were forthcoming, cost became a deterrent to recipient countries. In Ghana and Nigeria, full generating capacities were often not meet as a result of variability in water supply to turn turbines at generating points (see Appendix A). It is also important to note that though thermal source of electricity supply seems to dominate other sources of electricity supply in most countries, inadequate supply of natural gas to power plants makes it impossible for the nations concerned to meet the electricity consumption requirements of their respective countries.

**WAGP: Benefits and Anticipated Impact**

As stated earlier, the WAGP project is supposed to benefit a region that is devastated by poverty for a long period of time as a result of lack of basic infrastructure to support the growth of the sub-region. The impact and benefits of the WAGP project can be summarized as positive and negative impacts.
Positive Impact

1. Environmental Impact and Benefits

The WAGP project is going to use and benefit from natural gas that was to be allowed to flare in Nigeria and causing havoc to the environment of the West African sub-region. The extraction of oil involves burning and gas flaring; and this has continued in the Niger Delta region for some time now without recourse to the environment. It is anticipated that with the emergence of WAGP, gas will no more be allowed to flare but will rather be put to good use in the form of supply of energy to households and industrial sectors of the region. In 1989, Nigeria flared a reported 617 billion cubic feet of associated gas, releasing 30 million tons of carbon dioxide in the process. This accounted for 35 million tons of CO$_2$ and 12 million tons of methane, more than the rest of the world. This makes the oil industry in Nigeria one of the major sources of greenhouse emissions worldwide (Chukwu and Ahiakwo, 2007, 174). Research by ecologists suggests that routine flaring of gas at Niger Delta facilities has stunted plant growth and reduced crop yields in the region. It is therefore argued that cleaner-burning gas supplied by the WAGP will reduce gas flares from Nigeria's oilfields.

2. Economic Growth and Competitiveness

The project is expected to spur up economic growth and development in the region through energy generation in West Africa. In addition to the $1 billion investment in WAGP and power facilities, it is estimated that the new power
supplies, fueled by gas from the project, will stimulate new industrial investment of approximately $800 million in the region. This will boost the competitiveness of the energy sectors in Ghana, Benin and Togo by promoting the use of cheaper and environmentally cleaner gas from Nigeria.

3. Socioeconomic and Financial Importance

It is anticipated that when the project gets to its peak, it will stimulate growth leading to improved standard of living in the form of increased electricity consumption by residents of the region, as a result of wealth creation and new job opportunities. It is projected that about 10,000 to 20,000 primary sector jobs will be created in the region at the peak of the project. The industrial growth has the potential to spawn additional 30,000 to 60,000 secondary jobs (Onuoha, 2008, 95). The World Bank estimates that Benin, Togo and Ghana can save nearly $500 million in energy costs over a 20-year period as WAGP-supplied gas is substituted for more expensive fuels in power generation. Ghana estimates that, it will save between 15,000 to 20,000 barrels per day of crude oil by taking gas from the WAGP to run its power plants (Ghana Final Draft, 2004). Government and sponsors of the project are also required to benefit by way of dividends on their respective investment into the project, countries involved in the project are also expected to derive benefits by taxing income on the individuals and corporations that would be directly or indirectly engaged by the project.
4. **Geopolitical Impact**

Integration of the sub-region has been on the drawing board for some time now for ECOWAS, the birth of WAGP has come as tool to help enable the dream of ECOWAS come true—integration and citizenship for individuals of member states. The WAGP is believed to be a geopolitical ring binder knitting the web of regional economic and political integration in the ECOWAS region, which would support economic growth, particularly the development of the West African electricity market.

5. **Corporate Responsibility**

As a commitment and responsibility to the communities affected by the project, the project has undertaken to provide community initiated development programs to help alleviate the plight of affected communities. This program supplements all compliance requirements to address socio-economic impact as it pertains to the results to be derived from the WAGP project.

**Adverse Impact**

There is no doubt that when placed on an economic template, the WAGP is a viable venture capable of addressing the development needs of the West African countries, particularly in overcoming their perennial energy starvation. However, when situated within the broader context of human security, a broad spectrum of issues needed to be dispassionately addressed in the design, execution and management of the project.
still remain unresolved. Such issues like the rapid deforestation of mangrove forests, the fragmentation of habitats and wildlife corridors, cultural dislocation, and economic impoverishment as a result of livelihood dislocation have tended to undermine the acceptability of the project by host communities (Onuoha, 2008, 96).

Methodology

The object of this study is to uncover whether or not the WAGP would play a complementary role in the socio-economic emancipation and integration of the West African sub-region, furthermore, the paper sought to unearth the impact the WAGP would have on the region. As a prelude to WAGP, the ECOWAS treaty was examined to ascertain its articles that mandate the economic integration of the region by way of trade and citizenship for all persons within member states. Of importance to the subject matter is WAGP itself, various records were examined to establish the idea behind WAGP, including records from the world bank, the main sponsor of the project; records of WAGP project implementation; articles of scholars of energy; journals; and other records pertaining to the history of West Africa.

It is important to note that the WAGP project is in its early phase of implementation, and there have been little documented evidence about it in terms of achievements in relation to the subject matter of this paper. However, it is important to note that as a precondition to its establishment, WAGP is required to induce other high-level projects into the region to help alleviate the economic situation faced by the citizens of ECOWAS member countries. As a result, this paper seeks to examine other components of projects enticed into the region, and use such projects and other adjoining
factors related to WAGP as a basis for measuring the indicators as outlined. Therefore, the West African Power Pool (WAPP) concept is enveloped into this paper so as to be used with other indicators to examine the impact of WAGP in the socio-economic emancipation and integration of the West African sub-region, in this case ECOWAS.

Findings

The essence of this paper is to investigate whether or not the socio-economic emancipation and integration of countries in West Africa is possible with the launching of the WAGP. Evidence gathered so far indicates that integration of the region politically and economically is far from a reality, the barriers to economic integration as enumerated in the ECOWAS charter are still prevalent. Though WAGP is in full fledged operation— gas is being transported through the pipelines to recipient countries, bottle necks associated with each country in the regional groupings needs to be cleared before the benefits of socio-economic emancipation and integration can be realized in a region devastated by poverty. The current state of affairs in the region notwithstanding, the WAGP has achieved some success in terms of socio-economic development of the West African sub-region; the WAGP project has chalked some successes in the political front in a region desirous of political integration.

At the regional level, WAGP has led to development of the infrastructure base of a region that lacked the needed resources to undertake such a huge development. A regional integrated infrastructure and clean and reliable source of energy is vital to stimulate other developmental components both foreign and domestic into a region that lacks the basic resources to stimulate growth.
Closely related to development of infrastructure and capturing and transporting gas through the pipelines to generate electricity for industrial and household use is reduction in gas flaring not only in the region but also in the world as a whole. WAGP is contributing to the reduction in gas flaring, thus eliminating the potential of the dangers associated with air pollution and related impact on communities, especially the areas within and around the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

As noted earlier, the region for a very long time has suffered from inadequate supply of electricity not because generating plants are unavailable, but as a result of unreliable source of supply of energy to generating plants, or in some cases cost of fuel to power generating plants is beyond the reach of some of the countries in the region. The emergence of WAGP has ensured and is expected at its peak to guarantee adequate and reliable energy supply to countries concerned to stimulate economic activities by way of generation of electricity. Energy supplied by WAGP will complement the already existing but unreliable source of energy to most plants in the region.

A secondary and prominent objective of WAGP is its inclination to lure other economic ventures into the region. As a follow up to fully integrate the region, ECOWAS relying on the WAGP initiative in 2000 launched a strategy aimed at achieving regional integration by interconnecting the entire region from national grids of each ECOWAS member country. The essence was to enhance supply of electricity throughout the region: areas with excess supply could supply areas with inadequate supply; this in the long-term is expected to boost production throughout the region. The launching of interconnectivity gave birth to West African Power Pool, a major project in the region with funding from the World Bank and other donor agencies. The WAPP aims at enhancing the cooperation
among West African countries for developing electricity infrastructure, promote investment in the sector, improve electricity system reliability, and provide a forum for policymakers to share their views concerning the energy sector. West Africa Power Pool in this regard has successfully provided a forum for policy issues and has set up an institutional organization that embodies member countries of ECOWAS.

Another objective of WAGP is to spur up economic growth and development throughout the region—a major task and expectation of ECOWAS as embodied in its treaty. Though in its developmental stages, WAGP is expected to at its peak to have a multiplier effect on other sectors of the economy of West Africa; it is expected to generate industrial investment in the nations concerned to the tune of $800 million. Cost in generating electricity is expected to go down as result of cheap supply of gas from the Niger Delta region to Benin, Ghana and Togo. In the long run, WAGP is expected to boost the competitiveness of the energy sector in the sub-region by the interconnectivity provided by WAPP.

One cardinal objective of ECOWAS is economic integration of the region that would eventually eliminate poverty in all West African countries. Elimination of poverty will further transcend into improved living standards for the citizens of the region. WAGP has already opened up its doors to job creation as soon as the project commenced, and it is expected that at its peak additional jobs would be created along the project line. In fact, it is envisaged that more capital would be lured into the region, further expanding the job base of the region; this will subsequently reduce the mass unemployment prevalent in the region. Government along the project area will benefit by way of tax
revenues that are imposed on businesses and individuals who are directly or indirectly engaged by the project.

Integration of the sub-region by way of free movement and settlement of citizens among member states have been on the drawing board for some time now. With the birth and implementation of the WAGP project, citizens of the countries engaged by the project are allowed free movement without having to go through normal immigration procedures to enter another country, a mere identification as a WAGP employee gives one the right to move along the frontiers of the project area.

Politically, WAGP brought together for the first time governments of the sub-region to initiate a program that would not only benefit their respective citizens but citizens of the entire region. WAGP is asserted for now to be a geopolitical ring binder knitting the web of regional economic and political integration in the ECOWAS region that would support economic growth, particularly the development of the West African electricity market.

It is at this juncture important to note that just as any human developmental program, the WAGP is without adverse effect on the surrounding communities in particular and the countries involved in general. The WAGP project led to the rapid deforestation of natural habitat in the areas where the pipelines are laid; it has displaced cultural heritages that abound along the project line; and also culminated in the loss of economic ventures that people along the route hither too depended for livelihood. Overall, the long run benefit of the project is estimated to surpass the adverse effect as envisaged in findings above.
Limitations and Further Research Recommendations

The intent of this study is to gather available data and delineate whether or not the WAGP has contributed to the socio-economic emancipation and integration of the region. The objective of the study is not fully met as data pertaining to the subject area were scanty or unavailable. Unavailability may be attributable to the fact that WAGP is still in its infant stages. Secondly, information regarding the subject area is cumbersome to come by as a result of the bureaucratic tendencies one has to undergo before obtaining data.

It is therefore in the light of these limitations that future inquiries in this subject area should focus on the following among others:

1. Quantification of savings WAGP has brought to individual nations as result of shifting to the use of gas supplied from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

2. Ascertain the level of political integration as a result of implementation of WAGP.

3. Measure the environmental impact WAGP has brought to the Niger Delta region particularly, and the sub-region generally.

4. Measure the level of economic improvement in the lives of citizens affected by the implementation of the project.

5. Ascertain whether or not electricity generated due to gas supplied by WAGP is complementing other sources of energy in the region.

6. Determine whether the implementation of WAGP has culturally affected the indigenes along the project area.
7. Free movement of citizens among member states of ECOWAS need to be given special attention in future research as a result of WAGP implementation.

8. Measure the impact of WAGP in relation to other capital and local investments lured into the region as a result of the project.

Conclusion

Though in its infant stages, the WAGP is making remarkable contribution to the socioeconomic development of the West African region. Evidence (though inadequate) gathered so far indicates that the project has made some significant impact: clean source energy has been provided for the generation of electricity to meet the needs of the region; associated with clean energy is elimination of environmental pollution that was allowed in the region as a result of gas flaring in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Another achievement, is the regional political atmosphere that WAGP has fostered in the area—frequent meeting of high powered government representatives to deliberate on regional policies pertaining to electricity generation, the project has also enabled the luring of further resources into the region and is deemed to bring in more bigger projects into West Africa when it gets to its peak.

Furthermore, even though the integration of citizens across the region is made difficult as a result of impediments in individual ECOWAS countries, the level of integration has begun steadily with workers of WAGP and WAPP being allowed to cross national frontiers without vigorously undergoing immigration formalities. Jobs created by WAGP are on the rise, and is expected to pick up at the peak of the project, additional to
job creation is an increase in revenue by governments of the project area by way of taxing institutions and individuals engaged by the project.

It is also important to note that though the project has brought significant changes into the region, it has also endured some negative consequences on the communities around the pipeline project; deforestation and displacement of population who either depended on the sea or the surrounding lands for their livelihoods. Displacement and sometimes elimination of natural resources is what the project has brought to bear on its path.
References


World Bank. 2006. Project Appraisal Document on proposed Credit. No 36361-AFR

Treaty of ECOWAS. 1975. Available online at:

### Appendix A

**Overview of Electricity Consumption and Generation in West African Countries**

*(2005)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Final Consumption</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Share of Thermal Power Plant %</th>
<th>Share of Hydro Power Plant %</th>
<th>Installed Capacity (GW)</th>
<th>Thermal Capacity % of Total</th>
<th>Hydroelectric Capacity of % of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>99.05</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>45.08</td>
<td>54.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>80.54</td>
<td>19.46</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>82.22</td>
<td>17.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory coast</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>73.18</td>
<td>26.82</td>
<td>1.084</td>
<td>44.28</td>
<td>55.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>20.64</td>
<td>79.36</td>
<td>1.490</td>
<td>19.60</td>
<td>80.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>45.10</td>
<td>54.90</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>52.92</td>
<td>47.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>45.95</td>
<td>54.05</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>44.64</td>
<td>55.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>16.88</td>
<td>22.53</td>
<td>65.06</td>
<td>34.94</td>
<td>5.898</td>
<td>67.14</td>
<td>32.86</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>87.94</td>
<td>11.88</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>96.61</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>58.52</td>
<td>41.48</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>85.75</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Total</td>
<td>31.61</td>
<td>39.79</td>
<td>60.58</td>
<td>39.41</td>
<td>10.178</td>
<td>59.46</td>
<td>40.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EIA (abstracted from Gnansounou, 2008)

**Note**

The percentage of thermal and hydro as a proportion of generating capacity as per Appendix A represent absolute figures for individual countries. Cumulatively, the percentage for the entire region represents smaller figures indicated as 60.58 percent and 39.46 percent for thermal plant and hydro-energy respectively. Furthermore, the capacity as a percentage of the total represents the proportion of power generation for 2005.