

The Need for Environmental Epidemiological Studies in the Niger Delta Area of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The Niger Delta region is a peculiar part of Nigeria. Though epidemiological studies have been carried out in Nigeria in the past and have successfully arrived at identifying environmental and occupational diseases, the peculiar nature of the Niger Delta environment and its industrialisation were not taken into consideration. There is, therefore, the urgent need for environmental epidemiology, a scientific endeavour that studies humans as they interact with their environment leading to unhealthy living, to establish the exogenous diseases and ailments which residents and workers suffer from as a result of the terrain and activities arising from the industrialisation of the Niger Delta area, especially those of oil exploration. This would make it possible to know the distribution of the diseases and disabilities in the area and of the factors which influences that distribution in order to provide data essential for the management, evaluation and planning of services for the prevention, control and treatment of these diseases. It was recommended that every effort should be made to provide an empirically produced environmental epidemiological report for the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.