



Reducing gas flaring in Nigeria

Location: Nigeria

Region: Africa

Sector(s): Short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs)

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Summary

Nigeria is one of the world’s largest producers of oil and natural gas and has faced a significant challenge to reduce the amount of gas flaring taking place.

With oil considered the primary product of hydrocarbon extraction in the Niger Delta, gas has been viewed as a waste product to be disposed of as quickly as possible. As a result, Nigeria has flared large amounts of the associated gas (consisting primarily of methane) that is found alongside oil in underground deposits.

Flaring involves the burning of gas and is preferred over directly releasing gas into the atmosphere however it is rarely 100% efficient and also results in the production of carbon dioxide and other pollutants.


Despite Nigeria’s heavy economic dependence on oil production it has worked to mitigate the problem and reduced flaring by approximately 70% between 2000 and 2018. To strengthen the strategy for the elimination of gas flares, the Government of Nigeria introduced the **Nigerian Gas Flare Commercialization Program (NGFCP)** in 2016. The objective of NGFCP is to eliminate gas flaring through technically and commercially sustainable gas utilization projects developed by competent third-party investors.

In order to provide a legal framework to the implementation of NGFCP, the Government of Nigeria approved the **“Flare Gas (Prevention of Waste and Pollution) Regulations 2018”**.

Results and accomplishments

Listed below are the expected outcomes in the short to medium term:

- reduce flaring by roughly 20 billion cubic meters per year until 2018 irrespective of the 2018 regulation

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- provide access to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for six million households
 - 2.5 GW power to be generated from new and existing Independent Power Producers (IPPs)
 - benefit Niger Delta communities through reduced flaring and economic development.

Enabling conditions

- Wide scale recognition within the Government of Nigeria about the potential to harness flared gas to stimulate economic growth, drive investments and provide jobs in oil producing communities.
- Introduction of economic incentives by the government to get the gas to market rather than flare it for associated gas gathering lines in 1998, and export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in 1999.
- Most of the international oil companies operating in Nigeria are part of the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI). OGCI companies have pledged to cut their emissions down to a 0.25% leak rate by 2025, moving eventually to a 0.20% leak rate for all upstream sources.

Challenges

- Despite wide stakeholder consultations and engagement, some stakeholders are yet to come to terms with how a third-party company will co-habit with them on the oil field.
- The initial drivers/promoters of the initiative have mostly left the active service of the current national government. The institution that is currently responsible for running the initiative will take time to settle in and understand the process. This has led to the postponement of scheduled activities, making the implementation process longer than planned.
- The electricity industry is the biggest consumer of gas in the domestic market. The industry is still struggling due to poor cash revenue streams as a result of customer dissatisfaction around electricity supply in the country. This could pose a challenge to the third-party gas suppliers who may want to venture into the industry.

Key lessons learned

- Programs such as these should be institutionalized and not depend on political office holders whose tenure is usually defined.
- Bottlenecks need to be addressed prior to implementation as some of these oil fields with current flares are in swamps or remote locations with poor access road networks and high costs for pipeline transportation.

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[Nigerian Gas Flare Commercialisation Programme](#)

[Flare Gas \(Prevention of Waste and Pollution\) Regulations 2018](#)