

## **Land Dispute, Delta State, Nigeria Fact Sheet**

### **Context**

PPP's work with local citizens in Delta State focused on preventing a land dispute between two communities (*ogboli Ibusa and Asaba*) from escalating into violent conflict. The dispute occurred because the communities relied on oral accounts as opposed to a documented land boundary.

### **Indicators of Potentially Violent Conflict**

Despite a subsisting court order restraining both factions from gaining access to the land pending the final ruling, the youth were forcefully entering the land and selling portions to foreigners, a situation that it was feared would trigger violent conflict between the communities. The land under dispute had also turned into a gathering venue where politicians recruit jobless youth, pay them money, and use them as electoral thugs, a situation that had the potential to trigger violence.

Prior to this project, the relationship between the communities was strained. There was no exchange of visits between members of the two communities. There was little communication between members of the two communities. Community representatives only saw each other in the court rooms during hearings on the case.

### **Locally Defined Strategies and/or Activities**

In December 2013, the Obi Ogadi and Ogboli Ibusor Peace Committee (OOPC) was formed to rebuild relations between the communities. This representative group of local citizens from both communities engaged in the following activities: community forums, inter-communal dialogue sessions, and conversations with the Ministry of Land and Surveys about land demarcation.

### **Impact**

The initial actor meeting in December 2013 brought together for the first time in several years members from the disputing communities to discuss the impact of the land dispute and what needed to be done to encourage resolution. Relations among the two communities has improved. Community members now freely attend marriages and burial ceremonies in the other community without fear of attack. The community representatives have agreed to a boundary demarcation as a lasting solution, and have initiated the demarcation processes. They have also agreed to accept and abide by the boundary delineated by the boundary adjustment commission. There has not been a reported case of violent conflict related to the land since the beginning of PPP's project in December 2013.