

**National Civil Society
Network on Water
and Sanitation
(NEWSAN)**

% African Network for Environment and Economic Justice
123 First East Circular Road,
Box 3864, Benin City, Edo State.
Telephone: +234-52258748

% The Bread of Life Dev. Foundation
Suite 3, No 13/15, Ekoru road, Abule Egba
Box 14055, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.
Telephone: +234-17942833.

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REPORT OF THE PRE-MEXCO ROUNDTABLE ORGANISED BY NEWSAN

The National Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation in Nigeria-(NEWSAN) with the support of WaterAid on March 8, 2006, organized a one day Roundtable to review progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal target 7 in Nigeria, and also policies/programmes that may impede the achievement of the goal. The event took place at the International Press Centre (IPC) House 11, Dideolu Court, Dideolu Estate, 2nd Gate Bus stop, Ogba, Lagos.

The roundtable organized as a prelude to the 4th World Water Forum, Mexico, March 16-22, had the following objectives:

- i. Review Nigeria's efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal target 7
- ii. Suggest policies and practices that need to be implemented to ensure the achievement of the MDG target 7 in Nigeria
- iii. Enhance the capacity of Civil Society Organizations to meet the water and sanitation needs of local communities in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goal 7 for Nigeria.
- iv. Sensitize and promote the participation of all CSOs involved in water and sanitation on the importance of the Mexico World Water Forum.
- v. Bring together stakeholders for the purpose of coming up with a document that will be presented at the CSOs side event in Mexico by Nigerian Civil society Organizations (CSOs) on water and sanitation.

The water and sanitation roundtable was in two sessions with the respective themes "*Stepping up efforts towards achieving MDG Goal 7, Target 10 in Nigeria*" and "*A review of Civil Society participation in Water supply and sanitation projects in Nigeria*". Sub themes that were explored included: "*A review of DFID's report that says Nigeria is 'off track' towards achieving MGD 7; Alternative ways of meeting the MDG 7; Challenges and opportunities provided by the 4th World Water Forum Mexico, March 2006 to lobby global actors towards achieving the MDG 7 in Nigeria; and Local actions by NGOs towards achieving the MDG 7. Others are: A review of Civil Society participation in Donor financed water projects in Nigeria (Projects by Wateraid, ADB, World Bank, UNICEF, European Union e.t.c.); Review of Civil Society participation in the 1st and 2nd National Urban Water Sector Reform projects; A review of Civil Society participation in other Federal, States and Local Government water projects; and the Right to water campaign in Nigeria.*"

Papers were delivered by Leo Atakpu, National Coordinator, NEWSAN; Anthony Akpan, South Coordinator, NEWSAN; Priscilia Achakpa, North Central Coordinator of the NEWSAN; Ifeoma Charles-Monwuba of Wateraid Nigeria office; Lekan Oyebande of the West African Water Partnership; Emmanuel Adeyemo of the Global Water Partnership-Nigeria; Patrick Osuocha of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources; John Barker, of the DFID; and Chloe Fevre of the EC Delegation to Nigeria.

The roundtable was attended by the Leadership of the NEWSAN including the National Coordinator, Leo Atakpu, all but one of the six zonal coordinators, and members of the NEWSAN, Lagos state Chapter. Other participants included Representative of the Honourable Minister for Water Resources, officials from donor communities such as WaterAID, Delegation of the European Commission in Nigeria, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Global Water Partnership-Nigeria, Civil Society organizations, the media, water user organizations, and consumer rights organizations. Of note, community leaders drawn from all the Local Governments in Lagos state also attended the roundtable.

Below are observations and resolutions of the NEWSAN and community leaders at the end of the Roundtable.

- i. It is regrettable as indicated by a DFID study, that Nigeria is one of the countries 'of track' towards achieving the MDG 7 in the water and sanitation sector.
- ii. The financial resources available through governmental and non-governmental means are not adequate to achieve the MDG 7 in Nigeria. Nigeria requires \$2.61b or \$201m annually to fund programmes geared towards the achievement of the MDG7 in Nigeria. Unfortunately governmental appropriation to this sector and donor support over the past five years has been far below required sum.
- iii. 6 years after the MDG goals were agreed upon, access to water supply and sanitation facilities is decreasing rather than increasing in Nigeria, which confirms fears that the MGD 7 may not be achieved in Nigeria.
- iv. One of the reasons for this development is that, Government officials in all tiers are mismanaging and also diverting funds budgeted for the development of water resources in Nigeria.
- v. Though Nigeria has developed a national policy framework for water supply, the implementation of the policy is top down, rather than bottom up or demand driven. Moreover, there is little commitment to policy implementation at the state and local government level, there is lack of community mobilization for participation in water policies, and rural water infrastructure also lacks community ownership.
- vi. The Federal Government, and Lagos and Cross river states Governments are presently pursuing water privatization policies disguised as water sector reform programme.
- vii. The civil society is not sufficiently consulted by the Federal and State Governments implementing water Supply and sanitation programmes.
- viii. Participants recognized the past and continued support of donor agencies specifically the Heinrich Boell Foundation and the Wateraid in facilitating dialogues on water supply and sanitation related issues.
- ix. Community Leaders from all the Local governments in Lagos state, specifically noted that they have not been adequately informed on the on going Water supply- Private sector Participation programmes of the state. They also noted that, the Lagos state water Law 2004 was enacted without proper and adequate public consultation

Resolutions

- i. *Participants called for increased funding of the water and sanitation sector by all tiers of Government and also donor agencies in order to achieve the MDG7 target 10 in Nigeria. All the tiers of Government in the country are being encouraged to recognize that without success in the water and sanitation sector, the entire MDG concept may be in jeopardy.*
- ii. *CSOs should set up programmes for tracking and monitoring the budgetary allocation to the water and -sanitation sector, in order to ensure judicious and prudent use of the resources presently being allocated to this sector.*
- iii. *Participants rejected water privatization as a water resources management policy as experiences have shown that water privatization largely excludes the poor from having access.*
- iv. *Participants re affirm the human right to water, meaning each person has the right to water for securing his or her basic livelihood. The Civil society and Nigeria government are called upon to strengthen the implementation of the right to water and make the right to water fully enforceable in our national laws, as in other countries like South Africa and Uruguay.*
- v. *Participants, called on the Federal and state Governments to promote proper stakeholder participation and engagement to ensure the development of comprehensive legislation and institutional frameworks that adequately address water related societal needs and concerns.*
- vi. *The Federal and States Governments are also the International Organizations working in the water sector are called upon to address the requirements of vulnerable and marginalized groups including women, children, farmers and deprived people in rural areas facing difficulties with physical access to water.*
- vii. *The Federal and State Governments implementing water sector reform programmes should set up a process for civic engagement in this process. The Lagos and Cross River State Governments are particularly called upon to suspend implementation of the \$220 World Bank project and carry out adequate public consultation on this project.. There is a need to review the Lagos state water Law to accommodate the concerns of the civil society and general public.*
- viii. *CSOs should keep community groups informed on their programmes and activities. Community commends NEWSAN for organizing the dialogue, and stressed the need for regular consultations and meetings between the non-governmental organizations and community groups.*

Babatope Babalobi
Coordinator, NEWSAN, Lagos State

Leo Atakpu
National Coordinator, NEWSAN