



Rc.14090

The Bread of Life Dev. Foundation

Press Statement

RE: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF REVISED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESEMENT (EIA) REPORT ON IJU AND ADIYAN WATERWORKS UNDER THE WORLD BANK FINANCED SECOND NATIONAL URBAN WATER AND SANITATION REFORM PROGRAMME IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

GOVERNING BY DECEIT

Background information

1. On June 26, 2008, the Project Implementation Unit of the 2nd National Urban Water sector reform project of the Lagos Water Corporation, acting through the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency, placed full page advertisements in several National newspapers in Nigeria inviting comments on the “Revised Environmental Impact Assessments report of on the Iju and Adiyon Water works”.
2. The newspaper advertisements stated that the Environmental Impact Assessment is necessitated by activities under the World Bank financed 2nd National Urban Water Sector Reform project that will involve the rehabilitation of two major water plants of Iju and Adiyon water works in Lagos; and that the public disclosure is being made in compliance with the World Bank’s safeguard policies, and the Federal and state laws of Nigeria, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act No 86 of 1992 which makes it mandatory for proponents of all new major development activities to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of proposed projects
3. The newspaper public notice of June 26, 2008 also stated the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report would be displayed in seven venues, and that the ‘duration of display’ is ‘June 26, 2008’ between the hours of ‘8.00am-4.00pm’ only.

Facts on the ground

1. The **Bread of Life Development Foundation** wishes to note whereas the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act No 86 of 1992 specifically stated that EIA reports must be displayed for public information and comments for 21 working days, in this particular case, the EIA report was scheduled to

be displayed for only eight hours. To make matters worse, the Public notice for the display of the EIA reports was published on June 26, 2008 the only day slated for the display

2. Over the past two weeks, **Bread of Life Development Foundation** visited all the seven venues in Lagos and Abuja announced as display locations for the EIA report, and our findings reveal that there was no public display of the EIA report took place even for a minute –on the 26th of June or since thereafter.
3. The **Bread of Life Development Foundation**, since 2006 had been advocating for public disclosure of the Environmental Assessment Study of the 2nd National Urban Water Sector Reform Project in Lagos state, because the wastewater disposal of the Lagos water treatment plants at Adiyari and Iju have negative environmental impacts which should be addressed before further major construction works are embarked in the two waterworks.
4. We like to state that an assessment study (E1138 Volume 2 of July 2005) earlier conducted by the World Bank attest to the negative environmental impacts of the two treatment water plants on the nearby River Adiyari and twenty neighboring communities in Lagos and Ogun state of Nigeria. Excerpts from the study state that:
 - i. *“The two plants at Adiyari and Iju have impacted quite negatively on the neighbouring community from the points of environmental geochemistry, ecology and environmental engineering”.*
 - ii. *“The water quality has reduced considerably as some of the waters, plants and soil contained more heavy metals in the downstream sector of River Adiyari when compared to the upstream sector”.*
 - iii. *“The primary productivity in the downstream of River Adiyari is quite lower than that of the upstream sector of River Adiyari. In addition, much siltation and eutrophication were found to be more in the downstream of River Adiyari than the upstream. Because of much siltation, the River Adiyari downstream has refused to flow normally, and thus has always led to flooding of the river whenever it rains”.*
 - iv. *“In addition, the siltation of the riverbed coupled with eutrophication has resulted in the area being a breeding ground for mosquitoes. This has eventually led to prevalence of malaria in the community”*

Position Statement

1. In view of the background information and facts of the ground above, the **Bread of Life Development Foundation** condemns the failure of the appropriate state agencies to display the said Revised EIA in line with extant laws and practices. We state that nowhere in the world are EIA reports displayed within eight hours only for public information and comments.
2. We also like to state that the failure of the appropriate agencies to ensure the EIA report is made available for public information and comments in the seven display venues between June 26th and now, as announced, amounts to political treachery, government deceit and perfidy.

3. The reality on the ground is that no public disclosure of an EIA report on the World Bank financed 2nd National Urban Water Sector reform project in Lagos state is taking place or had taken place, and we invite all stakeholders to reject the ongoing phony exercise and compel the Lagos State Government to commence a credible and publicly verifiable disclosure of an EIA for the project.
4. We request that the funds expended in advertising this phony public disclosure of EIA report in several newspapers should be refunded back to the public treasury by the officers concerned.
5. We call on the World Bank offices in Abuja and Washington to take cognizance of this development and withhold financial approvals for the construction works in the two water works until the provisions of the law on public disclosure of EIA is adhered to by the Lagos State Government.

Babatope Babalobi
Bread of Life Dev. Foundation

July 13, 2008