



CREATING PUBLIC AWARENESS ON URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION TO PREVENT COVID 19



Creating a clean hygienic and sustainable environment is considered critically essential to human development. This is necessary in order to avoid the effect of environmental pollution which are injurious to human existence in view of its negative impact on socioeconomic development and spread of viruses and diseases.

The risks of environmental pollution are more grievous at this crucial time when the entire world is combatting the effect of Covid 19 surge and preventing its Community spread globally

In the Urban cities, environmental pollution potend great danger to the spread of the deadly virus, COVID-19, hence the easy rate of spread has compelled a global use of face mask for individual and observance of community safety precautions which includes hand washing, social distancing, use of gloves and hand sanitizers on a daily basis.

These safety precautions are only preventive since the World Health Organization (WHO) is yet to announce approved curative vaccine for the virus. It has therefore become necessary to sensitise the public on the need to keep the environment safe and tidy as many materials that come into contact with infected persons as well as massive amount of waste creation in our environment are capable of causing Community spread of the virus.

In the last few months, millions of people have been put on lockdown in order to reduce the transmission of the virus. This epidemic has also changed the people's life style; caused extensive job losses and threatened the sustenance of millions of people, as businesses have shut down to control the spread of virus. All over the world, flights have been canceled and transport systems have been closed. Overall, economic activities were stopped and stock markets dropped at a very large rate.

It is to this end that Oluseyi Bisiriyu Foundation went to the street to sensitize the public on the need to keep their environment clean and be free from pollution.

Oluseyi Bisiriyu Foundation's objective is to commit to advocacy and

actions towards environmental protection, sustainable environmental development, and promotion of environmental awareness within Nigeria.

In recent weeks, the foundation carried out a survey in Abeokuta metropolis, and with evidence of pictures, there is empirical prove that the rate of pollution in Abeokuta is astronomical and its environs which calls for concerted efforts of government and citizens to keep a clean and hygienic environment

After this process, the Foundation's environmental team submitted that there are still so much to be done by Government to further enlighten the citizens on the need for environmental cleanliness and enforcement of environmental laws.

To awaken people on the need for environmental concern, the Foundation, however, make use of information campaigns as strategy to enlighten and educate the people about many environmental lapses and the effect of each on the larger society.

The Public Relations Officer of the Foundation, Mr. Kehinde Ademuyiwa who led the campaign team, said the awareness essentially serves as an educational tool; helping people in Ogun State, Nigeria, and around the world understand the economic, aesthetic and biological importance of preserving resources and reducing or eliminating the harmful impacts of man-made alterations.

He added that the awareness will further help people to understand the consequences of human activities on various lands and as well identify remedial solutions.

The Operations Manager of the Foundation, Mr. Emmanuel Ojo, added that the Foundation's decision to carry out the awareness was to state the commitment of the Foundation to support the machinery of government to ameliorate various challenges in the area of environmental pollution.

He, however, added that the Foundation will continue to compliment government's efforts not only on environmental issues, but in all areas that could foster development in the State.



OBF COLLABORATES WITH GRASSROOT AGRIC HUMAN RIGHTS FARMERS TO BOOST AGRICULTURE



One of the things that is common among all the living creature is a daily meal which is the basic need. While some have in abundant, some do not have enough while some do not have at all.

The management of Oluseyi Bisiriyu Foundation has met with the Grassroot Agric Human Rights Farmers Foundation (GAHFF) leadership to seal the partnership agreement between both parties in giving attention towards improving the Agriculture.

The collaboration meeting which was held at the Foundation's office, 2, Kuforiji Olubi street, Adigbe Abeokuta deliberated on the proposal of the Farmers' Association to go into Castol plantation in the state.

Chief Dapo Oke who represented the Founder of the Foundation welcomed the leadership of GAHFF assuring them of the readiness of the foundation in giving attention to the sustainable crop production to boost income in agriculture.

He added that the foundation is giving to due attention to agriculture to ensure sustainability of the environment and job empowerment.

Mr Olorode Sulaiman who spoke on behalf of GAHFF presented a copy of the business proposal for the foundation, while encouraging the foundation to have trust in them.

Comrade Malomo Ganiu, the President for the GAHFF explained that the area of focus is an uncommon cash crop with a lot of residual income, adding that it is also a crude oil plant that can boost the economy of any nation.

He further described the crop as perennial and very dependable one.

In his own contribution, Mr. Ojo Emmanuel, the Operation manager for the foundation admonished the farmers to be committed and serious to their own part of duties.

OGUN STATE: POTABLE WATER, THE ISSUES THE SOLUTIONS

BY
Kehinde Akinlade



Second to air, water is the most important element of nature that sustains life on the planet earth. So essential to life and daily living is water that some doom's prophets have said and are still saying that the next world war may be fought over its availability. Looking at the growing trouble in the horn of Africa between Egypt and Ethiopia over River Nile's water, one may want to pay attention to the prophecy.

Breaking it down to daily domestic potable water use, even in states and provinces within developed nations of the world, issues surrounding water supply are on the discussion tables receiving serious attention. There the discussion is not about how constant supply is neither about the state of water supply facilities which of course would be state of the art nor is discussions centred on potable water quality. Rather, they are discussing the future of supply against the backdrop of climate change due to global warming that is affecting earth's natural water reservoirs.

In Ogun State of Nigeria, the issue is not about availability of fresh water for abstraction but about treated water emerging from taps at homes and wherever it is needed for day to day usage. Of a fact, water supply to homes should by now not be a problem in Ogun State. Disruption to supply should be for routine maintenance and not due to systemic failure. Reason is that the history of pipe borne water in the state capital is dated back to the days of Egba United Government of the late 19th century. The state water agency, Ogun State Water Corporation is as old as the state itself having been created in 1976 with the statutory function of seeing pipe borne water running in all nooks and crannies of the state. As far back as the early 80s, pipe borne water was running in many towns and villages of Ogun State. A state with this kind of history ordinarily should not by now have any town without reticulation with full pressure water running through daily. Contrary to the tone of media contents regarding Ogun State water sector coming out of some Ogun based electronic media houses, there is potable water in Ogun State. It is reticulation that is limited in reach, network expansion is slow and the major reason for this is funding. Water provision is capital intensive.

There are parts of the state capital that are enjoying pipe borne water, there are parts where the supply is not frequent and there are areas of the capital with no reticulation at all. Same for the rest of the state. Pipe borne water is not restricted to Abeokuta, many towns in Ogun State have the presence of Ogun State Water Corporation in terms of water schemes not all are not functioning. Recently, while the Prince Dapo Abiodun led government was tackling the challenge of restoring Abeokuta Main Water Scheme located in Arakanga back to functionality, the government extended attention to about 14 other towns across Ogun State where water facilities were down and now they are supplying the all important liquid to the people of the towns they are to serve.

Fact faced, the coverage should by now be total in Ogun State considering the fact that the first drop of pipe borne water dates back to the colonial era and the state water agency is of same age with the state. No doubt there are day to day operational issues bedeviling sustainable provision of quality potable water in Ogun State, there is the issue of funding due to lean government purse which is not peculiar to Ogun State but the major factor that should be blamed is continuity, of plans, policies and actions on the part of government. The eight years of the last administration in the state was a big disconnect in the chain of the state water sector development. Not that administrations before the last took the state water sector to Eldorado but there were noteworthy movements in that direction in terms of water projects put in place and whatever strong asset the sector has now should be attributed to them.

The immediate past administration did not do much in the area of potable water provision. Water provision was vividly not a priority and that was a big surprise for a government that made urban renewal the flagship of its governance. Eight years is too long in the life of a developing state for a government not to have embarked on, finished and commissioned big water project(s). Not doing that is a big gap that will be very difficult to bridge in a state that is breeding new human settlements both in the rural and urban areas regularly. Not prioritizing water pump pi is by the last administration has dented efforts of administrations before it to see Ogun State well covered in

terms of quality potable water provision. Governments before the last administration, military and civilian did much in the area of putting in place water schemes for potable water provision in nooks and crannies of the state. From Tongeji Island (Ipokia Local Government Area) in the far west to Oni (Ogun Waterside) in the far east of the gateway state, major, mini and micro water schemes with different levels of potable water output to satisfy the water needs of Ogun people were put in place to abstract fresh water from different fresh water sources for domestic and commercial water needs of the people.

The governments of Chief Olusegun Osoba and Otunba Gbenga Daniel made significant improvement on existing water infrastructure they met on ground. Ikangba water scheme in Ijebu Ode corridor of the state was commissioned by the government of Chief Olusegun Osoba as well as Ifo-Akinside water scheme to serve Ilaro and Ifo axis. The World Bank funded National Urban Water Sector Reform Project was in the days of Otunba Gbenga Daniel as governor. Under the project, six major water schemes of across the state were rehabilitated. Ifo-Akinside, Ogere, Apoje, Sagamu, Yemoji and Abeokuta Main Water Scheme. It was during his time that the federal government constructed Owiwi water scheme and rehabilitated Abeokuta old scheme of Iberekodo. Pipe network extension works were also carried out.

After the extensive rehabilitation of water facilities, water was still not reaching the right places. That led to the identification of the need for regular and adequate power supply to push water far and wide. The government of Otunba Gbenga Daniel decided to equip all major water works in the state with independent power supply stations dedicated to each water plant. Structures to house the power plants were constructed and the low pour fuel power plants to be housed in the structures were imported with Ogun State people trained to man them. His administration did not finish the project before leaving office. The idea was dropped by the immediate past administration in the state leaving the water facilities to continue to struggle with power problem till date.

If the last administration had continued in the might that Otunba Gbenga Daniel left in Ogun State water sector, both rural and urban water sector especially his independent power supply idea, hiccups that the present administration inherited would not have happened, corridors of the state that were unreachable would by now be enjoying regular water supply as a result of water pipe network expansion and the state water agency would by now be raking in enough revenue to cover its expenses if not more.

Lack continuity is the major factor behind the the level that potable water provision in the state has remained.

SOLUTIONS

A return to the independent power plant idea for major water schemes and their booster stations to ensure pressure boosting continuous pumping of functioning water works.

Repair of wears and tears from eight years of almost total neglect: The administration of Prince Dapo Abiodun has made moves in this direction with the resuscitation of Abeokuta Main Water Scheme and water schemes in 14 other towns across Ogun State but more needs to be done.

Water pipeline extension work should be done with priority for communities that are viable in terms of revenue.

Immediate return on investment will keep the expansion work going till all communities feel the presence of government in the area of water provision.

Development of water supply master plan based on modern day reality and future projections.

Consideration of Public Private Partnership involvement in water supply with focus on Build Operate and Transfer especially for development pressure zones of Lagos-Ogun border areas.

Strong government backing for the state water agency to deal with water thieves and vandals.

Adequate funding for the state water agency for day today running of water facilities throughout the state.

Reorientation of the end users, the citizenry from seeing water from the taps as free gift of nature.

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