

**PRESS RELEASE ON MAIDEN SEMINAR of Association of Water well Drilling Rig Owners and Practitioners (AWDROP) held at Kakanfo Inn, Ibadan on 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2013. Topic is “WHY WATER PROJECTS FAIL”**

The need to justify the spending of the government cost-benefit-impact realities of the investment expended on water projects in Nigeria necessitated the seminar organised by the well concerned stakeholders and practitioners in water industry Association of Water Well Drilling Rig owners and practitioners (AWDROP). The seminar began with the first speaker Dr Bangboye, Director of National Water Resource Institute, (NWRI), who was represented by Principal Officer of the institute Engr Olabode. He laid more emphasis on why Borehole drilling and Water construction projects fail, that Borehole failures can result from many causes which can be classified into the following categories: Failures due to lack of expertise or inexperience and poor performance of the driller, poor supervision, characteristics of the aquifer, well users and failure due to poor technological choice. Other factors that can directly or indirectly lead to failure of borehole projects are: Unrealistic costing and pricing, at times pressures are put on companies to undertake works at unrealistically low prices with promises of future and better contracts, unfair contract terms and conditions, third party contract- subcontracting by brief case companies to professional companies as a result of which profit on the project is shared among two companies, abuse of tender process as a result of which contract is awarded to a company based on connection and not on capability. All these can make the contractor compromise the quality of the work and this eventually will lead to failure of the project with time. He recommended the following that.

1. Government at all levels should ensure that competent professionals are selected to carry out drilling works.
2. Government should intensify effort to commence licensing of drillers as enshrined in the code of practice for water well drilling. This will go a long way to check the activities of quacks.
3. Government need to continue to strengthen procurement process and develop the capacity of institutions and individuals involved in procurement and encourage work ethics that promote public good over individual interest.
4. Federal Government should provide support to the drillers association as a forum for discussion with the drillers, professionalizing borehole drilling and increasing the capacity of drillers for cost effective drilling.

5. State Government should identify the manpower and capacity development requirements of their staff for effective supervision of borehole drilling and provide the training, tools and enabling environment required by such staff for effective supervision of borehole contracts.
6. Local Government Authorities should keep inventories of boreholes within their areas and monitor their functionality and support the communities in the maintenance of the facilities.
7. Sustainable groundwater supplies in the future depend on the data and information of the past and present. Drilling organizations as well as government agencies involved in groundwater development should collect and keep data.

Mrs. Tanwa Koya LLM, Executive Secretary of Lagos State Water Regulatory Commission LSWRC said according to Rousseau and Hooijmans, most but not all water projects fail due to factors like: No detailed problem analysis, Unclear or unrealistic set objectives, Non-inclusion of stakeholders in the planning, development and management of water projects, Wrong choice of technology types, No follow-up or monitoring after commissioning, all of these will lead to, absence of financial discipline, Non-accountability on performance of projects, inefficient operations of Installation, Inadequate maintenance, unreliable service delivery, eventual breakdown, financial losses. She stressed on the need for regulation of water activities by providing framework for detailed problem analysis and vets outcomes or solution proposed prior to licensing for adequacy, providing platforms for assessment of projects prior to licensing by reviewing the objectives and its viability, encouraging consultation with stakeholders in the planning, development and management of projects, Classifying of best applicable technology types based on local conditions (social and environmental) Propelling periodic monitoring and assessment of project performance at the different stages of the project life cycle.

The third and the last speaker, Engineer Issah Lawal, the Permanent secretary of Ministry of Water Resources, Oyo state delved much on the surface water project failure. He described failure as being unsuccessful in doing something or as unable to do something or unwilling to do it, or to stop functioning or growing as expected. Engr Issa described project as a task or a planned program of work which needs a large amount of time, effort and planning to complete. He stressed that only 2.7% of the fresh water is available for human use which is being competed for by other activities such as industrial and agricultural purposes.

22.7% of the 2.7% of the freshwater is obtained from the underground water source and moisture. Engr Issa emphasized on the need for the country to harness the water potential in the country as it stand to be the economic fulcrum for the world economies.

Amount of water available for individual in different countries and potential of hydroelectricity is the determinant of their economic power. He described types of failure to be permanent or temporary, other failures include **Specific failure** (Structural, Hydraulic, and Treatment process, Breakdown, Financial and Power).

He described failure of water projects to include and not limited to the following: Lack of data for planning, inappropriate Technology, high turnover of skilled manpower, non-availability of materials and electro-mechanical equipment, lack of Electricity, capital- intensiveness, source of fund/aid, Gov't Policy:- Merger/demerger of FMWR, free water policy of the government, inappropriate Project Implementation Team, foreign/local Consultants and Contractors, in effective Operation and Maintenance framework, indiscipline, political consideration: - Sudden directive to build a scheme in 1985, corruption, lack of Co-ordination between Agencies:- MWT, WCOS, PHCN etc, vandalism, infrastructure ageing. He proffered solution to include the following: Data gathering must be undertaken seriously & necessary for water projects, appropriate technologies be used:- Gravity for pumps & electricity, concrete for metals etc, high skilled manpower be trained, retrained, motivated & retained, manufacturing of pipes, fittings & electromechanical equipment in the country. aqueduct & concrete for pipe, electricity should be provided possibly through PPP provision of fund through PPP & use of locally sourced materials, policy be carefully spelt out & enacted to prevent policy-somersault & be immune from political vagaries, competent, experienced & skilful staff to be members of PIT, foreign and Local Consultants & Contractors be Competent, experienced, skilful, including listening to the operators, whilst foreigners must be knowledgeable of project area, local contractors & consultants must avoid "son -of- soil" syndrome, fund, Spare parts, & skilful staff be readily available for operation and preventive maintenance, discipline staff on instant rules & regulations devoid of political interference, very good plan be in place to supply all urban, semi-urban and rural areas with potable water & for other water projects, enlightenment of citizens, Anti-corruption agencies be made more effective, justice to take due course, agencies to collaborate with each other from conception, planning, construction and operation, while adequate security be provided and culprit punished, proper maintenance, regular rehabilitation, expansion & construction of new schemes.

The National President of the Borehole Drillers Association (AWDROP) Mr. Micheal Ale emphasized the need for the government to be careful in their procurement process because water is a project and not a commodity or a finished product such that price of the projects is determined from the start of procurement or bidding process. He also stressed the need to involve professional in the Conception and implementation process and reduction of intermediary in the contract award process. Important Water projects should henceforth not be advertised in piece and pieces to the public, rather be awarded to competent and professionals to handle as a lump sum projects which should have component like maintenance agreement with the contractor for certain numbers of years. For example, what business is the ministry of education having with water provision services, they should concentrate on the assignment they are saddled with i.e educational development, while the ministry in charge of provision of water is allowed to carry out their operation and service in the water provision to the citizenry through their various commissions.

Water project is not like building project which does not need any immediate investment for operation or maintenance, Water becomes an issue the first time it is place on use as the energy needed to make it work continuously is paid for, also, the repairs of other utility component attached to the project which may go bad as per use, while the operator involved is also paid for e.t.c. He also reiterated that water projects should not be made for political aggravation if that case should come up, such money should be given to individual than using it on proposed water projects which will fail. Actually, many individual water projects at homes don't fail since it is managed directly in which inconsequential cost is expended before this is put to use.

Lastly, cooperation with organized drillers association like AWDROP for technical training of drillers and managerial training of Rig Owners and Practitioners is of utmost importance for economic advancement.

It is highly recommended that pilot studies on reasons why more than 40% of water projects in Nigeria failed be carried out by the practitioners within the association and proffer requisite solution.

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