



Report on the Courtesy Visit by the Ecumenical Water Network Africa to the Oyo State Community and Social Development Agency (OYSCSDA)

Date: 24th October, 2024

Location: OYSCSDA Headquarters, Osuntokun bodija, Ibadan.

Introduction

On 24th of October, 2024, a 17-member delegation from the Ecumenical Water Network Africa (EWN Africa), which included representatives from the Student Christian Movement of Nigeria, the Institute of Church and Society, CRUDAN and Faith for Peace Initiative, paid a courtesy visit to the Oyo State Community and Social Development Agency (OYSCSDA). The visit was scheduled to commemorate Africa Week for Action against Water Privatization and to acknowledge the agency's role in community development, particularly in the provision of water resources to local communities in Oyo State. The courtesy visit was chaired by Honourable Abideen Adeaga, the Chairperson of OYSCSDA. The meeting commenced with introductions from both parties, setting a collaborative tone for discussions.

Purpose of the Visit

The purpose of the visit was presented by the head of the EWN Africa delegation, Very Rev. Kolade Fadunshi. In his remarks, he highlighted the following key objectives of the visit:

- To commemorate Africa Week of Action Against Water Privatization by recognizing OYSCSDA's efforts in providing water to local communities.
- To commend the agency for its significant contributions towards community development in Oyo State.
- To introduce EWN Nigeria's ongoing efforts to oppose the privatization of water resources in Nigeria and advocate for public ownership and management of water services.
- To propose future partnerships between the EWN and OYSCSDA, particularly in the areas of training, advocacy, and community sensitization on water-related issues.

Very Rev. Fadunshi emphasized the need for sustainable water management solutions and concluded by expressing optimism about future collaborations.

The OYSCSDA, represented by the Director of Programs and monitoring, welcomed the delegation and provided an overview of the agency's activities and achievements. In his presentation, he outlined the agency's history and its role in implementing the Community Development Project (CDP) in Oyo State. Key highlights from his address include:

The OYSCSDA was established through the Oyo State Act of Parliament in December 2008 as a mandatory requirement for including Oyo State in the World Bank's Community Development Project. The agency operates under the guidelines of the Project Implementation Manual (PIM) and the Community Implementation Manual (CIM) created in 2008. The initial phase of the project concluded in 2013, but due to outstanding performance, the World Bank extended financing for the project from 2015 to 2020.

One of the agency's flagship initiatives was the Water Replication Project, which commenced in 2009 and concluded in 2021. The project aimed to provide water to underserved communities across Oyo State. Additionally, the OYSCSDA implemented the COVID-19 Action Response and Economic Stimulus (CARES) project, a World Bank intervention that began in January 2021. This project focused on supporting livelihoods at the grassroots level.

The Director reported that the agency had intervened in 155 communities and 51 Group Development Projects (GDP). These projects spanned sectors such as water supply, education, rural electrification, healthcare, and economic empowerment.

The agency utilizes a Community-Driven Development (CDD) approach, which empowers communities to identify their needs and manage project implementation. The OYSCSDA provides technical guidance to ensure that projects meet quality standards. The Director emphasized that this model has delivered remarkable results, with many more communities expressing interest in participating after witnessing the successes of others.

Discussions on Future Partnership

During the meeting, both parties discussed potential areas for collaboration. The EWN Nigeria expressed interest in partnering with the OYSCSDA in future water projects, specifically in:

- Training and Capacity Building: Developing training programs for local communities on water resource management.
- Advocacy and Sensitization: Joint campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of water conservation and the need to keep water resources under public control.
- Sustainable Water Solutions: Partnering in innovative projects that focus on long-term sustainability in water management.

The OYSCSDA expressed its openness to future collaboration, particularly in areas that align with its community-driven development model.

Conclusion

The courtesy visit ended on a positive note, with mutual appreciation and recognition of the vital roles both parties play in improving access to water and enhancing community development in Oyo State. The EWN Africa expressed gratitude to the OYSCSDA for its contributions to community development and water supply, while the OYSCSDA reaffirmed its commitment to working with organizations that share its vision for sustainable development.

Both sides expressed optimism about future partnerships, recognizing the importance of collaboration in addressing water-related challenges and promoting sustainable solutions for local communities.