

Lokoja Urban Water Supply as a Basic Service Programme: A Critical Appraisal of Achievements and Failures, 1991-2011

ALIMENTATION D'EAU DE LOKOJA EN MILIEU URBAIN COMME UN PROGRAMME DE SERVICE DE BASE: UNE CRITIQUE EVALUATION DE 1991-2011 CONCERNANT DES RELATIONS ET DES ECHECS

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Abstract

On the 27th August, 1991, through a Presidential announcement, Lokoja became the capital of Kogi state, Nigeria. Prior to this time, it was a Local Government Headquarters. Due to the sudden transformation to a state capital, and coupled with serious neglect of water supply infrastructures, Lokoja immediately started to experience unprecedented water supply problems. This article examines the conditions of water supply infrastructures, population growth vis-à-vis water supply and demand in Lokoja before 1991, and up to 2011. In addition, the article appraised what successive governments in Kogi state had done to ameliorate the water crises and noted with concern that, its achievement had been negligible and negligent. The article concludes that, for sustainability of the giant strides made in the water sector between 2008 and 2011, both the government and the consumers should change their attitude in favour of “waterwise” and “green economy” approaches.

Key words: Urban population growth; Water supply and demand; Water supply infrastructures; Water supply targets; Water crisis; Waterwise; Green economy

Résumé

Le 27 août 1991, par une annonce présidentielle, Lokoja devint la capitale de l'Etat de Kogi, au Nigéria. Avant cette époque, il était un quartier général de l'administration locale. En raison de la transformation soudaine d'une

capitale de l'Etat, et couplé à une négligence grave des infrastructures d'approvisionnement en eau, a immédiatement commencé à Lokoja expérience sans précédent des problèmes d'approvisionnement en eau. Cet article examine les conditions des infrastructures d'approvisionnement en eau, la croissance de la population l'approvisionnement en eau vis-à-vis et la demande dans Lokoja avant 1991, et jusqu'en 2011. En outre, l'article évalué ce que les gouvernements successifs de l'Etat de Kogi avait fait pour améliorer les crises de l'eau et a noté avec préoccupation que, sa réalisation avait été négligeable et la négligence. L'article conclut que, pour la durabilité du fait des pas de géant dans le secteur de leau entre 2008 et 2011, le gouvernement et les consommateurs doivent changer leur attitude en faveur du “Econeau” et les approches de “l'économie verte”.

Mots clés: La croissance démographique urbaine; L'approvisionnement en eau et de la demande; Les infrastructures d'approvisionnement en eau; Les cibles d'approvisionnement en eau; La crise de l'eau; Le Waterwise; L'économie verte

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INTRODUCTION

Kogi state is one of the states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It was created on the 27th of August, 1991 by the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida (Rtd) along with other states such as Delta, Yobe, Jigawa, Taraba, Osun, Kebbi and Abia. Geographically, it is located within the heart of Nigeria, or what is historically referred to as the Middle Belt of the country, but described

in a new political lexicon in the country as the North Central geo-political zone (Omotola, 2008). Lokoja, the capital of Kogi state is located on the confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue, on Latitude 6° 44' North and Longitude 7° 44' East. Its climate is tropical with two main seasons. The wet season is between April and September of every year, and the dry season is between October and March of the following year.

Lokoja, just like many other towns in Nigeria occupies a nerve centre position in Nigeria's history. For instance, As far back as 1890, a group of twelve Missionaries known as the Sudan Party had arrived Lokoja, and Lord Frederick Lugard administered Nigeria from Lokoja as it was once the headquarters of the colonial government (Gbadamosi & Ajayi, 1980). In addition, apart from its geo-climatologically position which attracted many adventurers, missionaries, european merchants and colonialists in the pre-colonial era, two of the Nigeria's largest body of water- Rivers Niger and Benue have their confluence at Lokoja (Gbadamosi and Ajayi, 1980).

On the basis of the above descriptions, historically therefore, Lokoja is an ancient town, and in terms of its geo-climatological condition, it a town that is blessed with abundant water resources. However, even though Lokoja possesses all of the above advantages, as a result of serious neglect right from the colonial days up to 1991, commensurate urban infrastructural facilities such as housing, water and electricity were not available. To be specific, the condition of urban infrastructures in Lokoja prior to 1991 could be described as grossly inadequate. In view of the above, it is no wonder that, many of its residents succumbs to the view that, despite the natural advantage of Lokoja as the confluence of rivers Niger and Benue, the lack of potable water supply situation accurately rhymes with an anonymous sailor's distress statement which was quoted by Abdullahi (1981) as, 'water, water everywhere, but not a single drop to drink'. Similarly, the lack of potable water supply situation in Nigeria generally, and particularly in most of the new states including Kogi state, that were created in 1991 was also echoed by Oladunni (1996) when she observed, '... good drinking water, which is a basic necessity for human life is a scarce commodity in the country... owing to inadequate coordination in the provision of water...'

When in 1991, as a result of the massive state creation that made Lokoja the state capital of Kogi state, the existing social and physical infrastructures of Lokoja and other major towns in Kogi state such as Okene, Ajaokuta, Kabba, Kotonkarfe, Anyigba, Idah, and Ankpa, already in poor conditions began to experience unprecedented pressures. The specific implication for Lokoja was that, its urban infrastructural facilities which was originally planned to take care of the basic requirements of the population of a Local Government Headquarters were used for the population of a state capital. In order to co-ordinate water supply for Lokoja metropolis and the

rest of Kogi, the Kogi state government established a Public Utility Corporation called the Kogi State Water Board (KGSWB). Thus, apart from the supply of water via its own water supply scheme that are located along Marine Road, the KGSWB is also responsible for the co-ordination of the activities of water supply functions of international and state government bodies such as United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Kogi State Agricultural Development Programme (KGDP), State Ministry of Water Resources (KGSWWR), State Ministry of Agriculture (KGSMA) among others (KGSB, 1995).

The Concern of this article is that, despite the abundance of water resources in Lokoja, being a confluence town of two large bodies of water, the expected domestic and commercial water supply needs of the people is far from being met. Furthermore, it is about twenty years since Lokoja assumed the status of a state capital, and yet, not much has been done to improve the capability of its water supply infrastructures. In addition, the worry of this article is that, although Nigeria is a member of the United Nations (UN), it is expected that, the 'International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD)' programme co-ordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which set a target to provide potable water and sanitation to the entire world regardless of their place of abode by the year 1990 (WHO, 1980) has not started yielding significant impact on the Lokoja residents. To be more specific, when the majority of the United Nations members found the above approach to potable water supply cumbersome to achieve, it came out with a new focus of water for all rather than the year 1990, but water for all by the year 2000 (WHO, 1980). In spite of the ten years extension, the modified approach to potable water supply by the United Nations expired about eleven years ago, the big question is, what has the Kogi state government done towards improving water supply infrastructures in Lokoja to commensurate with its change in status, and indeed the whole of Kogi state in order to meet up the target set by the United Nations Organisation? This article is an attempt to answer this question among others.

1. THE CONDITION OF WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURES IN LOKOJA BEFORE 1991

When Kogi state was created in 1991, the Lokoja water supply scheme was inherited by Kogi state as part of the asset shared with Kwara state. The Lokoja water supply scheme was constructed between 1950 and 1956, and river Niger has been its main source of water supply. As at 1991, the condition of the water supply scheme and the water treatment plant in particular was already

in bad shape due to long period of exploration. Some parts of the equipments of the scheme were completely out of operation and many others parts were not in good condition. Even then, there was a package of the water supply scheme that was not used at all due to incomplete parts (KGSG, 1995). Furthermore, the capacity of the water supply scheme and “quality of the water” that was pumped did not in any way get near to meet the requirements set by the World Health Organisation for the supply of potable water throughout the year. This was dangerous as it caused epidemic and water born diseases, especially due to sudden increase in the population of Lokoja. Thus, because of the very bad condition of the water treatment equipments, it could only utilise 20 percent of its capacity prior to 1991 (KGSG, 1995).

Given the poor condition of the Lokoja water scheme, in order to meet the water supply requirement, expectedly, the water treatment equipments should have prior to 1991 been refurbished and replaced. This could have ensured potable water supply throughout the year, and also, a considerable increase of capacity could have been reached before the creation of Kogi state in 1991. In response to the low capacity of the scheme, the Kwara State Government identified contracted the refurbishment of the Lokoja water supply scheme to Vodokonal Project (Nig) Ltd (KWSG, 1991). The refurbishment started in April, 1991, but due to the inability of the Kwara State Government to make fund available to the contractor on time on one hand, and the inability of the contractor on the other hand to immediately mobilise equipments to site, the refurbishment of the Lokoja water supply scheme could not progress according to contract agreement, and was thus caught up with the state creation in 1991.

As a result of the state creation, some areas of Kwara state, which geo-politically now consists of the Kogi Central and Kogi West Senatorial Districts were excised and merged with some areas of Benue state, which geo-politically is today the Kogi East Senatorial District to form Kogi state. Given that Lokoja the new state capital was originally in Kwara state, the contract award for the refurbishment of the Lokoja water supply scheme to Vodokonal Project (Nig) Ltd in which no tangible progress was made prior to August, 1991 was completely abandoned (KGSG, 1995). From the foregoing, the low capacity of the Lokoja water supply scheme combined with population growth and urbanisation therefore worsened the Lokoja water crisis.

2. LOKOJA URBAN POPULATION GROWTH, WATER SUPPLY AND DEMAND FORM 1991

Consequent on the restructuring of the internal map of Nigeria in 1991, Lokoja soon began to experience tremendous changes in all facets of human activities. For

example, as a result of high rate of migration to Lokoja, there has been a rapid population growth and urbanisation. To be more specific, the population of Lokoja sharply increased by about 60% more than what was projected in the Lokoja Master Plan for the year 1995. For instance, according to the survey conducted by the Department of Lands and Survey and reported in the Lokoja Master Plan, the population of Lokoja was to increase by only 5% in 1995, and from the year 2000 up to 2020 there shall be only 2.5% population increase in Lokoja (KGSG, 1992).

The projected Lokoja population growth for the period up to the year 2020 registered in the Lokoja Master Plan is shown in following figure table.

Table 1
Projected Population Growth of Lokoja 1991-2020

Year	Population of Lokoja as Local Government HQ (, 000)	Projection of Lokoja population as State Capital (, 000)
1991	96,423	106,423
1995	117,202	187,200
2000	149,583	237,920
2020	237,920	391,498

Source: Lokoja Master Plan, 1992

On the basis of the data in the figure table 1 above, it is very clear that the population of Lokoja as a Local Government Headquarters was only 96,423 as at 1991. But the population of the same town astronomically jumped to 106,423 as soon as it became the state capital of Kogi state. At this stage, it should be born in mind that, despite the rate of urbanisation in Lokoja, not much was done by the government to increase the capacity of its water supply infrastructures. The implication of the sudden surge in the population growth of Lokoja on its existing water infrastructures can therefore be imagined. The figure table 2 below summarises the effects of urbanisation on the Lokoja water supply infrastructures and the extended water crisis.

Table 2
Projected Lokoja Water Demand, 1991-2020

Year	Population (, 000)	Projected Water Demand as Local Govt HQ Max. G/P/D.	Projected Water Demand as State Capital Max. Daily G/P/D
1991	106,423	1,460,000	1,800,000
1995	187,200	1,620,000	3,510,000
2000	237,920	1,620,000	4,480,000
2020	391,498	23,200,000	105,100,000

Source: Lokoja Master Plan, 1992

A close analysis of the figure table 2 above shows that, with the transformation of Lokoja from a Local Government Headquarters to a state capital, within the same year, its population suddenly surged from 96,423 to 106,423. Similarly, within the same period, the projected daily maximum water demand that was 1,460, 000 gallons

per day increased rapidly to 1,800,000 gallons per day. Furthermore, based on statistics that was obtained from the Kogi State Water Board, the actual volume of water supplied to Lokoja in the periods 1991-1996 was 70,000 gallons per day, where as, the actual demand was 2 million gallons per day (KGSG, 1996). On the basis of the actual water supplied and demanded in these periods, there is no doubt that, water supply in Lokoja metropolis was grossly inadequate. In order to reduce pressure on its own facilities, the Kogi State Water Board started to ration supply of water to some parts of Lokoja once a week. For instance, Karaworo was getting its own supply of water every Sunday, while cemetery, Stadium and New Layout areas were getting their own supply of water on Mondays.

From the foregoing, there is no doubt that, the Lokoja residents started to feel the impact of acute water shortages. Due to this inadequacy, residents of Lokoja resorted to alternatives means of getting water for domestic and commercial use. The alternative sources of water included, fetching water from the River Niger, purchasing water from water hawkers popularly known as 'Mai Ruwa', collecting water from heavily polluted ponds or roadside ditches and streams (Moforunsho 1992). There is no doubt that collecting water from these alternatives sources are limited both economically and health wise. For instance, in the case of those that purchased water from the Mai Ruwas, the prices they charged were usually very high, hence, only small quantities could be bought. To make matters worse, the wholesomeness of such water is questionable as one could not vouch for the sources. The concern here is that, despite the astronomical increase in the population as well as water demand, it was the same old dilapidated Lokoja water scheme that was supplying water. This negative development should be worrying for any government that is concerned about the welfare of its own citizens.

3. GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO IMPROVING WATER SUPPLY CRISIS IN LOKOJA 1991-1996

On the basis of the analysis so far, there is no doubt that, the Lokoja water supply facilities that Kogi state inherited from Kwara state were inadequate to provide enough potable water supply to meet the increasing domestic and commercial water demand of Lokoja metropolis. This is more so that, shortly before and after the creation of Kogi state in 1991, Lokoja had already started to experience gross shortage of water supply and the situation was not immediately addressed. Some of the reasons the management of the Kogi State Water Board gave for the gross shortage of water in Lokoja before it became the capital of Kogi state included first, the water supply scheme were old and most of its worn out parts were not

replaced, and secondly, there was no much commitment on the part of government to rehabilitate it (KGSG, 1996).

In spite of the acknowledged poor condition of the Lokoja urban water supply scheme, the first Military Administrator, Colonel Danladi Zakari focused his priority at securing accommodations for the civil servants of both the Federal and State Governments that were newly deployed from Kwara and Benue states, asset sharing between Kogi and Kwara states, and finally, reconstitution of the state bureaucracies. Throughout the tenure of Col. Danladi Zakari in the state, the Lokoja water crisis was only mentioned in the budget, but not much was done to actually improve it to accommodate the increasing water demand of the Lokoja urban residents.

At the end of the long and protracted transition to civil rule embarked upon by the successive military governments in Nigeria, and the first partisan election after almost nine years, Prince Abubakar Audu was elected the first Executive Governor of Kogi state in 1992. The government of Prince Abubakar Audu just like its military predecessor gave priority to the physical development of Lokoja at the expense of water supply. For instance, in no time, he awarded the contract for the construction of phases 1 & 2 housing estates, reconstruction of the Lugard House which later became the Kogi State Government House, renovation of abandoned colonial structures and buildings, Kogi State Government Secretariat Complex, establishment of the Kogi State Polytechnic, Construction of Lokoja township roads and the building of flashy roundabouts etc. In the area of water supply, the government of Prince Abubakar Audu could only do skeletal renovation of the water supply scheme, but at the same time extended the pipeline networks. However, as a result of additional networking of the pipelines, without a commensurate increase in the capacity of the water supply scheme to treat and pump more water, the extension of water pipelines to the newly constructed government quarters and offices, rather worsened the already bad water supply situation in Lokoja.

Due to military coup, the civilian administration of Prince Abubakar Audu was replaced with a Military regime, and Colonel Paul Omeruoh became the Military Governor of Kogi state. On assumption of duty, Colonel Omeruoh noted with concern the poor conditions of the Lokoja water supply scheme, and thus attempted to address the situation straight away. To this end, he inaugurated a Technical Committee to work out modalities to implement a water programme which later was referred to as the "Greater Lokoja Water Supply Project" in 1995. The Technical Committee submitted its report on time, but the report of the Committee did not go beyond mere paper work. Over all, in the period 1991 to 1996, according to the Kogi State Water Board, an average coverage of on 38 percent was achieved in water supply for Lokoja (KGSG, 1996).

4. GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO IMPROVING WATER SUPPLY CRISIS IN LOKOJA, 1996-2011

The military regime of Colonel B. L. Afakirya commenced governance in Kogi state in August, 1996. During his maiden address, he made his intention known to the people of Kogi state that, he was going to give priority attention to those sectors of the economy that provide essential services to the people. He specifically mentioned that, water supply to the people of Kogi and Lokoja in particular would be given the needed attention. In order to actualise his ambition, the regime of Colonel Afakirya quickly awarded contract for the replacement of some worn out spare parts of the Lokoja water supply scheme. The immediate result of Afakirya's attempts was that, the Kogi State Water Board was able to increase its volume of water supply to the residents of Lokoja. Although the water supply situation in Lokoja had improved, Colonel Afakirya realised that the effort of the Kogi state government alone would not be able meet the water demand of the people. To this end, he liaised with the UNICEF and UNDP to assist provide hand pump bore hole to parts of Lokoja that include, Karaworo, Niger-Barracks, Kabawa, Angwa Mansara, Felele, Kogi State Secretariat Complex, Adankolo, Workers Village and Lokongoma phase 1 and Lokongoma village where the government observed the Kogi State Water Board could not easily service (KGSG, 1996).

Given the commitment of the Kogi state government under Colonel Afakirya to improving the water supply infrastructures in Lokoja, the government promptly made available its own counterpart funds, and the International Agencies on their own part were quick to construct many water supply points in Lokoja. For instance, UNICEF provided 30 water supply points, while UNDP provided 25 water supply points in Lokoja. These water supply points were executed in the form of bore-holes to complement the water supply from the Lokoja main water scheme. Considering the short span of time that Colonel Afakirya was able to expand on the water supply in Lokoja, there is no doubt his regime was able to increase the amount of "safe water" supply to Lokoja residents. However, the efforts of Afakirya's regime could not meet the water supply demand of Lokoja residents. Over all, the government of Kogi state under Colonel Afakirya increased the water supply coverage of Lokoja metropolis from 38% to 44% (KGSG, 1996).

Colonel Augustine Aniebo took over the mantle of leadership from Colonel Afakirya in 1998. During his maiden speech, he categorically informed the people of the state that his mission to Kogi state was purely a military assignment, and as such, the interest of his regime was to ensure security and a peaceful transition from military regime to civilian administration. Thus, in order to achieve his mission, Colonel Aniebo focused his

attention mainly on the conduct of a peaceful transition from military government to civilian administration. Other than this, the only physical development of Colonel Aniebo executed was the construction of a government quarters which he named after himself. Throughout his military posting to Kogi state, water supply to Lokoja was never given its desired attention except for skeletal replacements of worn out water treatment spare parts. To make matters worse, some of the boreholes that were constructed during the regime of Colonel Afakirya had started to break down, and yet the regime of Colonel Aniebo could not get them renovated. Hence, during the regime of Col. Aniebo, the water supply coverage for Lokoja fell from 44% to 42% (KGSG, 1996).

Col. Augustine Aniebo in keeping within the military assignment that brought him to Kogi state handed over the mantle of leadership to Prince Abubakar Audu on the 29th May, 1999 after a successful democratic election. On assumption of office, and in the course of his maiden address to the people of the state, Prince Abubakar Audu, in his usual style of governance gave priority to other aspects of physical development of Lokoja at the expense of water supply. For instance, he set up a technical committee for the establishment of State University, which he later named after himself. As far as water supply was concerned, the government of Prince Abubakar Audu managed to award contract for the rehabilitation of the existing Lokoja water supply scheme. Not much was done, even though the population of Lokoja was growing at astronomical rate. After the 2003 general election, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris was elected the Governor of Kogi state. Throughout his first term in office, Ibrahim Idris allowed non-state actors to run the machinery of the state as he could not even constitute the State Executive Council. A few of the achievements of Ibrahim Idris during his first term in office include, the renaming of the State University, roads and streets that the former Governor, Prince Abubakar named after himself, and the award of contract for the construction of Abejukolo-Ankpa road and a few other physical projects. Other than these, the Lokoja and urban water supply issues were not given the desired priority.

During the 2007 electioneering campaign, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris made a commitment to address the Lokoja water crisis. To this end, on assumption of office on 29th May, 2007, he re-visited the report submitted by the Technical Committee on the "Greater Lokoja Water Supply Project", originally initiated by Colonel Paul Omeruoh in 1995. In April 2008, the Greater Lokoja Water Supply Project was after 13 years finally contracted to Chinese GeoConstruction Company (CGCC). The total cost of the contract for the construction of the 10 million gallons per day (GPD) water scheme was N10 billion (\$63m), and the contract agreement was formally signed on 21st March, 2009. Embedded in the contract agreement are that, the water project should be completed

within 24 months. In addition, the water project should have expandable capacity to generate up to 10 million gallons of water per day. Furthermore, the project should complement the existing water works and to raise the level of water supplies to Lokoja and its environs from the 2 million gallons per day to 12 million gallons per day. That is, the project should be connected to all the existing water structures to ensure the effective distribution from the new waterworks to parts of Lokoja and the adjoining towns of Ganaja, Zango, Kabba, Obajana and Gadumo. Finally, engineers and technicians of the Ministry of Water Resources should be trained to operate and carry out regular maintenance of the waterworks.

On the occasion of the formal signing of the contract for the Lokoja water project, the Governor of the state, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris said:

When the Greater Lokoja Water Project is completed and hand-over to the State government, there is no doubt that the scarcity of water in Lokoja metropolis and its environs will become a thing of the past. Everybody is aware of the untold hardship the people of Lokoja and its environs have suffered in the past and so with the dogged determination of the present administration to confront this Monster headlong, smiles will soon come to faces of the people (Observer, 2009)

On the occasion of the contract signing ceremony, the Permanent Secretary of the Kogi State Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development, Mr. Emmanuel B. Bello also provided the detailed technical elements of the water supply project to comprise the construction of the following units:

- (a) An intake on the river Niger capable of producing 10mgd (45million, liters (Per day)
- (b) An Aerator (10mgd capacity)
- (c) Clarifiers (Sedimentation tanks) 3 Nos. of 10mgd capacity and provisions for expansion)
- (d) Rapid Gravity filters (10mgd)
- (e) Clear Water tanks
- (f) Dosing system for alum, lime chlorine and coagulant aids.
- (g) Power station for the running of all the electro mechanical equipment.
- (h) Intake pumps, high lift pumps, booster pumps (3 No. booster stations), the intake and high lift pumps capable of delivering 10mgd and provisions for future expansion.
- (i) 0.8m diameter DI rising main to tank A at Ganaja function and 0.5m diameter Dr rising main from Ganaja functions (tank A) to tank B on Mount Patti road.
- (j) 2.2 million gallon (9.9m liters) storage tank at Ganaja/Barrack road junction designated as tank A.
- (k) 0.6million storage tank on mount Patti road designated as tank B
- (l) Distribution network to cover the Lokoja metropolis up to the Barracks, Felele, Sarkin Noma and the main settlement including the GRA.
- (m) Construction of 3No. Booster stations (Observer,

2009)

On 23rd May, 2011, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development, Emmanuel E. Bello, who was quoted in the Water Technology News (2011), formally announced the completion of work on the N10 billion (\$63m) Greater Lokoja Water Project. According to him,

it is to be commissioned in June 2011, test-run of the new water scheme is in progress ... the completion of the new water project is a big relief as it would put an end to the perennial water shortage in the city... a committee has been set up to work out affordable water rates for all categories of users, stressing that no government the world over could provide water free of charge... payment of water rates was to guarantee sustainability and durability of the project in line with the agreement reached with the World Bank that part-financed the water project.

In the course of the announcement, Mr. Emmanuel E. Bello also said, the Kogi state government had also completed 53 other major Water Projects across the 3 Senatorial Districts of Kogi State, and 7 others are on-going (The Observer, 2011).

From the foregoing, it thus appears that, after several years of water crises in Lokoja metropolis and its immediate environs, the drought appears to be truly over. The interesting aspect of it is that, there is provision for its expansion in the future. All said and done, we wish to note however that, even though this gigantic Greater Lokoja Water Project have expandable capacity to ameliorate the domestic and commercial water needs of the Lokoja residents, in addition to the agreement the Kogi state government has reached with the Chinese GeoConstruction Company (CGCC), there is a need for further collaborative agreement between Kogi State government and some international bodies in the areas of manpower training. Finally, there is the need to immediately install pay as you use meters. The manpower training will enhance the performance of the staff while the electronic meters will enable the board to collect its revenue with ease.

CONCLUSION

Despite availability abundant water resources in Lokoja, being a confluence town where two of Nigeria's largest rivers meet, obsolete and low capacity water infrastructures, sudden change in its status from a Local Government Headquarters to a state capital, and neglect on the part of government to harness the water resource all combined to aggravate water supply crisis in Lokoja metropolis. This article critically analysed what the successive governments in Kogi state had done towards improving water supply infrastructures towards ameliorating water crisis between 1991 and 2011. Our analysis reveals that, although the Kogi State Government through a variety of programmes was involved in the provision of potable water to Lokoja residents, its attempts

to solving the water crisis was up to 2008 negligible and negligent.

While government's effort at completing the Greater Lokoja Water Project after 20 years of Lokoja becoming a state capital is commendable, we are of the opinion that, in order to ensure sustainability of the Greater Lokoja Water Project, it is important that the government and the consumers should both change their attitudes in favour of "waterwise" and "green economy approaches. That is to say, government on its own part should immediately begin to address the issues and challenges of Reducing Non-Revenue Water (RNRW) by training the personnel of the Kogi State Water Board who eventually, will take over the coordination of the project on how to improve the efficiency of water utilities and reducing water losses. This is priority training as most urban areas that include Lokoja are beginning to experience decrease in their water sources, and at the same time, a rapidly increasing urban population. On the other hand, the consumers should be prepared to treat water with dignity. Finally, both the Kogi State Water Board and the consumers should incorporate the challenges of climate change by embarking on strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation such as, resource efficiency and the green economy. On this note, we conclude that, water is a basic and essential service; therefore, government should consider its provision a responsibility, and the consumers should consider it a guarantee of life, and also treat it with dignity.

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