



Joycee Awojoodu- Miss Enugu 2008

Assignment # 4

Adu Achi

Dear MNIA Inc:

Enugu state, located in the southeastern region of Nigeria is home to The Oji River Power Station which used to supply electricity to all of Eastern Nigeria. With the deregulation of electricity generation in Nigeria, and the proposed privatization of the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), the State Government helped to assist private investors to negotiate the take over and reactivation of the Oji Power Station. Despite the relative stability of electricity in Enugu, some villages still struggle to have running water and electricity to complete daily tasks.

Nigeria has considerable populations without basic access to safe drinking water, with over 50% of the country lacking coverage. The village of Adu Achi falls under the Oji River Local Government Area in which the predominant language is Igbo. Enugu State currently seeks to develop a gravity-fed, distribution system employing groundwater from the Ajali sandstone aquifer. The village and surrounding areas consist of approximately 10,000 people currently relying upon contaminated surface water to supply their households on a daily basis. Adu Achi is one of the areas in which manufacturing activities are present along with farming, trading and services. While farming is something they take comfort in, the people in this village are eager to develop a water management program and a distribution

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system that will allow for an ease of life. Currently, children in Adu Achi make as many as six trips each day to the distant (2 miles away) and contaminated stream to collect water for their families. The main barriers to developing sustainable water provisions for the region have been the lack of electricity, the depth of the aquifer and informal government structures within the community, and economic support. The people of Adu Achi have always been able to enjoy the crops they cultivate as a result of farming. Nevertheless, the terrible condition of the water can easily affect what they currently deem to be an amenity.

While one may look at the problem of clean water and lack of electricity as separate issues, they actually cause a domino effect. Under the present situation in many of the villages in Nigeria, the people left to suffer the consequence the most are the village women who have no other alternative than to vegetate in their homes. Many of these women are really strong and industrious. They go any length to earn money to get at least their male children get the basic education in order to escape the calamity of the village life. The female children who are unlucky to get educated join the vicious circle of poverty in the village.

This domino effect is enough for any person to say *“I want to make a difference for my people.”* Anytime I read about the state of villages in Nigeria, I feel compelled to do something to lessen the terrible effect of these serious problems. I have worked for an energy company for over a year now and I know the



importance of electricity. Nigeria is one of the lucky countries that has gone through deregulation; which permits for competition and cheaper electricity prices. Even though this is the case, there still seems to be a major issue. Utilizing my resources at work and my studies in school I could come up with a project that researches the benefit of the Oji River in this territory and how we can utilize its presence to create a lasting positive effect for the people.

I am currently volunteering with the Nigerian Nurses Association in America and I chose a specific program to work with. The nature of the program is to restore health care clinics in the villages that are affected due to the lack of electricity and clean running water. Adu Achi surely falls into this category. My intention is to fundraise and hopefully in the near future visit various villages in Nigeria to help in any capacity possible. I desire to partner with organizations in Nigeria and the United States so that as a working unit we can make the lives of our people back home better. Research will be vital in a project like this one. Things such as how do we effectively utilize the Oji River? How do we cause the benefits of deregulation to take its course? How do we fix transmission lines and congestion which contributes to the lack of electricity? With my experience in the energy industry as well as my drive to see a better life for my brothers and sisters residing in Nigeria; I am confident that I and others can create change.

The logo for Miss Nigeria in America features the words "Miss Nigeria" in a large, elegant, black cursive script. Below "Nigeria" is a small crown icon. Underneath the cursive text, the words "IN AMERICA" are written in a smaller, black, all-caps serif font.

I am sure that the citizens residing in the villages would put in their part to create a better live for themselves. They would be overjoyed to see that people would bring resources to help them and as a result they would see any assistance as an answer to their prayers. Fixing problems like lack of electricity and running water will allow many young girls to get an education when they never thought that would be possible. Most people would agree that an education is essential for the betterment and advancement of our people. At the end of the day we would rely heavily on the generosity of the public in order to be able to execute any projects we initiate. I would lead a fundraising cause to help bring improvement to all of the issues mentioned above.