

PRESS RELEASE

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Kaduna State signs Maintenance contract for its 1.7MW Solar project, expands program to hospitals, schools and water facilities in partnership with EU/UK DFID

In 2016, the Kaduna State Government, as part of its strategic and robust energy development agenda, began installation of a total of 1.7MW of Solar Systems in Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs) across Kaduna. In partnership with the UK Department for International Development (DFID), a total of 34 primary healthcare centers in 21 Local Government Areas have now received these solar systems. As part of the agreement, UK DFID committed funding for the installation while KDSG committed to establishing and funding the Operation and Maintenance of the systems.

In fulfilment of this commitment, the Kaduna State Government today signed a 1-yr operation and maintenance contract with MP Infrastructure Limited, a solar and infrastructure company. Speaking at the signing, the Executive Secretary of the State's Primary Healthcare Development Agency, Dr. Hadiza Balarabe said, "at its initiation, this project was the first of its kind in Northern Nigeria ensuring that the selected healthcare centers, serving over 180,000 patients annually, can be supplied all the power they need to provide quality healthcare round the clock in an environmentally friendly manner. On average, almost 6,000 babies are delivered every year across these 34 Primary Healthcare Centers – 44% at night"

Solar systems are essential at night in rural Primary Healthcare Centers where there is no supply of grid electricity. In the absence of grid electricity, PHC staff have little choice but to deliver babies that come at night under candlelight. In the 34 selected PHCs, the solar systems are helping to make night-time deliveries safer. The solar systems have also eradicated the need for noisy

generators; thereby reducing carbon emissions and creating a more serene environment for patients. It is for these reasons that the significance of proper maintenance cannot be overstated. If properly maintained, solar systems can last for over 20 years.

In her statement, Dr. Hadiza Balarabe further said, “the Operation and Maintenance Plan will feature remote monitoring, a fault alert messaging service, training and a 24hr maximum response time for system failures.”

Continuing, the ES said “by establishing an O&M plan for the solar systems, this administration is not only protecting investment in public assets but also ushering in a culture of maintenance for sustained improvement in public service delivery.”

The O&M contract has an option for renewal based on performance and includes training of electrical and civil technicians employed in the state service in each local government impacted. PHC staff, as users of the system, will go through annual sensitization on energy conservation and the proper use of the solar systems.

According to the Senior Special Assistant on Energy to the Governor, Ms. Dolapo Popoola, the Kaduna State Government has secured an additional grant of 10 million Euros from the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS for the scale-up of the Kaduna Solar intervention. This will see the program being expanded to rural general hospitals, public secondary schools, water treatment facilities and more primary healthcare facilities to improve healthcare delivery, education and availability of water in rural communities. The full list of facilities benefiting from these programs can be found on the state’s energy website: www.kdsg.gov.ng/energy, she added.

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