

Regeneration in the Nigerian Urban Built Environment

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ABSTRACT This paper examines the problems and challenges of the Nigeria's urban built environment. Nigeria's built environment is in the state of chaos; as a result of physical deterioration and infrastructures decadence. The decay has resulted in the creation of slums and blights in our urban centers. The paper traces the factors responsible for these, to that: associated with the rapid urbanization; rural-urban migration, which is exerting undue pressure on the available facilities in the urban centers; inadequate and insufficient housing to meet demand and ineffective urban housekeeping. The paper asserts that to avert further decay; there is an urgent need for effective action along a broad front; through urban regeneration of the built environment. Such regeneration should focus on slum eradication and families from them must have decent housing at an affordable cost. Blights must be removed and further spread prevented. The paper posits that our urban centers should be a conducive, harmonious, and pleasing living environment for the citizenry. Therefore, there is the need: to stimulate an effective rural development programme; by the provision of basic infrastructures, amenities and services in the rural areas. These would encourage industrialization of the rural areas; and consequently, serve as growth poles and springboards for the redistribution of population and traffic patterns; for sustainable balance development. The paper concludes that Nigeria can still achieve sustainable human settlement, provided we are ready to adopt and apply the norms and principles of good urban housekeeping.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid urbanization in many developing countries over the past half-century seems to have been accompanied by excessively high level of concentration of urban population in very large cities.

Urbanization is taking place at different speeds in different continents. In Africa and Asia the proportion of city dwellers rose from 25 percent in 1975 to 35 percent in 1995, and a little more than 37 percent today. It is predicted that the figure will reach 50 percent by the year 2025 (Abudulahi 2003).

Developing countries today face greater urbanization challenges than developed countries. Developed countries urbanized at a comparatively leisurely pace. The United States was 40 percent urbanized in 1930, 70 percent in 1960, and 75 + percent in 1990. This gradual pace is in marked contrast with that in many developing countries. For example, the Republic of Korea was 40 percent urbanized in 1970 and 78 percent urbanized by 1990. What took the United States 90 years to accomplish, took Korea 20 years and Brazil 30 years. (Henderson 2002).

A study by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS-Habitat), in 2001,

stated that nearly half of the Worlds' people are now city dwellers and more than one billion of the worlds' city residents live in inadequate or deficient housing; because of rapid urbanization.

The problem is more felt in Africa, Asia and Latin America where half of the population are either homeless or living in houses which are dangerous to health and an affront to human dignity. Nearly 80% of the urban population lives in slums and squatter settlements without adequate water, lighting, sanitation and waste disposal.

In Nigeria, a joint study by the Lagos State Government and a United Nations group discovered that about 42 towns in Lagos alone could be classified as slums and in dire need of upgrading or regeneration (Atere 2001). Many towns in Nigeria urban centers also need regeneration.

This paper will examine the goals and operations of regeneration in the built environment, the problems, criticisms and achievements in Nigeria. It will also articulate how the built environment could be improved upon or enhanced for sustainable development and living.

PROBLEMS OF NIGERIA URBAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The world urban population continues to

increase very rapidly as reflected in tables 1, 2 and 3 and figures 1 and 2. From the tables and figures, Africa experienced the maximum growth rate of 2.7% during the period and Nigeria experienced 1.1% annual growth rate between 1963 and 1975 and as much as 2.5% between 1975 and 1991. The population continues to increase and rural-urban migration continues in astronomical rates.

The urbanization process in many developing countries particularly Nigeria has not been accompanied with a corresponding supply of adequate housing, basic infrastructures and amenities. This has given birth to the development of informal settlements and slums.

Another problem of our urban centers is that they fit into what some scholars have tried to distinguish as “grown” and “planned” cities (Blumenfeld 1971). The inevitable result of this has been: disorganized congestion, decline, dilapidation, blighted areas and then slums. Another major contributor to the urban decay is negligent urban housekeeping, and irresponsible civic management; which has permitted its spread.

Continuous neglect will mean that: physical decay of urban community will continue or be encouraged; obsolesces (obstruction to full production of housing) will continue to stretch over the built environment with its consequent degeneration to the city.

The deterioration of our urban centers has

been a process, not a willful act that may be corrected on command or presidential fait. Consequent upon the above, there is the urgent need for the regeneration of our cities to standards appropriate to our time. This is also a process, and calls for effective action along broad fronts.

The purpose of urban regeneration is to provide safe and sanitary housing. In essence, the urban regeneration programme will attempt to rebuild rundown areas of cities by: Removal of sore spots or blights affecting surrounding areas; save declining areas and then restore them to sound condition.

EVOLUTION AND GOALS OF URBAN REGENERATION

From the foregoing, it has been established that our built environments are decaying, and that citizens on their own together with public institutions cannot save them. Government must step in and “help” the citizens with urban regeneration, while responsible citizens should collaborate with the government in its effort.

Urban regeneration can be described as a deliberate effort to change the urban environment through planned large-scale adjustment of existing city areas to present and future requirements for urban living and working, (Osuide 2004).

From this description, it is obvious that urban

Table 1: Population of the constituents of the world and their growth rates

Continents	Population in millions					Annual growth rate %
	1955	1965	1975	1985	1990	
Africa	241	303	401.6	553.8	613.3	2.7
America	368	460	561	683.9	755	2
Asia	1,487.00	1,833.00	2,252.30	2,772.60	3,076.20	12.1
Europe	408	445	470	495	506	0.6
Oceania	14.1	17.5	21.3	26	28.7	2
USSR	196	231	254.5	281.1	295.5	1
Total World	2,714.10	3,289.50	3,963.80	4,784.70	5,256.80	1.9

Source: Data From United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1985

Table 2: Nigeria total and urban population growth (1963-1991)

Year	1963	1975	1991*
Total population x 10 ³	55,670	62,930	88,680
Population growth rate (%)	-	1.1	2.5
Urban population 10 ³	971	1,321.50	3,189.60
Urban population as % of total	1.7	2.1	3.6

Source: Data from United Nations Statistical Yearbook

*Quoted from Nigeria Population 1991 Census released in April 1992.

Table 3: Age dependency ratios by state and rural-urban residence

States	Age dependence ratios								
	Young			Old			Overall		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Abia	96.5	77.6	88.9	10.3	4.2	7.9	106.8	8.2	96.8
Adamawa	104.9	84.8	86.9	5.1	2.4	7.4	110	87.2	94.3
Akwa-Ibom	89.1	82.8	102.1	9.7	8.5	4.8	98.8	91.3	106.9
Anambra	81.4	77.3	78.8	7.9	6	6.5	89.4	83.3	85.3
Bauchi	94	91.2	93.4	6	4.2	5.8	100	95.4	99.2
Benue	106.4	94.1	104.5	10.7	4	9.4	117.1	97.9	113.9
Borno	77.7	87.1	81	6.2	3.4	5.2	83.9	90.5	86.2
C/River	99	85.7	95.2	5.4	3.1	4.8	104.4	88.7	110
Delta	90.1	88.2	93.3	9.8	4.5	8.1	100	92.7	101.4
Edo	96.2	85.6	91.1	9.1	5	7.1	105.3	90.5	98.2
Enugu	102	92.5	97.9	7.1	4.2	6.3	109.1	96.7	104.2
Imo	89.1	82.8	97	9.8	8.5	9.3	98.8	91.3	106.3
Jigawa	76	80.2	76.1	6.8	5.4	6.6	82.8	85.6	82.7
Kaduna	96	89.1	120.7	6.3	3.2	6.2	101.8	92.4	126.9
Kano	82.1	83.5	82.5	6.2	5	5.6	88.3	88.2	88.1
Katsina	92	94.3	94.4	5.6	5	5.4	97.5	99.2	99.8
Kebbi	96.4	93.5	95.8	5.7	4.1	5.6	102.1	97.5	101.4
Kogi	99.3	93.5	97.5	10.1	8.4	9.3	109.4	102	106.8
Kwara	90.1	82.8	86.8	11.8	6.5	9.2	101.9	89.2	96
Lagos	80.2	66.5	68.3	5.2	2.3	2.6	85.5	69	70.9
Niger	95.1	83.9	92.1	6.9	3.1	5.9	102	87	98
Ogun	85.6	77.1	81.7	12.7	7.7	10.4	98.4	85	92.1
Ondo	83	79	81.2	7.5	7	7.3	90.2	86	88.5
OSun	88	82.4	84.6	12	9.5	10.3	99.1	91.9	94.9
Oyo	84	77.3	79.3	10.5	6.2	7.5	94.5	83.5	86.8
Plateau	99.1	89.4	96.3	9.2	3.6	7.7	108.3	93	104
Rivers	83.8	78.2	81.8	4.2	3.1	3.7	88	81.2	85.5
Sokoto	86.3	90.8	86.9	5	4	4.8	99.3	94.8	91.7
Taraba	94	90.9	93.4	7.5	4.6	7	101.3	95.8	100.4
Yobe	84	93.1	86.2	6.4	4.4	6.2	89.9	97.5	92.4
Abuja (FCT)	77.5	56.2	70.4	5.5	1.2	4.2	83	57.4	74.6
Nigeria	90.4	90.9	86.8	7.3	4.7	6.4	97.6	88.6	93.2

Source: Nation Population committee

Note: 1. Young dependency ratio = % of population aged 0 – 14 / % of population aged 15 – 64 x 100

2. Old Dependency ratio = % of population aged 65 and over / % of population aged 15 – 64 x 100

3. Overall dependency ratio = Young dependency ratio + Old dependency ratio

regeneration and urban renewal mean the same thing and serve the same purpose; of providing safe and sanitary housing for the people.

Urban renewal was launched in 1949 with the blessings of Democrats, and Republicans, Liberals and conservatives, big labour and big businessmen. (Wilson 1963). It emerged out of the public housing slum clearance movement and became known as urban redevelopment as expressed in the 1949 Act. The Act was aimed at providing better housing through the spot removal of residential slums.

Yet unlike the slum clearance formula that replaces each demolished structure with 9 new low-cost units, there was no necessary link in the redevelopment programme between dwelling torn down and the units that went up in their place. (Kayes 1973).

The initial programme was bitterly criticized. In response to the deficiencies of the 1949 Act, amendments were offered in 1954 which transformed the programme from one aimed at bulldozing residential slums to one concerned with conserving and rehabilitating the existing stock within the broad framework of the workable programme.

“Urban redevelopment” became “urban renewal”. The terms redevelopment and renewal are technically widely separated according to Glazer (1965). Redevelopment means total clearance of an area and refers to treatment made possible by 1949 Housing Act. The phrase “urban renewal” with its emphasis on revitalization of the existing physical plan, emerged with 1954 bill. An innovation in the 1954 housing Act placed responsibility upon the local agencies to develop

an action plan for renewal – an overall community programme for the removal of slums and blight.

The total clearance programme is based on the assumption that some of the housing in the project area is deteriorated or dilapidated and must be removed in order to ensure the future well being of the surrounding neighbourhood.

In response to continual exhortation and pressure to do something to ‘save’ the built environment, and improve housing, the goals of regeneration should attempt to do the following: eliminate sub-standard and other inadequate housing through clearance of slum and blighted areas; stimulate sufficient housing production and community development to remedy the housing shortage; realize the goals of decent home and suitable living environment.

These goals no doubt are lofty. Better homes, improved neighbourhoods, and the elimination of slums all are desirable. The difficulty is not with the goals, but with the means of accomplishing them and with the consequences that result.

THE OPERATION OF URBAN REGENERATION PROGRAMME

In essence the urban regeneration programme attempts to rebuild rundown areas of cities by feeding large amount of public fund and government power into the normal operation of the private market. It does complement the private market; it short-circuits it.

The programme works in the following sequence: first, a section of a city is designated as an urban regeneration area, and plans are drawn up and approved by local renewal agency, the local governing body and state agency.

A public hearing is then held at which local renewal officials document their case for urban regeneration. At this point other citizens interested in the project have the opportunity to speak for or against it.

Once the planning is completed, execution starts. Though some execution activities may be carried on simultaneously, there are six basic steps:

1. Land Acquisition: The land and the building are usually acquired by negotiation with the owners, but if this fails, the regeneration authority will use the power of eminent domain to force the recalcitrant owners to sell; in case like this, the purchase is determine by independent appraisals.

2. Displacement and Relocation: Individuals,

families and business located in the area are forced to move and find homes or establish their business elsewhere. The law provides for some compensation and required renewal authorities to relocate them satisfactorily, although in practice this does not always happen.

3. Site Clearance: The wrecking cranes and the bulldozers demolish any building not considered useful by the regeneration authorities.

4. Site Improvement and Supporting Facilities: The cleared land is usually improved by the construction of streets, sewers, water mains, lighting systems, schools, libraries, and parks.

5. Disposition of Improved Land: The cleared and improved land can be sold, leased, donated, or retained by the regeneration agency. Usually the land is sold to private persons either by competitive bidding or by negotiation between officials of the agency and private investors.

6. New Construction: The new construction may be residential, industrial, commercial or public. However, the eventual developer is usually obliged to build according to a general plan approved by the regeneration authorities.

This is usually the systematic operation of regeneration programme that is dammed by some; praised by many, and understood by very few. The picture is often painted like this: *before*-dirty, dark, ugly slums, *after*-clean, bright, beautiful buildings.

The contrast is clear, the appeal seductive, but this picture shows only the hopes and wishes of urban regeneration. The realities of its costs and physiological consequences are drastically different.

HOUSING FOR DISPLACED FAMILIES

As a community or government goes into action on enforcing codes and building regulations eliminating slums and blight, constructing public improvement and highway constructions and urban regeneration; some families will be displaced from housing, offices or shops they now occupy.

Many of the families will need substantial assistance in finding suitable relocation housing. Many communities will find that existing local housing will not meet relocation needs. This is often true in regard to the limited number of sales and rental units available to displaced minority group families.

These raise basic question of social welfare and public policy. Among the more important issues are: how relocation affects the families ability to meet the society's minimum standards for quality and quantity of living space; the extent to which the family can fulfill its needs and desires in terms of housing and neighbourhood characteristics and convenience to employment, community facilities, family friends; the costs-financial, social, psychological and emotional in experiencing forced change, and the unintended consequences of such changes; the differential incidence of benefits and costs on various subgroups within the relocation population.

The above issues are of serious concern to sociologists and planners of the built environment. The Government must accept the responsibility of providing relocation assistance to all families displaced as a result of governmental action. It must make every effort to ensure that these families housing needs can be met but not without advance preparation and planning.

Those responsible for relocation assistance must work with officials of agencies likely to cause displacement through activities such as: (a) Code enforcement; (b) Construction of local public improvements, state or federal installations; (c) Urban regeneration; (d) Expressway or street-widening projects.

By determining both immediate and long-range relocation needs in advance of displacement, a regeneration agency will be in position to remedy any shortage of housing. There will be opportunity to organize relocation aids if they are needed.

Before a family is displaced, suitable relocation housing must be available. Hardships, slums and new squatter settlement are created, if community's relocation responsibilities are neglected. Also, community's improvement plans and projects are delayed.

CRITICISM AND FEARS OF URBAN REGENERATION PROJECTS

One of the most serious consequence of the urban regeneration action programme is the effect that it has on the supply of housing, especially low-rent housing. This is ironic, because, one of the goals of the programme is to improve living conditions. The reasons these goals are not realized are not far fetched.

A typical regeneration project destroys a great

many houses. These are mainly houses classified as substandard by the local regeneration authorities, while some good ones may also be destroyed because they are judged to be incompatible with the proposed plan for the area. The total effects on housing conditions in most cases are even worse.

The fears of most people are that urban regeneration programme no doubt have changed the city landscape but has at same time, created more problems.

CASE STUDY I: AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

Between 1950 and 1960 in America, a study conducted by Martin Anderson, showed that the programme was responsible for the destruction of approximately 126,000 housing units, of these homes, 101,000 had been classified as substandard by the local renewal authorities; while 25,000 were in good conditions. The good ones were destroyed because they were judged to be incompatible with the proposed plan for the area.

Within this decade approximately only 28,000 housing units were completed within urban renewal area. About 25,000 of these were privately owned homes, 3000 or so were public housing units. Consequently, the score was: 126,000 housing unit down and about 28,000 units up. This means that almost four times many houses were destroyed as were built.

The total effect on housing condition was even worse. All the 126,000 homes that were destroyed were located in older section of cities, and almost all were low-rent units. On the other hand, the rents of the new privately owned houses were very high.

Thus, Martin Anderson (1964) summed his finding this way:

- ❖ More homes were destroyed than were built.
- ❖ Those destroyed were predominantly low-rent homes.
- ❖ Those built were predominantly high rent-homes
- ❖ Housing conditions were made worse for those whose housing conditions were least good.
- ❖ Housing conditions were improved for those whose housing conditions were best.

CASE STUDY II: NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

The examples of renewal carried out in Nigeria

are the Ndoki and Aggrey Road Water Front in Rivers State, and the Maroko- Lagos and Aja experiment, in Lagos State. The Ndoki water front low-cost housing renewal project was executed in 1988 at a cost of ₦6, 086,070. The project affected 77 landlords and 1500 households who resided in the water front squatter settlement..

While in the Aggrey Road Water Front low-cost house project, 80 landlords and 1213 households were affected. This project was executed at a cost of ₦15, 824,827.00 in 1991. The Rivers State Land and Housing Bureau (RSLHB) undertook both projects. In both projects, large-scale relocation of families and individuals was witnessed. No compensation was paid, however, the squatters were assured that they would be given priority in the allocation of the completed new dwelling units.

At the end of the exercise at both Ndoki and Aggrey Road redevelopment sites, only 27.3 percent of the new residents were of low-income group, while the rest 72.7 percent belong to the medium and high-income groups. (Ibeakuzie 2002).

From the above statistics it is evident that the low-income households who were displaced could not return at the completion of the scheme. The researcher summarized his finding thus: That the renewal scheme did not really solve the housing problems of the squatter dwellers, but rather compounded them to intolerable levels especially with regard to:

- ❖ Break-up of social relationship
- ❖ Upsetting existing economic systems and opportunities
- ❖ Compounding the congestion in Port Harcourt infrastructure due to migration of displaced squatters and
- ❖ Expanding and increasing the number of marginal water front squatter settlements or people moved in with relatives in existing squatters settlements else where in the city.

The cases of Maroko and Aja villages are not different. In July 1990 squatters residing at Maroko faced the Lagos State bulldozer. While on September 2, 1995, Aja villagers got their own treatment. Presently, the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, is witnessing demolition and displacement of families in the Kubwa, Lugbe districts and elsewhere.

In all these actions, the governments seemed not to recognize the basic rights of the inhabitants of these communities as far as housing is concerned as enshrined in international con-

ventions. The fact is that urban regeneration cannot be practiced in a developing country, particularly Nigeria, as it is practiced in developed countries. It must be given a human face.

The fear of regeneration scheme is genuine among the citizenry. This is so because of the greed and corruption among the political class; who would not blink an eye, in disposing fellow citizens of their land and reallocating it to themselves at the completion of the project.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The major achievement attributable to regeneration programme is that the programme has done much to revitalize the urban environment and increasingly emphasizing the human aspects of regeneration. While much remains to be accomplished, we are confident of the out-come if we maintain the present momentum and aims of the programme; as could be exemplified by the Akwa Ibom plaza project and Abuja experience.

At the completion of any renewal project, the experience has always been dramatic and exciting. Fresh and striking new homes, apartments, offices, shops, or cultural institutions are known to have risen; where a few years before were only disorder and decay.

It is an acknowledged fact that the civilized world is now passing through a time of vivid transition. Intensive efforts are being made in every country to bring the shattered social structure into order. According to Saarinen (1966) "It must be borne in mind that the family and its home are the corner-stones of society, and that man's physical and mental development depend largely upon the character of the environment in which he is nurtured as a child, where he spent his manhood, and where he does his work".

VEHICLE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The building of cities is one of man's greatest achievements. The form of his city always has been and always will be a pitiless indicator of the state of his civilization. This form is determined by the multiplicity of decisions made by the people who live in it. In certain circumstances these decisions have interacted to produce a force of such clarity and form, that a noble city has been born (Bacoon 1974).

The effort at regeneration of our urban centers

had been very minimal. Only few state governments such as: Lagos State, Akwa Ibom State and the Federal Capital Territory; are known to have embarked on urban regeneration projects. Presently, Nigeria's urban development is chaotic and there are strong indications that the situation will worsen in the years ahead, since policy makers hardly understand their roles in the orderly planning of the nations towns and cities.

However, it is gratifying to note that the international organizations, such as UNCHS-HABITAT, NEPAD and NGOS have taken up to the challenges of urban regeneration.

Since the year 1985; The United Nations General Assembly under resolution (No. 40/2024 of December 1985) has set aside the first Monday of every October as The World Habitat Day. The celebration of this day, by member states of the organization is to focus and reflect on the state of human settlement and basic right of citizens to adequate shelter.

The Guardian Newspaper of Monday (September 20, 2004) reported the historic signing of agreement between world leaders, local governments and UN-HABITAT. The agreement will elevate the working relationship between the United Nations system and local government around the world to a new level.

The forum agreed to strengthen the interface between national and local governments by boosting the capacity of local governments, association with other UN bodies, and working with UN-HABITAT'S Global campaign on Urban Governance, UCLG regional sections to promote the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS).

Nigeria was selected as the appropriate location to launch the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat) Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance. This is in pursuance of one of the key elements of the Habitat Agenda agreed upon by 171 governments around the world at the Istanbul (Habitat II) conference of 1996, which mandated UNCHS to act as the task manager, within the United Nations System, to coordinate the global campaign. The campaign, in addition to helping to achieve the Habitat Agenda is expected to help in realizing the United Nations action strategy for halving extreme poverty by 2015. The UNCHS (Habitat) has categorized the norms of this campaign into seven: sustainability, subsidiarity, equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability, civic engagement and citizenship and security.

The attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria requires the mobilization of relevant agencies as well as the integration of traditional attributes into existing modern efforts at programme implementation.

Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP)

The SCP started in Nigeria in the year 1994 in Ibadan under the guidance of the Federal Ministry of Works and the National Planning Commission. Today, due to the success recorded, this programme has been scaled-up and is being replicated in Kano and Enugu. In each city, Habitat is providing technical assistance through implementation of the Environmental Planning and Management process. The process embodies the principles of participatory urban governance in a very practical approach by involving local authorities, key stakeholders and the public in general, defines, prioritizing and addressing the conceived environmental issues.

Nigeria can still achieve sustainable development if it adopts and applies the norms, principles and elements of Good Urban Governance (GUG) and Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP).

Joint UNDP/UN-Habitat Urban Management Programme for Poverty Alleviation

Since 1998, the joint UNDP/UN-Habitat Urban Management Programme has been working with local authorities, civil societies and NGOs to promote local governance for poverty alleviation in Shomolu, Lagos State; Ijebu Ode in Ogun State, Kaduna South in Kaduna State.

Cities Without Slums-The Millennium Declaration Programme

The UN-Habitat as the focal point of shelter delivery in the UN system has risen to the challenge of implementing the millennium declaration "cities without slums" initiative. This is a joint initiative of Habitat and the World Bank through a small secretariat based in Washington. Its purpose is to assist the developing countries to access investment resources to upgrade their living environment. It is interesting to note that Karu in Nasarawa State is the first city in Nigeria to benefit from this imitative. Currently, Habitat and the World Bank, in conjunction with Nasarawa State, Karu Local Government and

Federal Ministry of Works and Housing are working to upgrade the settlement, which is sprawling satellite town to Abuja, Federal Capital City.

There are more of such important Sustainable Development Programmes. What we require are the co operations with relevant agencies, proper understanding and willingness to implement the programmes according to their rules and regulations especially in payment of counterpart funds and project implementations. All these will help to achieve full mobilization of both domestic and external resources, which is the true path to sustainable development in Nigeria.

In an effort to rise to the challenges facing city managers in Africa, the world's most rapidly urbanizing region mayors from seven cities met in Lagos Nigeria and adopted a blue print that coalesces both the ideals of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and objective of improving living standards in continents cities. (Okunlola 2004).

The sustainable NEPAD cities programmes are a joint initiative of the UN-Habitat and the African Union through the NEPAD Secretariat. It was formed to engender in Africa cities that showcase core values, equitable, environmentally sound, safe and secure.

Cities currently pioneering the initiatives are: Bamako (Mali), Douala (Cameroon) Durban (South Africa), Lagos (Nigeria), Lusaka (Zambia), Nairobi (Kenya) and Rabat (Morocco).

The theme of 2004 Habitat Day celebration was "The Cities: Engines of Rural Development". This theme suggests that the city should be a catalyst for the development of rural areas. The theme also reinforces the beneficial relationship between rural and urban areas. It is therefore, imperative that development strategies originating from the city should be extended to the rural areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Proper urban development in Nigeria, must consider all the problems of the urban community – physical, social cultural, and aesthetics. Much of planning work of today must deal with the correction of earlier mistakes, which are the result of serious neglect of one of the nations most vital problems. In quite many instances, the past mistakes are virtually impossible to correct, and most likely they will remain in the urban organism as hindering inconveniences for times to come.

Slums must be eradicated and the families from there must have decent housing. Blight must be removed and further spread prevented. Rundown business sections need rehabilitation and industrial areas must be cleaned up. The decay must be carved out, and regeneration can serve the purpose.

The physical problem as well as socio-economic problem must be tackled together. This is so, because if the city must be formed into an appropriate place in which to live, human consideration has a dominant position in this formation. Consequently, we must address the issue of poverty, and income levels, the reasons for rural-urban migration and ability for home ownerships, if the urban problems must be realistically addressed.

There is the need to stimulate an effective rural development programme, by the provision of basic amenities, services and infrastructure facilities, small-scale industries. These would encourage development in the rural areas and consequently, serve as growth poles and springboards for the redistribution of population and traffic patterns for sustainable balance development.

There is also the need to ensure that all our urban and rural settlements develop in an orderly fashion to achieve the goals and objectives of good planning. The three tiers of government should take urgent steps to stem the degradation of our urban centers through lack of adequate planning.

We must also recognize the city's need for migrants and make good use of the migrants' energy, drive, enthusiasm and willingness to make a new and better life for themselves, and thereby enriching the city at a very low cost to the city.

There is also the need for neighbouring state governments to work in collaboration and work out modalities to tackle common urban problem and thus bring about balance development.

CONCLUSION

Efforts at urban regeneration in Nigeria require a lot of effective actions along a broad front. This is a task that must be accomplished to bring our urban environment to the standard appropriate to our time. The attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria requires the mobilization of all relevant agencies as well as the integration of our traditional attributes of communal living into modern efforts at programme implementation.

Urban regeneration would help us achieve a harmonious, attractive and aesthetically pleasing environment that would ensure for us and future generation centers of delight. It would also boost socio-economic development and the quality of life in urban and rural centers. Nigeria can still achieve sustainable development and sustainable Human Settlement provided we are ready to adopt and apply the norms and principles of good urban house-keeping.

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