



AN EVALUATION OF SLUM DEVELOPMENT AND ITS EFFECTS ON HOUSING QUALITY IN LAFIA METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT: *Housing has been defined to be more than shelter in order to embrace all the social services and utilities that make a community or neighbourhood a liveable environment. Slum is a heavily populated urban informal settlement characterised by substandard housing and squalor. The research aimed at an evaluation of slum development and its effect on urban housing quality. To achieve the aim, the following objectives were observed; to identify the common types of slum found within the study areas. This research work is made possible through the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The analyses were made in tabular form and they carried their respective percentages and different types of graphs and charts were used in the interpretation of tables. Based on the survey, a lot of findings have been made. The absence of good drainage system, sanitary system, refuse disposal, sources of water, standard buildings make living very difficult for the people and also have native effects on the housing quality of the dwellers within the area. At the end the researcher drives to his conclusion and make same recommendation that without any proper action from now year 2020 flood shall occur within the study area.*

KEYWORDS: Slum Development, Housing Quality, Urban, Drainage System, Refuse Disposal, Liveable Environment, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Housing has been defined to be more than shelter in order to embrace all the social service and utilities that make a community or neighbourhoods a liveable environment (WHO 1991). It comprises a ground of shelter, home and the attendant infrastructures, such as roads, water, electricity, communication, transportation etc (Omojine 2001) housing is an issue that reaches and touches the lives of individual as well as that of nature. According to (Agbala 1998) great importance is ascribing to the role housing plays in endangering human comfort by both nature and the society. From the above housing is not just a dwelling place but incorporating the shelter, infrastructure and the recreational environment.

The Nigerian government has always appreciated the significant role housing plays in national development; consequently, various policies have been put in place to enhance the development of housing before and after independence in 1960.

The National Housing Policies of 1991 forms the bedrock of housing delivery system in Nigeria. It provides the arrangement for affordable shelter for Nigerians, unfortunately most Nigerians are not familiar with other planning laws, building regulations and codes,



consequently, they build without regards to the provision of the laws leading to urban slum and sprawl.

Inability of the government to provide plan areas with necessary services and infrastructures; forced individual developers to build houses within an unplanned area that lack the basic facilities, these areas are called slums. However, as a property owner, it is important that one understand the various factors that affect the value of a property and its quality, it is crucial that one know how this value is determine the quality of the housing. Doing so will protect your interest as a property owner; this and more the research is set in addressing.

Slum Development

Slum can is an area characterized by overcrowding, deterioration, unsanitary condition or absence of facilities and amenities like potable water, recreational ground, schools, clinic, post offices among other. However, because these conditions of any of them endangers the health, safety or moral of inhabitants of the community. Also, slum can be described as the extreme condition of blight or degradation. A slum area could be also look upon as an of the worse social, and economic conditions, there are two school of tort regarding slums;

- a. Dirty habit of the dwellers and neglect building that make slum.
- b. This says that it is the physical deterioration of physical element that encourages slum habit in the people.

These regards identify two types of slum;

- a. Area which has be slum right from the inception that is area with insanity and bad housing condition resulting from the initial arrangements and construction and types of building material used.
- b. Squalid housing resulting from misused of dwelling unit originally plan for lees intensive use.

Characteristics of Slum

There is no agreed definition of what a slum is or the criteria to measure slum. Yet this is very important that any attempt in urban renewal programme. Slum varies widely in terms of their location, spatial terms and socio-economic and environmental characteristic. It could be agreed that no too slums are the same; they differ in their history, growth and development, opportunities and challenges.

Slum tend to be seen either in terms of their location and spatial form, the typology inner, intermediate or peripheral slum adopted by Okdosu (2004) or terms of their legal status, as illegal settlements, squatters settlements etc, slum can be planned neighbourhoods that have run down or sporadic and chaotic unplanned neighbourhood that have emerged and grown organically. Some have even described them as slums of hope or slum of despair Peter Llyod (1979)



Causes of Slum

- i. Low capital formation has been identified with slum areas, in developing countries like Nigeria, the major causes of slum is low capital formation of the less privilege group.
- ii. Types of building in an area or environment which may be of poor architectural design, poor construction materials, and non-conformity to town planning laws. Land revenue system which encourages the sub-division of land to each number of families, this result in small plot that cannot accommodate a good standard of living.
- iii. Break down infrastructure facilities such as pipe born water supply system, resulting in a filthy environment, lack of maintenance of roads which result in stagnant pool breeding mosquitoes.
- iv. The change of use of building has also been identified as a symptom of slum. For instance, the change of single household, unit to two or three and sometimes even four household encourages slum development.

Effects and Facts of Slums

Increasing urban vulnerability rapid urbanization has brought several spatial and social economic developments, which exacerbate vulnerability to natural hazards. High population density coupled with poverty creates conditions in which a natural or technological hazard has the potential for much greater impact on people.

Increasing concentration of population and assets: The urbanization process has increased the concentration of people and assets, meaning that there would be bigger human and economic losses when hit by a disaster. As people migrate to cities for employment, and as investment in urban housing and infrastructure goes up in response to the aspiration of manufacturing and service sectors, more people, buildings, structure and enterprises would be affected by disasters unsafe locations in the cities, there is always competition amongst different social groups for access to land with land costs for housing often beyond the reach of most or all low-income groups, illegal lots with no services are settled. Most often, these locations are unsafe such as a will sides, marshy lands, gully, and low-lying areas.

Slums and squatter settlements: according to a recent un-publication, 32 percent of the world's total urban population, representing about 43 percent slums in 2001. Slums have intolerate housing conditions frequently including tenure insecurity, lack of basic services and infrastructure, inadequate and sometimes unsafe building structures, overcrowding and location on hazardous land. Additionally, slum areas are characterized by high concentrations of social and economic deprivation. As a result, the people living in slums are extremely vulnerable to the impact of disasters and have few choices and resources for reducing their vulnerability.

Urban Renewal

This is the gradual re-ordering of uses of land and building to meet present day requirement and estimated future need it implies a continuous process of planning and re-building of towns and cities sorting out uses that have become mixed in unsatisfactory ways and recombining them in new ways.



Urban renewed here is used to describe the aggregated of techniques which can be developed for the treatment of urban problems on a physical basis

They may be seen as a group of building or an area characterise by overgrowing, deterioration, unsanitary condition or absence of facilities or amenities, such as portable water, drainage system, school, health facilities, and re-creational ground as defined by (Kehinde, 2002).

Development Process in Housing

Housing development as an integral part of the overall urban development process begins with the perception to development and terminates with occupation, letting or sale of the completed project. According to (Umeh 1977) the period of land development stretches from the gestation period through the construction of works and buildings to the marketing of the full product (Ikpe 2004) urges that housing process includes land acquisition, preparation, physical planning and design. Construction of building, roads, drainages, sewerage including provision of service such as electricity, water telephone, development, finance, contracts management, project completion, marketing and management (Omole 2001) list the stages under what he calls housing design and construction process, to include land procurement and negotiation for land acquisition, survey, subdivision, product of architectural and engineering drawings, approvals by planning authorities, (construction and supervision including infrastructural and building development) management and maintenance of completed projects for acquisition rental.

In his contribution (Lawal 2000) argues that the process includes preliminary stages, site selection and acquisition stages, planning and design stages, financing plan, construction operation and land of process.

Development in general, has been defined as the process of carrying out constructional works which are associated with changes in the uses of land or land with its building or with a change in intensity of the use of land or with re-establishment of an existing use such work, include alteration erection of building and also the construction of roads and sewers. The building of rivers wall or the laying out of playing fields (Litchfield 1974)

The Nigeria urban and regional planning Act No. 88 of 1992, defines development in the same manner as the British town and country planning Act of 1947 both see development as the process of buildings, engineering mining or other operation in over or under any land or the making of any material change in the use of building.

Whereas the repeated Nigeria town and country planning ordinance 1946, recognised development to be more than erection of building or re-building operation to include any change of use, the present NURP Act of 1992 includes demolition of building as a development entails the destruction of existing use site to pave way for proposed use.

From the above argument, development comes in three dimensions;

1. Creation of a new structure from a bare land
2. Creation of a new structure from existing structure by way of renovation, alterative, expansion etc.
3. Maintenance of existing structure to serve the purpose it was established.



Importance of Housing

The importance of housing to man cannot be over emphasized.

It is rated second in man's scale of basic and fundamental needs, (Lawal 2000) benefits accruing from housing range from personal security, emotional stability which has significant impact on economic development by generating both employment and income. The quality of housing stock is a reliable parameter of the standard of living, the level of technology, culture and civilization of the nation.

The maintenance of existing housing stock in an acceptable

Standard and living environment is as important as the addition to the housing stock.

(Onibokun, 1985) in his study indicated that about 67% of houses in Nigeria require minor or major and that overcrowding has become a characteristics of most urban cities, coupled with this is the inadequate of life support system such as water, medical facilities and infrastructures such as sewer, roads, electricity and communication facilities.

These shown the importance of urban renewal especially when many neighbourhoods of Nigerian urban houses are potential slum.

Problem of Housing

Housing is capital intensive and usually greater percentage of the people cannot afford the provision of their own houses out of their income. A good number cannot even afford to rent a decent accommodation for their family (Patrick Geddes 1932) yet housing is a basic need that must be met by every household. Housing has been seen as a social responsibility of every government, though it is obvious that government alone cannot provide all the housing needs of its citizens. The problem of housing has engaged both private and public sectors of Nigerian economy despite considerable investment and effort by the private and public sectors of the economy over the years, the housing problems of Nigeria has continued to increase in terms of;

- i. The large number of houseless households
- ii. Rapid growth of slum and unauthorized settlement
- iii. Spiraling prices and rents of land and houses
- iv. Deficiency in the availability of water, sanitation, drainage and basic service to bulk the population and
- v. The increasing struggle of the poor and vulnerable section of that populace to secure affordable and adequate shelter.

Review of Past Policies and Programme on Housing

The colonial period up to 1960 witnessed housing policy concentrated on expatriate staff and selected indigenous staff in the government. The past independence period 1960-1979 housing cooperative were formed. The excess of the oil boom made the government to proposed the construction of 59,000 dwelling units across the nation with 15,000 units in



Lagos and 4,000 units in each of 11 states capital in 1973. Similarly, the proposed 202,000 dwelling units for construction comprising of 50,000 units in Lagos and 8,000 units in each of the 19 states annually only 20% were achieved. In 1984 to 1990 era, housing finance and restructuring of housing institution as well as new ones were at focus. This was to ensure that all Nigerians owned or have decent housing at an affordable cost by 2000 AD.

The inability of past government policies used to receive and formulating of new policies published in grass root. The aim was to remove the impediment to the realization of the goal of the nation to ensure that all Nigerians owned or have access to decent, safe and healthy housing accommodation at affordable cost.

Some of the objectives are;

- i. To encourage and promote active participation of government in housing delivery.
- ii. To develop and promote measures that will mobilise long- term sustainable and cheap funding for housing sector.

In Nigeria local government headquarters were designated as urban centres for the purpose of planning and allocation of resources likewise settlements above 20,000 persons. The economic administration and infrastructure facilities in the urban cities have amounted to increased urban populace and the growth of urban size in relation to land coverage.

Housing problems in the urban centres ranges from poor dilapidated houses and High occupancy rate of 6 to 8 and 10 to 20 in Zaria and Owerri (Godswill and Amadu, 2004). Sanitary condition that wildly spread diseases in congested areas which may lead to “slum”. The incidence was witnessed during the bubonic plague that swept Lagos in 1928. However, it is expected that the urban population is expected to double its number from 35% to 61%; the urban problems leading to slum was caused by high cost of land, which the average people in Nigeria could not afford.

The living conditions in slum are usually unhygienic and contrary to all norms of planned urban growth and they are important factors in accelerating transmission of various air and water borne diseases.

The legal definition differs from state to state. *Slum* has been defined under section 3 of the slum areas (improvement and clearance) act, 1956, as areas where buildings are in any respect unfit for human habitation, are by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation high situation facility of any combination of these factors which are detrimental to safety health and morals.

Housing Quality

Housing is a fundamental need for dignified living and represents a major area of deprivation for the urban poor in Nigeria. The rate of provision of new housing stock in Nigeria has lagged behind the rate of population growth which is responsible for the formation of slums, growth of squatter settlements and high rent beyond the affordable limit of the poor. Housing poverty is manifested in the quality of housing occupied by low-income earners which is often of poor architectural standard, poor construction, and inadequate services. The lack of



adequate housing accounts for the preponderance of the large proportion of urban dwellers in Nigeria living in housing at densities and environmental conditions which constitute serious health hazard and threat to their general productivity.

Housing quality is often evaluated in terms of the quality of design, building materials, standard of construction, and the provision and performance of public amenities. However, the satisfaction of the user population with their housing and its environment is an important determinant of housing quality. Meeting the needs of particular families is an important criterion in evaluating housing quality and therefore the value of a house is determined by the extent by which it satisfies or frustrates the needs of its users Turner (1972).

Conditions of urban housing in Nigeria are very deplorable. The studies affirm that 75% of the dwelling units in urban centres in Nigeria are substandard and the dwellings are sited in slums. The inadequacy of the quality of most of urban housing manifests mainly in the poor physical state of the buildings. They are often unsafe and insecure and do not provide adequate shelter from the elements of weather. Walls of the buildings are built mainly with poor sandcrete blocks, and concrete used for construction often contain excessive quantities of dust and clayey matter. Arum and Olotuah (2006) averred that this is inimical to the production of good quality concrete. In most cases the environment in which the buildings are located is, and this generally leads to slum conditions.

Good-quality housing is a key element for ensuring a healthy town. Poor housing can lead to many health problems, and is associated with infectious diseases (such as tuberculosis), stress and depression. Everyone should therefore have access to good-quality housing and a pleasant home environment that makes them happy and content. Specific aspects of housing quality are described in the following sections.

- **Ventilation**

Adequate home ventilation is particularly important where wood, charcoal and dung are used for cooking or heating, since these fuels give off smoke that contains harmful chemicals and particulate matter. This can lead to respiratory problems, such as bronchitis and asthma, and make tuberculosis transmission easier. Women and small children are particularly at risk from poor ventilation if they spend long periods within the home or in cooking areas. Where cooking is done indoors, it is essential that smoke and fumes be removed from the house quickly and efficiently. Ventilation may be improved by constructing houses with a sufficient number of windows, particularly in cooking areas. Alternatively, houses can be constructed using bricks with holes drilled through them (“air-bricks”), which allow fresh air to circulate within the house.

- **Lighting**

Poor indoor lighting can have many harmful effects on health and well-being. A poorly lit working environment in the home can lead to eyesight problems,

For example. This is a particular concern for women working in indoor cooking areas. Poor lighting within the home can also make people feel more depressed. These problems can be remedied by adding windows to the house to increase the amount of natural light, which is much stronger than light from candles or lamps. In communities where it is important that privacy within the home is maintained, windows can be located where it is



difficult for people to see into the house, or constructed with a mesh or lattice work which allows light to enter while guarding privacy. Increasing natural light is also important for home cleanliness: if a house is dark, it is more difficult to see dust and dirt and thus more difficult to clean properly.

- **Disease Vectors in the Home**

Unless homes are kept clean and steps taken to prevent insects from entering, the homes can become infested with disease vectors.

- **Overcrowding in Homes**

Overcrowding in homes causes ill-health because it makes disease transmission easier and because the lack of private space causes stress. Overcrowding is related to socioeconomic level, and the poor often have little choice but to live in cramped conditions. In principle, increasing the number of rooms in a house should improve the health of the people who live there, but increasing house size is often difficult. Careful planning of family size can also help to reduce overcrowding. If community members feel that overcrowding is a problem, they can take the initiative and press landlords to provide more space for tenants at affordable prices. This may necessitate working with local government and pressure groups to ensure that the housing laws and tenancy agreements are revised, and that everyone has access to houses adequate for their family size.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above findings, the following recommendation will go a long way in making Lafia attractive areas for real estate investors and attraction of high-income earners.

- The Local Government sanitary inspectors should educate the people on the need to clean their environment so as to improve the quality of land and landed properties.
- A special committee be set up to look into how buildings be planned by complying with the master plan in Lafia to enable clean and good areas for real estate investment.
- There should be a redevelopment scheme so as to attract investors in real estate while some of the houses that their state is beyond economic repairs be demolished to give way for good planning to take place.
- The Nasarawa State Government should gradually rehabilitate the area and provide basic amenities such as pipe borne water, drainages, electricity and other facilities so as to enhance the quality of properties within the area after demolishing structures that obstruct accessibility and space for other amenities.
- The State Government should empower the Nasarawa State Urban Development Board (NUDB) to create more layout and locate plot to low income earners within the catchment area to reduce the slum population and overcrowding of the existing housing stock.



CONCLUSION

From a sustainable resource use perspective, the historically past and recent housing developments in Nigeria cities were generally undertaken in an extremely sustainable way - massive urban sprawl and the destruction of potentially productive land, low numbers of housing units per kilometre of infrastructure line (energy, water, sanitation, storm water drainage, roads, rail, etc), rising levels of waste output, increasing levels of energy and material use, etc. Indeed, as the urban poor were located further and further outside of the city, so too did transport subsidies increase (Behrens & Wilkinson. 2003) thus increasing the dependence of the poor on rapidly increasing oil prices. Similarly, no provision was made for the fact that water and energy resources in our cities are facing depletion and infrastructural systems are overloaded. Many Nigeria metros and municipalities are facing the twin challenge of massively expanding the size of their formal housing stock to meet the needs of the poor, and a simultaneous increase in demand of middle-class markets. However, cities must begin to recognize and remain within accepted ecological limits with respect to energy, water, landfill space, sewage disposal, food supplies and biodiversity. The study has examined the effect of slum on houses within Lafia metropolis, from the data collected and analysed, it is with evident that the area is in slum already and it is increasing growing if no further effort is made to resolve the present situation at hand. The study was able to bring to light the extent to which slum can affect housing sustainability. These effects can be physical, social, functional or economical. However, with good urban renewal these effects can be wiped out. So, development authorities should ensure strict adherence to these laws so as to enhance housing sustainability and improve quality of life within the study area.

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