

Urbanization and Developing Sustainable Cities: An Assessment of Informal Settlements and Liveability in Abuja, Nigeria

Abuja City - Information and Demographic Characteristics

Background Information:

- Abuja -Nigeria's Federal Capital Officially declared capital city - 12 Dec. 1991/replaced Lagos which remains Nigeria's commercial nerve centre and most populous city
- Built from scratch/actual construction began in 1980
- Defined by Aso Rock, a 400m monolith left by water erosion
- Headquarters of ECOWAS and the regional headquarters of OPEC

Size and Geography:

- Total land area – 713 Km² (275.3sq²)
- Characterized by high altitudes and undulating terrains

Population:

- 2006 Population census (1,406,239) /one of the top 10 most populous cities in Nigeria
- Population density – about 190/km
- Initially designed to accommodate 3.1m people (Abuja metropolitan area now estimated to accommodate well over 3m/ some areas growing at 20%-30% pa
- Estimated 6.2m live in the satellite settlements surrounding Abuja
- Master Plan in place/designed for progressive development in 4phases
- The Federal Capital Development Administration (FCDA) responsible for development & management of the city



Economy/Key Economic Activities:

- GDP: US\$5.01 b (2007/Per capita - US\$3,285
- Key economic activities – Tourism, Agriculture, Solid minerals, Entertainment
- Expanding manufacturing, financial, service, communications, technology and entertainment sectors.
- Population below poverty line – 33% (2013)

Abuja City – City Development Objectives

Vision - To develop a modern capital city for Nigeria and make Abuja among the best/top 20 capital cities in the world by year 2020.

Mission - To provide good infrastructure, services, amenities and administration that would stimulate the city's development and growth.

Urban Challenge: Current Challenges

Urban Challenges of Abuja City:

Consequences of the unprecedented spate of population and physical growth include:

- Rapidly growing urban population places increasing demands on land, housing, services and infrastructure.
- Growth of satellite towns – Karu, Suleja, Gwagwalada, Lugbe, Kuje etc
- Increasing poverty and expanding Informal Settlements
- Environmental degradation and city decay/proliferation of Slums
- Unplanned neighbourhoods/Increasing insecurity and crime rates
- Housing shortages/overcrowding
- Chaotic transportation/lack of adequate public transportation services
- Inadequate/overstretched basic services and amenities (water, health and sanitation services, schools, health public space and recreational facilities).

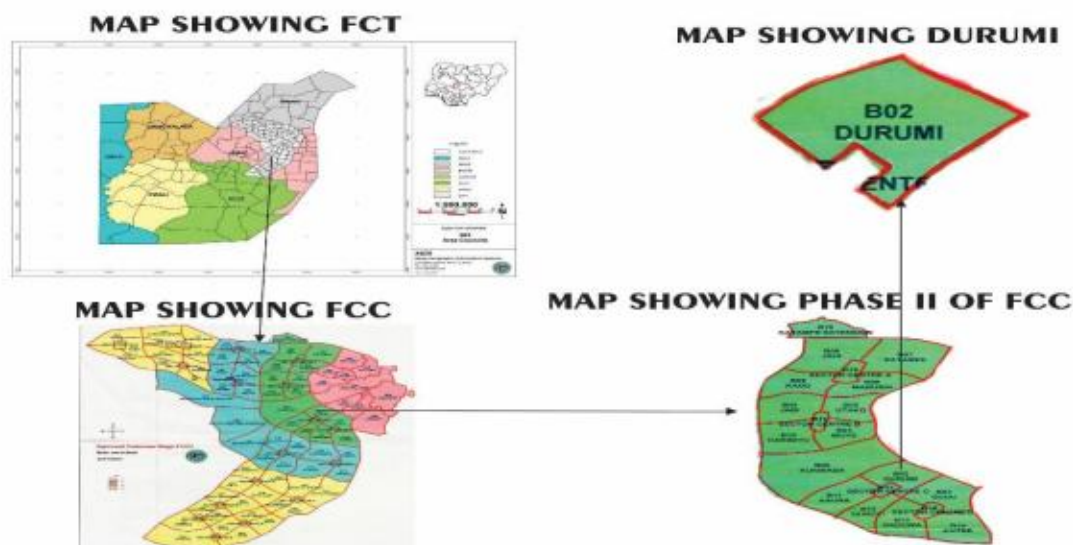
- Inadequate planning to accommodate the informal economy (which stands at 60-70%) has had negative impacts, which in turn has limited the city's contribution to growth of the national economy.

Location and Geographic Coverage

The study area is Durumi II, in Phase II Development Area of Abuja. It will focus on the examination of physical and socio economic problems in the existing slums and squatter settlements, and articulate effective, sustainable solutions and strategies to improve living standards of the dwellers.

Durumi is situated in the South Eastern part of Abuja Municipality. Its geographical coordinates are 9° 10' 26" North, 7° 29' 41" East. Its boundaries are Garki Districts I and II to the Northeast. Oladipo Diya Road to the SouthWest, the Nnamdi Azikiwe Express Way to the NorthEast, and Ahmadu Bello Way to the SouthEast.

LOCATION MAP OF DURUMI



Source: Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), 2016

Location of Durumi II (B02), FCT Abuja



Source: Google Earth™, 2016.

Proposed Solutions to the Urban Challenge

Aims and Goals of the Project

Target issues to be addressed:

- reduction in poverty and unemployment
- improvement of urban transportation
- upgrading of the slums & improvement of the living environment for living, working & recreation
- provision and maintenance of infrastructure
- improved social welfare and urban security
- improved urban planning and raising development finance through taxes & rates through PPP
- Security of tenure - the right to effective protection by the state against arbitrary, unlawful eviction

The ultimate target is to apply innovative techniques, tools and approaches to achieve efficient functioning of the communities in the context of continuous growth in economic activities and enhanced living conditions

Key Stakeholders/Operators

- Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA)
- Abuja Area Councils - 5 in Number
- Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing
- Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria
- Federal Housing Authority
- Federal Ministry of Environment
- Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Federal Ministry of Water Resources
- Federal Ministry of Justice
- Federal Ministry of Transport
- Local Government Councils

- Urban and Regional Planning Tribunal
- NGOs/CBOs/FBO with focus on women, youth and disadvantaged groups
- Professional Bodies - Town Planners, Land and Estate Valuers, Builders, Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, etc
- National Assembly
- Private Sector - Oil Companies, Banks, Industries, Building/Construction Companies, corporate Organizations, etc

Bottlenecks faced in the implementation of the Project

- Absence of robust land-use plans and slum upgrading strategies
- Absence of up-to date reliable data and statistics on population, housing statistics, economic activities, basic services provision and other variables required for effective policy/decision making etc
- Raising adequate finance for planned improvements
- Rejection of the changes and improvements by the residents
- Management and sustenance of the urban improvements

Implications of not implementing the Project

- Increased Poverty
- Loss of livelihood/loss of income
- Deteriorating Environment and liveability standards
- Safety and security threatened
- Dilapidated housing, infrastructure, services and amenities
- Overstretched and degrading basic services - water, sanitation, electricity, health centres, schools etc

Thank You

