



NETWORKING EVENT

1 – FEATURING

Hosting Organization - National Union of Tenants of Nigeria

Title of the Event - Interactive Session on Urban Innovation

Date and time: - To be decided

Aim of the Event -To examine the challenge of attaining inclusive cities in developing countries and showcase the best principles for tackling this challenge, taking into consideration the bridging of urban divide and the challenge of forced evictions

Chair of the Event -Professor Yves Cabannes – Head of the Development Planning Unit of the University College (London) and Chairman of the United Nations Advisory Group on Forced Evictions
 Website: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu>

Opening Speaker -His Excellency King Professor Dr. Frank Eke (*JP, CON, MB.BS, MPH, FMCPH*)– President of the National Union of Tenants of Nigeria and Former Deputy Governor of Rivers State
 Website: <http://gbakagbaka.com>

- Panelists**
- (1) -**Prof. Johnson B. Falade**– Habitat Programme Manager of Nigeria Office of the UN-HABITAT
 - (2) -**Mr. Tewodros Alemu** – Regional Advisor of the Cities Alliance, Addis Ababa (East Africa)
 - (3) -**Mr. Cesare Ottolini** – Global Coordinator of the International Alliance of inhabitants (Italy)
 - (4) -**Mr. Tajudeen Toyin-Oke** – Regional Director of the United Cities & Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA)
 - (5) -**Mr. Joseph Schechla** – Coordinator of the Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN), Egypt
 - (6) -**Dr. Mrs. A. O. Fawehinmi**–Director, Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (Nigeria)
 - (7) -**Mr. Rasmus Precht** – United Nations Housing Rights Programme of the UN-HABITAT, Nairobi (Kenya)
 - (8) -**Dr. Sayed Iqbal Mohamed**–President of the Organization of Civic Rights (OCR), South Africa

Target Audience	-Participants from the non-governmental bodies, inter-governmental organizations, academics, parliaments and various levels of government
Audience Capacity	-100 participants only
Special Guest	- Mrs. Grace Ekpiwhre , JP, mni – Hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

2 – THEMATIC BACKGROUND

It is practical that the right to a standard of living adequate for the wellbeing of members of the urban family is indispensable from the attainment of the right to cities. The urban family, in this context, comprises the Poor and the Rich, both of who lives at the opposite ends of the cities—with a borderline drawn between poverty and abundance. While the Poor lives in the neglected part of the cities plagued by social disorganization, the Rich is found in the organized part arrayed with network of social infrastructure that is of extreme rarity to the Poor. Attempt by governments to bridge this divide is often counterproductive to the Poor. This is because urban renewal, being the popular approach adopted by governments, is often misunderstood to mean *forced evictions-based* development, which bounces back to the Poor and keeps them in most depressed living conditions against their right to cities.

Urban renewal, being a popular tool for addressing urban dichotomy, is linked with forced evictions and focused at the Poor who form the larger segment of the cities. This people exist in the cities in escape from poverty and become poorer owing to poor urban governance and the consequent absence of social infrastructure to make the cities inclusive. The result of this urban deficit, being gross poverty and acute shortage of accommodation, culminates in the slum formation and its insolence to the architectural state of the cities. In order to correct this urban distortion, most governments of the developing countries often adopt *forced evictions-based* development, which is usually targeted at the slums. The most familiar excuse for such evictions hinges on provision of basic infrastructure to bridge the gap between the urban slums and the formal cities and, thereby, improve the lives of the slums dwellers.

Nevertheless, forced evictions do not deliver the required goal for inclusive cities because the rising urban settlement with the resultant population pressure on cities which is overwhelming and often ends up in slum formation cannot be suppressed by evictions. Resorting, therefore, to forced evictions as antidote to urban slum challenge, always amounts to futile effort. The reason for this is that most evicted persons do not disappear instantly, but linger around the cities while those that relocate outside the cities later find their ways back to search for the bright lights of the cities. The overall outcome of this often leads to further slum formation around the cities and, thus, defeats the urban innovation effort of governments.

Looking at it from another perspective, forced evictions are often counterproductive to MDG attainment, particularly the target on improving the slum dwellers' lives. This is because forced evictions stimulate homelessness, and not to mention that they interfere with the rights of those evicted. Of particular note, in this regard, is the interference with the right to a standard of living adequate for the social and economic wellbeing of the evicted persons and their families. This right includes access to housing, health, education and livelihood means etcetera, all of which are essential components of the right to cities.

Expected Outcome: *Lessons learnt from papers presented and the contributions thereto will culminate in a set of recommendations on the best approach to addressing the urban divide in developing countries without interfering with people's rights.*

3 – HIGHLIGHTS OF PAPERS-PRESENTATION

(a) First Papers: Topic: Urban Transition in Developing Countries

Main Speakers: Prof. Johnson B. Falade (UN-HABITAT)

Mr. Tewodros T. Alemu (Cities Alliance)

Support Speakers: Mr. Tajudeen Toyin-Oke (Director–UCLGA)

Dr. Mrs. A. O. Fawehinmi (Director–FMWH)

(i) Paper Outline

Recent study indicates that owing to large concentration of economic activities in the capital cities of developing countries, the cities have become a magnet of hope for people in the towns and villages and, therefore, attract tremendous population inflow. These economic activities with their accompanying population pull have forced the cities to host over half of developing countries' populations without the adequate infrastructure to make the cities inclusive. This deficit has stimulated slum formation as the only available and affordable housing option for the urban population, which has assumed the duty of rebuilding the cities and, in consequence, kept them plagued by temporary/illegal structures.

Most governments have, in response to the challenge of slum formation/city-rebuilding, opted for master planning as an approach to resuscitating the cities and bridging the divide between the urban slums and the formal cities. However, most master-plans failed to accommodate the interest of the populace because they aim to streamline the existing use of space without recognizing the stake of the occupiers in terms of housing/livelihood means. In this regard, it is argued that master-planning in developing countries has been ineffective in addressing the challenge of sustainable cities, as it exacerbate homelessness/poverty and, therefore, has a counter-effect on cities. Even though master-planning is development-based, some of the development structures, which are usually of elite class and sited in defined places, serve the need of only the Rich, as they are rarely accessible to the Poor. Continuity is another problem of master-planning in developing countries, particularly in Africa. The reason for this is that most political leaders, upon assumption of office, prefer to abandon the projects initiated by their predecessors and go for new brands. This practice usually links with corrupt motive and aims to enrich the new breeds of politicians through project handling/contract award, both of which usually ends in poor performance or non-execution.

Decentralization is one other antidote to the challenge of inclusive cities and involves bridging the rural-urban divide to make life inclusive in local communities and, thereby, discourage population outflow to the cities. This approach, which vests its implementation in the hands of the local governments, aims to bring development to the doorposts of the rural people. The approach is adopted in response to the challenge of "one-city" style of development that is prevalent in almost all the developing countries and copied from the colonial ideology of concentrating all development projects in the capital cities and neglecting the duty to develop the towns and villages. Particularly in Africa, Decentralization approach failed to deliver results due to inadequate funding of the local governments coupled with the problem of good governance, being a missing factor in the prevailing leadership system and a phenomenon that engenders accountability in development efforts.

(ii) Expected Outcome

The topic shall be examined in two segments of papers-presentation namely first and second papers, each of which shall take 10 minutes to present. While the first paper is expected to throw more lights on the fundamental flaws associated with master-planning in bridging the urban divide in developing countries, the second paper will highlight the role of local governments in the urban transition efforts.

The both papers will showcase the best principles for attaining inclusive cities in developing countries, drawing references from contemporary initiatives and global policies with emphasis on steering of development in the cities rather than streamlining the existing use of urban space. The papers will also examine the challenge of sustainability, good governance and pro-poor consideration in addressing the issue of best principles.

(b) Second Papers: Topic: Urban Transition and the Right to Housing

Main Speaker: Mr. Cesare Ottolini (ZEC/IAI)
Mr. Rasmus Precht (UN-HABITAT)
Support Speakers: Mr. Joseph Schechla (HLRN)
Dr. Sayed Iqbal Mohamed (OCR)

(i) Paper Outline

The basic needs of man have been identified in their order of priority as food, housing and clothing. Among these, housing takes the second most substantial part of a man's income and is used in judging government's performance in the socio-economic circle.

In developing countries, the private sector views housing from a more comprehensive perspective than the public sector, as a man's status in the society is largely pronounced by the type of house he occupies and the environment where the house is located. In other words, the house with the environment, in which a man lives, depicts an expression of his personality, a symbol of his economic worth, a measure of his achievement and a barometer that indicates how the society perceives him. Although, most people understood housing from the shelter concept of mere structures with roofs, four walls, doors and windows; but this will be far from reality if the parameters of adequate housing are brought into consideration. One of these parameters recognizes housing from the concept of structures with network of basic infrastructure and social services put together in a proper, permanent and sustainable form to serve the human need. It is this recognition that has partly propelled the urban transition effort of governments, though it failed to acknowledge the other parameters particularly the concept of secure tenure, which recognizes protection of people against forced evictions.

Forced eviction, in its minimal understanding, conveys a sense of removal of person from accommodation or land contrary to the wish of that person. The practice of forced evictions can only be justified in exceptional circumstances, which include evictions carried out in pursuit of overall public need. Where forced eviction occurs, it must conform to the principles of procedural protection, which aim to minimize or avoid the need to use physical force or violence and to ensure that no one is rendered homeless or vulnerable to other human rights violation. Today, nearly all the forced evictions carried out by governments bore the symbol of urban transition, being an essential component of public need; though, only few of such evictions recognized peoples' right to procedural protection. This practice does not only invoke homelessness and poverty, but also associates with violence. For instance, in Nigeria, the forced evictions attempt carried out on 12th October 2009 in an effort to integrate the slums at Bundu Community into Port Harcourt main-city invoked the killing of eight residents and maiming of nine others by the Army. Also in Nigeria, the forced evictions carried out in 2005 to resuscitate "Abuja master-plan" culminated in the killing of four residents by the police and the dis-

placement of 800,000 families. Similarly, in October 2005, the police in Zimbabwe, in a bid to enforce the forced eviction of Porta Farm residents at the outskirts of Harare, killed eleven persons and rendered the entire community homeless. In a similar vein, a Nanjing resident in China set himself ablaze in August 2004 when he came back from work and found his house demolished. Also in 2004 in India, over 300,000 families were rendered homeless in Mumbai as part of government's development programme. All these are just few instances of violent evictions carried out recently around the world in the name of urban transformation.



Port Harcourt evictions—over 200,000 residents rendered homeless, eight shot to death and nine maimed while more than half of the surviving residents await the bulldozers



Thousands of Port Harcourt residents protested against their forced eviction from the city

Evictions that do not conform to procedural protection are incompatible with global policies and prohibited by law. Policies that are opposed to forced evictions include the

Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), both of which forbid governments from destroying people's homes without provision of adequate alternatives.

(ii) Expected Outcome

This topic, which shall be examined in two segments of papers-presentation of 10 minutes each, will highlight in details the implication of forced evictions in urban transition. While the first segment X-Rays the challenge of forced evictions from human rights perspective with reference to international treaties and the jurisprudence of treaty bodies; the second segment is designed to raise awareness of the negative impact of forced evictions on global policies including, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The paper is also expected to highlight how forced evictions hinder full and progressive realization of MDG in developing countries.

Both papers will showcase how urban transition can be pursued without resorting to forced evictions and will draw reference from contemporary initiatives and further showcase how these initiatives can be replicated. In dealing with this, the papers will reexamine the issue of non-justiciability of housing right in the legal system of some countries, including Nigeria, and how this right can be reinterpreted to give it a legal force.

4 – ABOUT THE ORGANIZER [National Union of Tenants of Nigeria]

The National Union of Tenants of Nigeria is the umbrella NGO for housing right protection in the country and was established fifteen years ago under the Law of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The establishment of the union was further to a recommendation by the Rivers State Government, to an end that the union's goal married with the National Policy on Housing and would compliment government effort to address the housing right crisis in Nigeria.

Embedded in this goal is the advancement of everyone's right to adequate housing through advocacy for Nigeria's full and progressive realization of the Global Policy on Shelter, which includes protecting all people from unlawful forced evictions. Also embedded in the goal is the promotion of the right to a standard of living adequate for the well-being of families through advocacy for MDG attainment, especially the target on improving slum dwellers' lives.

For more details, contact:

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