


**RESETTLEMENT ISSUES, SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS AND THE PROBLEMS OF LAND ADMINISTRATION IN ABUJA, NIGERIA'S FEDERAL CAPITAL**

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PRESENTED AT  
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## INTRODUCTION

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- Having realised the inadequacies of Lagos as the Nation's capital
- The Federal Government of Nigeria decided to move its capital city from Lagos in the coastal area to Abuja in the central part of the country
- FCT ACT was enacted in 1976 with the sole aim of moving the entire inhabitants of the FCT out of the area



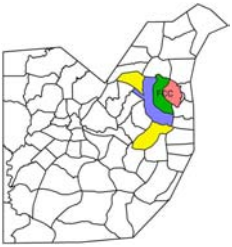
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## FCT RESETTLEMENT POLICY

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- "...The few local inhabitants in the area, who needed to be moved out of the territory for planning purposes, will be resettled outside the area in places of their choice at Government expenses..."



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## FCT RESETTLEMENT POLICY

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- "... the ownership of the lands comprised in the Federal Capital Territory shall likewise vest absolutely in the Government of the Federation."
- Resettlement as it affects the FCT was categorized into two;
  - Those who opted to be moved out of the FCT and
  - Those that had remained but could be resettled within the FCT, should their places of abode be affected by development projects

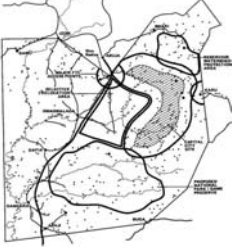
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## FCT RESETTLEMENT POLICY

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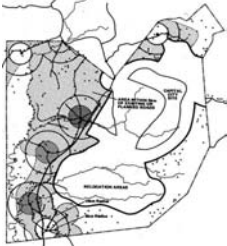
- Master Plan of Abuja listed 40 villages to be relocated in the initial stage of City growth;
  - The settlements within areas earmarked for city development
  - 5 kilometers of the Capital City site designed to protect the periphery of the City from development encroachments or



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**FCT RESETTLEMENT POLICY**

- unplanned expansion of existing settlements
- Additional 85 to be relocated as the city expands to the 3.1 million ultimate population
- On the whole, 264 involving approximately 50,000 people then, could be relocated, assuming that all elements of the Regional Plan were to be implemented



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**FCT RESETTLEMENT POLICY**

- Though this represents very high percentage of total number of existing settlements,(42-46%)
- That represents the total relocation program to be executed over many years
- The Master Plan favoured the option of relocation within the FCT to existing villages:
  - Already have some of the basic community facilities
  - Better address the potential socio-cultural preferences of the population who could potentially be served through existing community facilities

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**POLICY CHANGES**

- Within 27 years four major policy changes affecting resettlement within the FCT(1976 – 2003)
  - First policy change (1978)
    - 1977 ecological survey indicated large part of territory infested with tsetse fly
    - River courses provides breeding ground for simulum fly, carrier of disease vector given rise to river blindness
    - Huge amount money, (1.8 billion Nigerian Naira) required for compensation
    - Therefore Government decided to revise the policy

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**POLICY CHANGES**

- The second Policy change (1992)
  - "Integrations Policy"
  - Garki Village within Phase I of FCC allowed to stay
- The third Policy change (1999)
  - Reversal of "integration policy"
  - New houses built by Government



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**POLICY CHANGES**



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**POLICY CHANGES**

- Security personnel took over the houses
- Government looked the other way – political expediency?
- The Fourth Policy Change(2003)
  - Restoration of the Master Plan
  - Reversal to the original idea of complete resettlement



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## IMPLICATIONS OF THESE POLICY CHANGES



- FCT ACT, 1976, vest all land in the Territory absolutely in Government of the Federation
- Other Nigerians perceived movement into the territory as license to enter into any parcel of land
- Above laid solid foundation for squatter settlements
- Inadequate development control apparatus in place
- SERIES OF INCONSISTENCIES AND CHANGES ON GOVERNMENT RESETTLEMENT POLICY LED TO MASSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS WITHIN THE FCT

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## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS



- 28 squatter settlements within the FCT
  - Most of them as a solution to 'housing needs' of the urban poor
  - A lot as a solution to 'work-place-needs'
- Inconsistencies
  - set the trend
  - Gave people the impetus
  - Made them believe Government not very serious with the issue of resettlement

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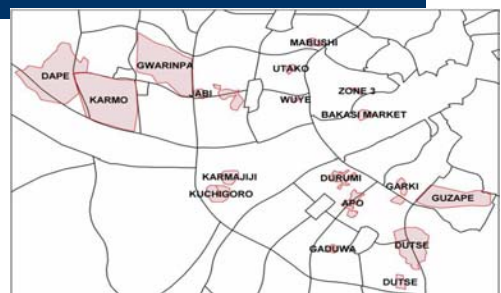
## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS



- Government started development alone initially, people & organisations reluctant
- Government started pulling out in the 1990s
- Private sector not fully ready at the time government pulled out
- Consequences
  - Acute shortages of affordable housing stock
  - Squatting as a solution


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## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS

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## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS



- Legal system ascribe no value to bare land
- Compensation for unexhausted improvement only, rates too low
- Expedient for owners to sale in open market than wait for government acquisition and subsequent low compensations
- Provision of the law observed mostly in breach
  - Flourishing vibrant illegal land market
  - Easiest way of land acquisition by squatters

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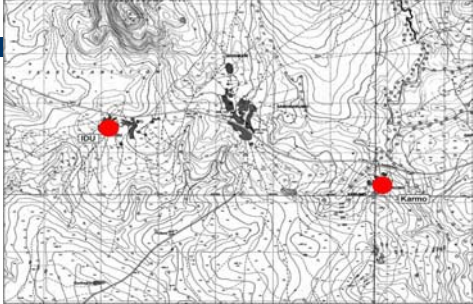
## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS



- Activities of traditional authorities
- Instant fortune from illegal operations of land market, exploit weakness of Government apparatus
- Government machinery often slow, in processes of acquiring legal titles
- Relative peaceful nature of Abuja, attraction to people
- Lack of well developed mortgage institutions for low income earners

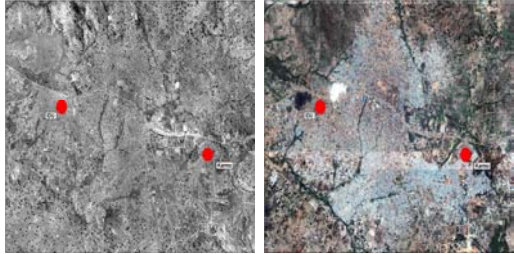
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## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS



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## SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS



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## CONSEQUENCES OF SQUATTING

- Consequences of above scenario
  - Distortions of provisions of The Master Plan & Regional Development Plan
  - Breeding ground for unscrupulous elements, increasing crime rate, traditional leadership broken down
  - Lost of valuable revenue by Government
  - Health hazards – slum & squalid conditions
  - Unregulated activities – substandard educational & health institutions & facilities

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## THE NEW APPROACH

- By 2003, the new approach - a return to the original provisions of the Abuja Master Plan
- Implementation started in 1980
- No single review since then
- Restructuring the agency involved & removing bottle necks
- Development Control apparatus strengthen

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## THE PILOT SCHEME

- Task force set up for relocation of all squatter settlements
- Targeted biggest settlement – 524 hectares in phase three of FCC
- More than 5,000 house holds involved




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## THE PILOT SCHEME

- Private – Public – Partnership affair, involving
  - Affected people
  - NGOs
  - Community leaders
  - Banks & Financial institutions
  - Private developers
  - Industries etc



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## THE PILOT SCHEME

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- "Letters of Intent" issued
- Formal letters of grant to follow after development on site
- "letters of Intent" sufficient for financial assistance from banks
- New government agency- Satellite Towns Development Agency-STDA – to provide other amenities



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## LESSONS OF THE PAST

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- REALISATION OF PAST POLICY INCONSISTENCES, LACK OF FOCUS
- REALISATION OF THE ILLS OF DISTORTIONS OF THE MASTER PLAN
- NEED FOR WELL ARTICULATED RESETTLEMENT POLICY, KEY TO SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATIONS OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE MASTER PLAN OF ABUJA

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## SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM THE PAST POLICY

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- New approach
  - Involving people
  - Private developers
  - No more 'government-would-do-it-alone'
- Hope for squatters to own a plot/house with valid legal title
- Concession given to them, seen as a favour
- Land rates and charges reduced by 1/3 of normal city rate




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## CONCLUSION

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- Response so far very encouraging, high rate of success where previous attempts failed
- Relocation time table behind schedule, but program on right track
- Success of the scheme to set the phase for future resettlement not only in Abuja but entire Federation of Nigeria



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## CONCLUSION

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- It may also be a beacon of hope for the urban poor, who may never have any real opportunity to afford a decent housing of their own and also make a decent living in the urban informal sector, with valid legal title documents and a secured tenure.

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## THANK YOU

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# QUESTIONS ?

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