



NATIONAL URBAN OBSERVATORY





About Us

Ehotiyon Associates International Limited was fully established as a Limited liability Company since 1992 by its principal founder Late Prof S.I Abumere. Late Prof Abumere was one of the countries prominent urban planners/Geographer who played a significant role in the planning and execution of the Federal Territory Abuja which today is the Nations Capital.

The firm is positioned as a development policy/research think-tank, representing a critical mass of subject matter experts, intellectuals, scientists, scholars, professionals and industrialists/practitioners' whose close interaction in a fellowship of free spirit is expected to ensures the firm's ability to muster change in the nations development and urbanization/industrialization process .

The strategic direction of the firm is to enhance national capacity in carefully articulating, realistically formulating and effectively implementing policy options calculated to promote a robust social welfare system that would be environmentally sustainable.

The firm believes strongly that for any country to succeed, human settlement especially in the areas of transportation, food, water, shelter, prison, healthcare etc must be readily available to engender socio- economic socio -political and social-cultural harmony.

The Report

Nigeria is almost notorious for the virtual lack of reliable data for socio-economic planning. This dearth of data is a big drag on the country's planning for development. Clearly then, the task of acquiring reliable data or at least establishing the framework for the regular collection of data ranks at the top of development priorities in Nigeria. This provides a strong rationale for the establishment of the NUO.

Perhaps more than many aspects of socio-economic and development planning, planning for the urban and regional development requires abundance of data measuring demographic, socio-economic, environmental and governance aspects of urban and rural development. The establishment of the National Urban Observatory (NUO) will serve as an important step in providing the much needed data for urban and regional planning of Nigeria. Since the data will be available on websites, interested persons around the world can have easy access to the data thereby helping to ameliorate the image of Nigeria as a country that lacks data integrity.





In Istanbul, 1996, Nigeria, along with 171 other countries around the world, committed itself to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The Agenda recommends several strategies for ensuring sustainable human settlement development. Among the key recommendations are the use of indicators and best practices as instruments for planning and monitoring developments in the human settlement sector. In compliance with this stipulation of the Habitat Agenda, several countries embarked upon the collection of data on key urban and housing indicators. Given the importance which the Agenda attached to gender issues, some countries went further to disaggregate the data on urban and housing indicators according to the gender.

The United Nations General Assembly held a special session in 2001 to review and appraise the progress made by countries in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. As it turned out, many countries, including Nigeria, had made little or no progress. The General Assembly then unanimously agreed that member countries must re-dedicate themselves to the key recommendations of the Habitat Agenda. To ensure that Nigeria complied with this injunction, the Nigerian office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) took up the challenge to produce for Nigeria, a gender disaggregated urban and housing indicators study. With the completion of this study, Nigeria has not only carried out some of the key injunctions on the Habitat Agenda, but has also acquired the wherewithal to join the Global Urban Observatory Network set up by the UN-Habitat as a worldwide information and capacity building network to enhance the implementation of both the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21 at the national and sub-national levels.



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In setting up of the National Urban Observatory, therefore, the Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Development is helping Nigeria to fulfill its UN obligations. This would mean that Nigeria will be in compliance with one of the major stipulations of the Habitat Agenda and more specifically Agenda 21. This would be a laudable achievement for the country.



The Need For The National Urban Observatory

The question may be asked, “why should we be concerned about sustainable urban development and the indicators to guide it?” On first impulse, it is easy to respond by saying that more than half of the world population is urban and the remaining proportion is increasingly dependent upon cities for a wide variety of needs including economic, social, political and recreational needs. In short, planning for urban development is tantamount to planning for overall economic development because urbanization is good for economic development.

The second point that needs to be made is that the establishment of the National Urban Observatory will be in fulfillment of the UN-Habitat recommendation especially the Habitat 21 injunctions that member nations embark on the use of indicators and best practices as instruments for planning and monitoring developments in the urban sector. Nigeria, particularly has not done very well in the areas of management of her cities. It is hoped that the availability of these indicators for planning and monitoring of development in the urban sector will make a real difference.

Thirdly, this project adds value to the global urban indicator programme by addressing gender issues. It provides a tool for monitoring and reviewing the conditions of cities and the housing sector through a gender perspective, providing benchmarks for the development of urban and shelter conditions and policy, taking gender into account. Indicators are quantitative tools for planning and monitoring the urban and shelter sectors. The indicators permit a comprehensive picture of the urban and shelter sectors in cities. As a major concern of the Habitat II conference, gender is addressed in this project through gender-sensitive indicators, i.e. gender-specific and gender-disaggregated indicators, in order to measure gender roles and relations in the urban and shelter sectors.

Towards Gender Sensitivity

Gender roles and relations need to be considered when it comes to planning, monitoring and elaborating policies in the urban and shelter sectors. Urban and shelter development planning must take into account gender roles in order to maximize the impact of measures and policies. More gender-sensitive planning and housing policies are required to ensure that housing and urban development projects are more people-friendly and take into account the requirements of men and women. To ensure that the indicators examined in the NUO are truly gender sensitive, they are to pass the following tests:

- Measure the role of men and women in urban development and shelter.
- Monitor urban and shelter sectors, taking gender into account
- Integrate the gender dimension in policies, indicators being policy tools.

These guided the selection of the indicators in this study




Rationale For Taking Gender Into Account

The UN-Habitat indicator programme provides an elaborate and convincing rationale for gender disaggregated data. In what follows, we re-state much of the arguments. Women play an important role in the human settlements development process. They constitute at least 50 percent of the world's population, and it is estimated that one-third of the households are women-headed. Despite the increasing recognition of the necessity for a gendered approach to human settlement, and the evidence that gender needs to be integrated in urban policies and shelter strategies, very little information exists regarding the respective roles of men and women in human settlements. This needs to be corrected. In many countries and areas of life, analysis of the status of women in human settlements is not easy because data do not exist. The contribution that women make to development, as well as the discrimination against them, are equally hidden. Indicators, which provide quantitative information on the roles and relations of men and women, are necessary for any analysis that integrates the gender dimension in housing and urban policies. This will enable the effective monitoring of the progress being made in bridging the gender gap in the urban sector.

The 1993 Human Development Report describes women as the “non-participating” majority. Women’s contribution in many areas of development has often been described as “invisible”. Data is needed not just on levels of education but male and female levels of education; male and female access to land and housing; male and female contributions to the construction sector; male and female contributions to production and consumption and indeed, to all segments of human endeavour. All these are vital especially in developing countries like Nigeria where women in several communities are discriminated against in respect of access to education, jobs and other opportunities.





UN-Habitat (1998) has advanced further arguments in support of the need for a gender approach to the indicator study, argument, which we again reproduce here. The UN-Habitat has since 1985 stressed the importance of improving the status of women to take a more active part in the human settlements process as a whole, and of incorporating gender issues into its entire work programme. In 1988, the Global Shelter Strategy to the Year 2000 underlined the crucial role of women in shelter development. The Commission for Human Settlements, in its resolutions 13/3 (1991), 14/4 (1993) and 15/3 (1995) aimed at promoting the participation of women in human settlements developments, by requesting UNCHS (now UN-Habitat) to strengthen gender-sensitive approaches and methods in the Centre's programmes and "to implement measures in the development of shelter strategy which strengthen the participation and empowerment of women in settlement development and management at local, regional and national levels".

In particular:

1. Resolution 14/4 (1993) requests the Head of UN-Habitat to review the set of key indicators which are being developed for monitoring shelter sector performance in terms of their gender sensitivity and to include indicators that are conducive to identifying the possibly disadvantaged position of women in the housing market in the shelter sector.
2. Resolution 15/3 (1995) requests Governments to include gender-impact analyses as an essential step in the development and monitoring of human settlements

A gender dimension of human settlements development has become a crucial concern of UN-Habitat and indeed, of the entire UN family especially UNDP. A gender-sensitive approach is therefore crucial and must address the following:

1. Identify, test, collect and analyze a set of urban and housing indicators.
2. Establish the collection of shelter indicators in all countries providing a precise and defined basis to analyze their own performance.
3. Implement a permanent data-collection facility and database that will permit regular analysis of the status of human settlements and the effects of policies in the different urban sectors.
4. Assist countries in the preparation of country reports for Habitat II using a general indicator framework.
5. Assist in national and regional efforts to develop indicators through training programme, survey design, and data definition and assembly.

