

Advances in 21st Century Human Settlements

Timothy Gbenga Nubi
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Basirat Oyalowo *Editors*

Housing and SDGs in Urban Africa

 Springer

Advances in 21st Century Human Settlements

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Housing and SDGs in Urban Africa

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*For all those
who have strived through the years
for a greater Africa*

Foreword

For too long, African countries have been the poster child of spatial dysfunctionality, as poverty and slum proliferation rates, infrastructure deficiencies and a plethora of structural inefficiencies continue to define the region. Yet, African nations are in fact experiencing unprecedented rates of urbanisation and citizens are responding to existential challenges in a variety of ways, essentially recreating cities to serve their purposes.

In September 2000, leaders of over 150 countries—many of them African heads of state—signed the Millennium Declaration, thus affirming their commitment to attainment of sustainable development. By 2015, the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were expanded to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reflecting more global needs and, more specifically, concerns for environmental protection, social justice and economic development. The SDGs are the current development agenda designed to address the multiplicity of issues threatening global well-being.

The SDGs align directly with Africa's development priorities as articulated in Agenda 2063, dubbed 'The Africa We Want'. Therefore, it is imperative that African nations localise the goals, mainstream them into substantive policies and ensure they are implemented at subnational and local levels. This publication, coming at the outset of the 'UN Decade of Action' for the attainment of all 17 SDGs, is indeed timely.

The Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development at the University of Lagos, as the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) Centre of Excellence for Urbanisation and Habitable Cities, has consistently explored the concept of sustainability on various dimensions. Through research, advocacy and community engagement, the Centre actively works towards achieving the various targets and indicators of the SDGs.

In line with the Centre's objectives, therefore, this book focuses on the African built environment and housing sector, especially given the nexus between housing and all SDGs. Comprehensive in its outlook, this edited volume is an attempt to establish the nexus between a functional, equitable and accessible housing sector and national development. Using case studies from various African cities, it interrogates extant assumptions, challenges the status quo and provides evidence for strategic repositioning of city systems and processes. In addition, the authors have stressed

the fact that the development challenges of African cities are interconnected and so require systematic and holistic responses.

By interrogating old ideas and testing new ones empirically, this volume presents nuanced perspectives on the African housing sector as it relates to local, regional and international development. It is my fervent desire that the book will precipitate wide-ranging re-evaluation of the SDGs' progress in Africa, while also serving as a valued knowledge resource in the urgent quest for a socially just and environmentally friendly economic development model that citizens and governments can truly own.

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Professor Oluwatoyin Temitayo Ogundipe is Professor of Botany in the Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, University of Lagos, Nigeria. He holds a Ph.D. in Botany (Ife) and MBA (UNILAG). He has attended trainings at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa; University of Reading and University of Cambridge, both in the UK; Harvard University, USA; and Kunming Institute of Botany, China. His areas of research include molecular plant taxonomy/biosystematics, forensic botany, cytogenetics, ethnobotany, paleobotany and ecological conservation.

Since joining the University of Lagos in 1990, he has held different administrative positions. He was Head of Department of Botany, Sub-Dean of the Faculty of Science and Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies, where he attracted partnerships with industry resulting in vast improvements in infrastructure at the university. He was also Director of the Academic Planning Unit. In 2016, he was appointed the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics and Research).

Since his appointment as Vice Chancellor on 12 November 2017, the university has recorded a significant rise in demand-driven research and the university–industry relationship has been blooming. The university in fact patented 11 inventions within 18 months of his emergence as Vice Chancellor, with three of the patents being prototyped. His administration has been able to attract over 7 billion naira in research grants, including the grant for the African Research Network for Urbanisation and Habitable Cities, which is to provide a strategic platform for developing research capacities in African institutions in the drive towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. He has attracted funding for research through the Lagos State Science Research and Innovation Council (LASRIC). The LASRIC fund is aimed at making Lagos the hub of innovation and technology in the country, with emphasis on the promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

He instituted the Prof. Ogundipe Innovation Challenge (POIC), which, with cash rewards, aims to motivate young academics

to undertake research and innovation projects. He has also been working assiduously to promote entrepreneurship among students of the university. Moreover, he has identified staff homeownership as one of the priorities of his administration. In this regard, the university is collaborating with Family Homes Fund, an initiative of the Federal Government of Nigeria, to provide homes for staff from grade level 9 and below. Under his leadership, the University of Lagos TV station has debuted with news and entertainment coverage across West Africa.

He has over 90 publications in accredited academic journals in addition to co-authoring eight books. Two of his research collaborations are undergoing patenting.

Preface

Several agreements and policies have been signed at the international and regional levels to address the housing and urban development challenges facing Africa. Not surprisingly, even though these agendas are unique in their own rights with set goals and targets, they converge at the urbanisation nexus. This is because it is recognised that cities are supposed to advance economic, social and environmental development and present the laboratory for tackling most challenges confronting humanity today. Accordingly, in most of these agreements, the need to guide the growth and development of African cities has been paramount. From the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its precursor Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, there has been a common attempt to set up policy frameworks for resolving the challenges facing Africa today. As we enter the last decade towards Agenda 2030 and given the challenges still dogging African cities, it has become imperative to empirically determine how far the continent's priorities align with global goals, as well as to undertake grounded interrogation of the linkages between these goals and policymaking in Africa.

The motivation for embarking on this book project came during a special strategic session of the management team of the University of Lagos Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development. As the African Research Universities Alliances (ARUA) Centre of Excellence for Urbanisation and Habitable Cities, with a strategic focus on African development, the Centre deemed it necessary to articulate, from a mainly African perspective, the linkages between the African housing sector and the global goals in housing. This thinking was due, first, to the centrality of housing as a dynamic and complex sector of any economy and, second, to the need to recognise the inherent linkages between various facets of housing and the socio-economic and environmental well-being of households, communities and even nations. We therefore decided to midwife a pan-African edited volume that would offer a platform for documenting often under-represented African scholarship on this all-important global discourse.

We invited chapter proposals exploring the interconnections, interactions and linkages between the SDGs and housing through original research, practice experience, case studies, desk-based research and other knowledge media. Expectedly,

we received contributions from academics, practitioners, policy actors and activists from within and outside Africa. The chapters address housing and SDGs linkages in African cities/countries and offer best practices, policy transfer and knowledge sharing for stakeholders in Africa.

While integrated and multidisciplinary approaches were strongly encouraged, authors were urged to present ideas in a systematic manner that is accessible to a general audience. Authors were also encouraged to support the capacity development drive of the Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development by collaborating with co-authors across institutional, gender and generational backgrounds. All submitted proposals underwent a double-blind peer review process. Selected proposals were then developed into full papers and subjected to double-blind peer review, resulting in the chapters that are included in this volume.

We therefore thank all the 24 contributors for sharing their research and perspectives with us. Authors come from a wide range of backgrounds: architecture, African studies, building, construction economics, development studies, ecotoxicology and conservation, ecosystem analysis (ESA), environmental management, housing studies, human resource management, real estate, as well as urban and regional planning, among others.

We also want to appreciate Prof. Bharat Dahiya, the 'Advances in 21st Century Human Settlements Series' editor, who has been quite enthusiastic and supportive of this book. We equally thank the team in Springer Nature, especially series publishing editor Loyola D'Silva and production editor Sanjeevkumar Mathiyazhagan, who both worked closely with us during the production process.

Our intention has been to show, via multidisciplinary research, the importance of housing to national development, urban management and attainment of the SDGs. We are convinced that the African housing challenge is best approached by engendering a reorientation of urbanisation in African cities along the lines of sustainability. In pursuit of this, we have embarked on the book project to present new ideas and to subject deep assumptions to reality checks in the context of African cities in a way that would be relevant for users in the academic, policy, development and civil society spaces.

Indeed, we hope that the book will promote broader understanding of the African urban reality and provoke deeper discourse on the diverse approaches to achieving sustainable development in Africa.

Lagos, Nigeria
Stirling, UK
Lagos, Nigeria
Lagos, Nigeria

Timothy Gbenga Nubi
Isobel Anderson
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About the Editors



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Between 2015 and 2017, he was Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Science, University of Lagos, as well as Chairman of the University's Housing Unit. He was Founding Director, University of Lagos Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development. The Centre, which was established with a grant from the African Development Bank, conducts research and delivers capacity-building courses and academic programmes in the field of housing and real estate development and management. Under his leadership, the Centre won the rights to host a Centre of Excellence in Urbanisation and Habitable Cities in Africa under the auspices of the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) and the UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Global Challenge Research Fund. He has a wealth of experience in engaging with government, communities, NGOs and private-sector organisations both locally and internationally and has over 60 publications. He is currently leading

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Professor Isobel Anderson is Chair in Housing Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Stirling, UK, where she has worked since 1994. Having held a range of leadership roles, she currently leads the Home, Housing and Community Research Programme. She is Chief Examiner for the M.Sc./Diploma in Housing Studies and chairs the University's Academic Panel for Postgraduate Research Students.

Her main research and Ph.D. supervision interests are in homelessness and access to housing, sustainable housing and communities, inequality and social exclusion, housing and health/well-being, participation and empowerment, international comparative housing studies and the use of evidence for policy and practice. She has held more than 40 research awards from research councils, charities and government bodies and has published widely for scholarly as well as practice audiences. She was previously UK researcher for the European Observatory on Homelessness (convened by FEANTSA, the EU association of national homelessness agencies) and remains on the international advisory committee of *The European Journal of Homelessness*.

She has been active in the European Network for Housing Research (ENHR) throughout her career. She founded the Working Group on Welfare Policy, Homelessness and Social Exclusion (WELPHASE), jointly coordinating it from 2004 to 2013. Since 2015, she has been joint coordinator of the working group on Housing in Developing Countries. She has collaborated with colleagues in Cuba, South Africa and Turkey, in addition to being privileged to be a UK partner of the Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development at the University of Lagos, Nigeria.



Dr. Taibat Lawanson is Associate Professor of Urban Planning at the University of Lagos, Nigeria, where she leads the Pro-Poor Development Research Cluster and serves as Co-Director at the Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development. She holds a Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning from the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria.

Her research work is in the broad areas of urban informality, pro-poor development, governance and environmental justice. She is particularly interested in how formal and informal urban systems synthesise in emerging African contexts, especially Lagos. She has authored over 60 scholarly articles and received research funding from DFID, British Academy, UKRI, Africa Multiple of the University of Bayreuth and Cambridge-Africa ALBORADA Research Fund among others. She is published in leading urban study journals including *Habitat International* and *Area Development and Policy*. She is on the editorial board of *Urban Forum* and serves as International Corresponding Editor of *Urban Studies*. She is also Member of the international advisory board of UNHABITAT's flagship 'State of the World Cities'.

She is Member of the International Society of City and Regional Planners, a proud alumnus of the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Centre and a pioneer World Social Science Fellow of the International (Social) Science Council.



Basirat Oyalowo researches into contemporary issues in housing studies, informality and urban sustainability, with an interest in decolonisation, comparative African studies and mixed methods research. She lectures in the Department of Estate Management at the University of Lagos, where she obtained her Ph.D. with a thesis on the co-operative societies and housing supply in Lagos. Earlier, she had earned her master's degree in Housing Policy and Management from the University of Northumbria at Newcastle, where she graduated in 2006 as the Best Full-Time Student in Housing Programme in the North-East, awarded by the Chartered Institute of Housing, North-East Branch, UK. She is also on the management team of the University of Lagos Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development, where she drives the Centre's grants response, research, capacity-building and postgraduate

programmes, as well as housing advocacy activities. In the last decade, she contributed chapters on housing and human capital development to the 25-year Regional Development Plan of the Ogun State Government of Nigeria, aspects of which she was actively engaged in implementing, as an academic where she has linked research with teaching and practice. She was Lead Facilitator, Informality Discovery Working Group, and later Member of the Strategy Writing Group for the preparation of the Lagos Resilience Strategy. Individually and as part of a team, she has won capacity-building grants under the ESRC and AHRC of the UK Research and Innovation Global Challenge Research Fund (UKRI GCRF). She is a registered Estate Surveyor and Valuer.

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Africa's Housing Sector as a Pathway to Achieving the SDGs



Timothy Nubi and Isobel Anderson

Keywords African cities · Housing policy · SDGs · Urban development · Urbanization

1 Introduction: The Urban Development Challenge for Africa

Adequate, affordable housing has long been recognised as central to global development strategies [5]. However, the inclusion of a specific ‘urban goal’ for sustainable cities and communities in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [17] has been recognised as a new milestone in the effort to integrate the residential environment into the sustainable development debate. A further required step, however, is fuller recognition of the myriad of ways in which a healthy housing sector can also contribute to meeting the other 16 integrated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their associated targets by 2030. As the first five-year milestone of implementation of Agenda 2030 is reached, this book presents new scholarship in the African context that demonstrates the centrality of quality homes to achieving the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, which was ratified in 2016 at the HABITAT III conference in Quito [14–16].

No doubt, there is an urgent need for scholarship in this direction. Cities are supposed to advance economic, social and environmental development and present

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the laboratory for resolving most of the challenges confronting humanity today. However, with high and rapidly rising urbanisation rates, African cities are not seen to be fulfilling this role. Rather, they are characterised by increasing slum proliferation and housing shortages as well as inadequate urban infrastructure that reduces business formation, competitiveness and productivity. All of these inhibit efficient inter- and intra-city human, material and resource flows. Similarly, African city management has for too long been based on outdated, irrelevant colonial-era urban planning dogmas. Consequently, there have been discordant city layouts and poor spatial connectivity, congestion and gridlocks, sprawls, inefficiency of infrastructure systems and decreased productivity. All of these have created negative externalities for the social, environmental and economic sustainability of urban areas. Therefore, it is now imperative to question the old ways of viewing and managing the city, if we are to chart a fresh path towards more competitive and yet more sustainable cities in Africa.

This collection draws on evidence reviews and new empirical studies to scrutinise the ways in which housing policy and provision can provide a pathway to achieving the SDGs in the African context. A key tenet of UN Agenda 2030 was that no one would be left behind in the effort to end poverty and hunger as well as to share wealth and address inequality. To this end, sustainable urbanisation was viewed as crucial to people's quality of life. Although implementation of Agenda 2030 is envisaged as being deliverable through a 'global partnership', paragraph 41 indicates that individual countries have the primary responsibility for their own economic and social development. As such, the chapters in this collection explore the shared and contrasting experiences on housing provision in African cities, alongside examining the deficiencies in government policy from various perspectives, considering alternative housing finance models and, very importantly, questioning—through empirical analysis—the various assumptions that had been believed to limit Africa's progress in achieving adequate housing for its teeming urban populace. In all these, linkages between housing and the SDGs are explored and specific areas of connection identified.

2 Housing and the Sustainable Development Goals

Housing issues are of course most directly relevant to SDG11, which seeks to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." Under SDG11, Target 11.1 is to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and to upgrade 'slums' by 2030 [17]. Reducing the proportion of the urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing is a key indicator of progress.

Subsequently, the New Urban Agenda emerged as a detailed declaration and implementation plan, with a similar goal of 'leaving no one behind'. Paragraph 32 of the Implementation Plan committed signatories to promoting the development of

age- and gender-responsive housing policies, which were integrated with the employment, education, healthcare and social integration sectors, as well as with all levels of government. Policies were to incorporate the provision of “adequate, affordable, accessible, resource efficient, safe, resilient, well-connected and well-located housing” (Paragraph 32). Paragraph 33 committed to stimulating the supply of affordable and accessible housing for different income groups, including those in marginalised communities and vulnerable situations, e.g., homeless persons. The UN HABITAT's New Urban Agenda (NUA) offers a shared vision in which all people have equal rights to housing and other benefits of the world's cities (2017a). Calling for a ‘paradigm shift’, the NUA proposed standards and principles for the planning, construction, development, management and improvement of urban areas, including housing and residential neighbourhoods, from national urban policies to local implementation. The approach applied equally to all civil-society organisations, emphasising links between urbanism, economic opportunities and an improved quality of life. It levers for the transformative change of city planning, land readjustment programmes and basic services as well as housing and public space, while recognising the importance of monitoring progress [16].

The New Urban Agenda's integrated approach recognises the important connections among housing, well-being and people's capacity to flourish and contribute to economic and social development. It is in this sense that the quality of homes and neighbourhoods underpin the capacity of societies to achieve the 17 integrated goals (Fig. 1). Chapters in this book make explicit connections with Goals 3 (Health), 6 (Water and Sanitation), 7 (Energy), 9 (Infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable communities), 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life below water), 15 (Life on Land) and 16 (Institutions). There is undoubtedly equal scope to make connections between access to housing



Fig. 1 The sustainable development goals. *Source* United Nations [18]

and eradicating poverty, hunger and inequality (1, 2, 10), as well as supporting education (4), gender equality (5), work (8), responsible consumption (12), while strong partnerships (17) are required to coordinate housing and urban development. Key to optimising these intersections is the need for integrated research often in the form of “interdisciplinary collaborations between natural and social scientists and transdisciplinary team building that brings together academic and non-academic (practice-based) researchers to investigate sustainability challenges of mutual interest” [13, p. 787].

The measurement of progress towards the SDGs is central to implementation of Agenda 2030 but it is also important to consider how this implementation can be conceptualised for analysis. Arguably, implementation depends largely on mobilising structures of governance (at global, national and local levels) through a classical policy-making approach [8]. In practice, however, implementation may be much more incremental, while the attachment of measureable targets to the broad aspirational goals reflects evidence-based policy models that emerged in the 2000s. In their review of the conceptualisation of informality in housing, d’Alençon et al. [1] acknowledged the need for a global/theoretical conception embracing national, city and neighbourhood levels of implementation. Therefore, they suggested better understanding of governance frameworks involving actors associated with ‘informality’, as well as of the political economy underpinning specific urban realities (p. 64).

In a policy paper directed towards developing the NUA [12], it was argued that inadequate housing and unequal access remain central characteristics of rapid urbanisation, at least as partly explained by the failure to adopt effective measures due to the fact that key stakeholders benefit from the status quo. In order to disrupt that status quo, the paper suggested, it is necessary to make the case for more radical interventions including market regulation, use of taxation to influence affordability and widen access, taking account of formal and informal housing and stressing social justice perspectives, as well as for adopting post-colonial theory and de-colonialising methods [12, p. 7–8]. In the global north, housing policy outcomes have also been at least partly explained by the embeddedness of institutional structures (often underpinned by neoliberal agendas), thus creating a path dependency that resists change [2, 3].

Kaika [9] noted that the NUA’s call for “safe, resilient, sustainable and inclusive cities” essentially remains path-dependent. This includes the use of techno-managerial solutions (such as smart cities), the indicators for monitoring and the overall institutional frameworks, which were viewed as belonging to a failed paradigm. Kaika characterised the approach as merely ‘vaccinating’ citizens in order to help them absorb further inequality. This interpretation sees the NUA as mediating, rather than alleviating, the effects of global inequality. Where communities rejected such strategies, there was more possibility to disrupt path dependency and establish alternative approaches to accessing housing, healthcare, sanitation, etc. Real social innovation, then, was to be found in dissent, rather than in consensus [9], while policy development from within countries in the south was seen as a requirement for disrupting policy pathways. The notion of path dependency and how prior trajectories can be disrupted or shifted to new directions lends itself to a wider consideration

of how housing can be a pathway to meeting the wider set of integrated development goals.

3 Housing as a Pathway to Achieving the SDGs

Scholarship to date has connected housing to the fields of some SDGs more than others. For example, housing has long been understood as a social determinant of health [6, 10]. Globally, home and housing are at the heart of communities and represent a key sphere in which public policy can affect people of all socio-economic cadres. The World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health shows the intergenerational nature of the SDGs [4]. The World Health Organisation housing and health guidelines on the health benefits of improved housing emphasise avoidance of overcrowding, appropriate indoor temperature and indoor safety and accessibility [21]. The guidelines also recognise the importance of housing affordability, security and the surrounding environment in achieving overall well-being.

The residential setting also underpins community activities, including community resilience and recognition of 'asset-based' approaches to residents' capacity to enjoy life and cope with its challenges [20]. In a resilience model, individuals, households and communities are seen as having resources to cope with difficulties, in contrast to a 'deficit' model of illness or housing disadvantage. Resilience, as capacity to deal with difficulties and even thrive in overcoming adversity, has also been recognised by the World Health Organisation as an important factor in lifelong health and well-being [11]. However, the concept of resilience, has also been criticised for failing to sufficiently challenge the prevailing structures that cause and sustain disadvantage [9].

Nevertheless, there is still scope to better document housing as a determinant of other factors such as economic, social and cultural opportunities and outcomes. Communities may build resilience to disadvantage, while institutionalism and path dependency may help explain why change is sometimes only incremental, even where progressive strategies are in place. It is therefore important to consider how far historical policies (colonial and post-colonial) determine contemporary national and local implementation of Agenda 2030 in African countries. While ultimately there may be no single conceptual approach that best explains the intersection of housing and the SDGs at the community level and national development, the triangulation of new research findings with the existing scientific literature and policy/practice can shed new light on evolving debates. Within the wider context of global sustainable development and city governance, then, our contributions analyse the ways in which a wide range of factors comes into play in shaping not only the development of settlements but also changes in sustainable economic and social development.

The evidence in the following chapters suggests that the benefits of housing improvements are not yet fully recognised in the wider spheres of the SDGs and Agenda 2030. There are also potential research areas that have not been addressed

in this collection. Nevertheless, the range of issues examined demonstrates the continuing need to better integrate interventions to achieve the global goals.

To an extent, agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda can be interpreted as rational planning tools for sustainable development but, where implementation is highly constrained, arguably path-dependent and incremental. National programmes and local projects can bring about real improvements in quality of life. The importance of community settings and practices to good health and education, for example, remains core to better understanding of community interpretations of sustainability and development and thereby to developing culturally effective responses and interventions.

The 2030 Agenda is ambitious, if also somewhat idealistic. All participating nations have signed up to ‘no one being left behind’. In a largely neoliberal world focused on economic competitiveness, however, this has rarely, if ever, been a realistic goal in most national agendas. The importance of housing to the other SDGs may be widely recognised but national and local agendas need to demonstrate integrated commitment to improved housing along with other mechanisms for achieving the SDGs. While there may be a danger that incrementalism ultimately implies almost no or limited progress, the international priority to the UN Sustainable Development Goals offers continuing opportunities to better address the global challenge of meeting the housing and community needs of low-income groups in an environmentally sustainable way, which in turn will support progress regarding the other goals.

4 Contemporary Housing and Urbanization in Africa

Contemporary African cities are defined by multiple issues that have challenged optimisation, competitiveness and efficiency in urban areas. Globally acceptable tools such as the Sustainable Development Goals provide the critical directions for change that can bring about resolution of these challenges for the benefit of all Africans. However, there is urgent need to incorporate these goals into sectoral concerns to catalyse change. Housing represents a substantial proportion of urban land use. As both an economic good and a social service, housing transcends the brick and mortar with which it is built. Indeed, homes underpin the fundamental quality of life and all other economic and social activities for work, play and living, thereby incorporating the immediate environment and neighbourhood, as well as the individual’s dwelling. The science and practice of the planning, supply, production and management of housing in its micro and macro environment are avenues for incorporating and operationalising all of the SDGs, with a particular focus on the residential environment.

This book’s focus on Africa and African perspectives is deliberate. There is a dearth of collections of scholarly works dedicated wholly to African issues and that comes out of the work done by African scholars and practitioners with collaborators from within Africa and elsewhere. The challenges facing African cities are

monumental, as they play host to some of the most daunting statistics on the impact of infrastructure and economic development on livelihoods, municipal efficiency and national growth and development. As the SDGs seek to promote environmentally conscious and socially just development, the quest for development in Africa often overrides consideration of what has been termed the tripod of sustainability (economic, social and environmental sustainability). This volume brings together scholarly research and argument that cuts across and intertwines this tripod into options that can deliver on the promise of the SDGs. The project is an initiative of the Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development at the University of Lagos, which identified the gap in grounded research that links the housing sector with the SDGs in African cities.

It is worth reiterating that the chapters in this volume critically examine the various interconnections between housing and the SDGs, exploring how the SDGs can be used as a platform for addressing issues surrounding housing, such as affordability and accessibility, and how housing and its neighbourhood impact the environment. Thus, externalities of housing neighbourhoods on pollution, waste management and slum proliferation are brought forward. The volume also addresses contemporary issues in housing production, housing investment and finance, housing governance, housing supply and urban design processes as avenues for achieving the goals and targets of the SDGs. The critical analysis of taken-for-granted dogmas, such as the right to housing and the relevance of the SDGs, also finds expression in the chapters.

In achieving the book's core objective of interrogating the connections between housing and the SDGs, the chapters represent the outcomes of engaging stakeholders in the epistemological, practical, theoretical and methodological issues associated with housing as a platform for achieving the SDGs in Africa. The book therefore explores the interconnections, interactions and linkages between the SDGs and housing through original research, practice, experience, case studies, desk-based research and other knowledge media.

The remainder of this introductory chapter outlines the range of contributions in the book in the context of progress towards the SDGs and the ways in which housing within African countries contributes to sustainability and development, beyond the SDG11 accommodation target. The contributions have a strong focus on evidence from Nigeria, as well as contributions from South Africa, Ghana and Uganda. Many of the materials will have relevance/transferability more widely in Africa, even as there are also wider comparative insights from outside Africa.

5 Housing, Urbanisation and SDGs in Africa

The chapters in Sect. 2 explore housing policy and governance in the African context. Chapter “[Global Goal, Local Context: Pathways to Sustainable Urban Development in Lagos, Nigeria](#)” (Taibat Lawanson, Basirat Oyalowo and Timothy Nubi) examines the global goals in local contexts through a focus on pathways to sustainable urban

development in Lagos. Anthony Olowoyeye addresses the theme of housing management in Chapter “[The Road not Taken: Policy and Politics of Housing Management in Africa](#)”. Housing’s centrality to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals is reflected in unequal patterns of infrastructure development, health outcomes and social injustice. The chapter identifies strategic and historical causes of the problems of post-independence housing systems in Africa having ‘not taken’ the road recommended by the Economic Commission for Africa in 1963, with the consequences of this missed opportunity still being felt. A key conclusion is that until robust policies enable housing to become a key driver of economic, social and infrastructural development, in a system that works for all, meeting the SDG goals will remain difficult across Africa. Chapter “[Learning from Experience: An Exposition of Singapore’s Home Ownership Scheme and Imperatives for Nigeria](#)” presents our international comparative analysis, in a consideration of potential learning from the experience of homeownership in Singapore (Hikmot Koleoso & Basirat Oyalowo). Starting with Sustainable Development Goal 11.1 as a declaration of the need to ensure access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all citizens, the authors address poor access to housing as a cause of poverty in developed and developing countries. They examine national homeownership structures as means of economic and social development and as a potential platform for eradicating poverty, as in the transformative experience of Singapore from its underdeveloped status into an international economic hub. The study analyses the key policy tools and features of Singapore’s housing reforms and interventions to reflect on what Nigeria (or other African nations) might adapt for a sustainable housing policy to contribute to achieving SDG11.1. The importance of government’s political and financial commitment to homeownership is supported by evidence of socioeconomic and cultural needs as well as financial ability. Successful features of the Singapore scheme that might be considered in African countries include design, affordability, legislation, regulation, allocation, physical management and regeneration of properties within the homeownership sector.

The third section of our collection focuses on housing quality and health, with findings from Nigeria and South Africa. John Ntema, Isobel Anderson and Lochner Marais present their findings on health outcomes in Mangaung Upgraded Informal Settlement in South Africa (Chapter “[Housing and Possible Health Implications in Upgraded Informal Settlements: Evidence from Mangaung Township, South Africa](#)”). The close association between housing and health underpins their consideration of SDG3 (health and well-being) and SDG6 (standards in water and sanitation provision, as well as the housing-oriented SDG11. Their evidence supports international and South African findings that the health of residents in upgraded informal settlements is connected more to infrastructural development and neighbourhood access to social amenities than to physical housing conditions. New evidence from the analysis of Mangaung households’ perceptions of health found that lack of basic sanitation and water, as well as of primary health clinics, were factors constraining health improvements. Thus, policies to ensure improved health services and sanitation in upgrading programmes are needed to contribute more effectively to achieving the SDGs on health and housing as well as water and sanitation. Similarly, in Chapter “[Housing, Health and Well-Being of Slum Dwellers in Nigeria: Case Studies of Six](#)

Cities", SDGs 3, 6 and 11, as well as 5 (gender equality) and 17 (partnerships), are considered in relation to the housing and health of slum dwellers in six Nigerian cities (Johnson Bade Falade). This study analysed the roles of slum housing in meeting the physiological and psychological needs of residents and in protecting them from disease. The study assessed the contributions of 26 indicators to meeting the health and well-being needs of residents. The results varied across the six slums and the analysis highlights the implications for promoting healthy housing and urban renewal, as well as for realising the targets of Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda.

The distinctive theme of housing and the environment is explored in Section Four of the volume. Chapter "**Adverse Impact of Human Activities on Aquatic Ecosystems: Investigating the Environmental Sustainability Perception of Stakeholders in Lagos and Ogun States, Nigeria**", by Temitope Sogbanmu, Opeyemi Ogunkoya, Esther Olaniran, Adedoyin Lasisi and Thomas Seiler, examines environmental sustainability and the impact of human activities on aquatic ecosystems in Nigeria's Lagos and Ogun states. SDG 14, which addresses the need to support life below water, is thus the focus, given the realisation that in urban Africa rising population rates pose environmental challenges for the management of aquatic resources. The authors' research exposes stakeholders' perceptions of environmental risk to air quality, water quality and impact on aquatic animals. The need for improved education, communication and implementation of evidence-based policies for the management of these ecosystems is highlighted as crucial to the planning of human settlements near aquatic ecosystems. Air quality is the focus of Chapter "**Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals: Considerations for Household and Indoor Air Pollution in Nigeria and Ghana**" (Irene Appeaning Addo and Oluwafemi Olajide)—a feature of good health (SDG3), climate action (SDG13), and life on land (SDG15), as well as being central to sustainable settlements and homes. Indoor air pollution in Africa is recognised as one of the leading causes of pulmonary diseases and death, given the high incidence of use of biomass fuel for cooking. This study on Nigeria and Ghana revealed a high incidence of indoor air pollution in sub-Saharan Africa (related to widespread home-based enterprises, use of solid fuels and poor ventilation), yet indoor air pollution is hardly recognised at policy and institutional levels, with little emphasis on monitoring and abatement. The study therefore recommends further research and action on indoor air pollution to drive the achievement of improved air quality by 2030.

The critical question of how human rights are embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals is explored in Section Five on the right to housing. Chapter "**A Study of Housing, Good Health and Well-Being in Kampala, Uganda**", by Mutyaba Emmanuel Musoke, is a narrative of the linkages between housing and well-being in Uganda. Starting from the premise that adequate housing is a necessity for health and well-being, the chapter develops the theoretical argument that housing is a human right that needs to be respected to achieve the promotion of health and well-being (SDG3). The review confirms that the home should be a place where people feel safe and have a sense of belonging, in addition to being a place that supports physical and emotional well-being as well as productivity. John Ntema presents a South African case study that examines aspects of relocation and informal settlement upgrading

in Mangaung Township, Free State Province (Chapter “[Relocation and Informal Settlements Upgrading in South Africa: The Case Study of Mangaung Township, Free State Province](#)”). In post-apartheid South Africa, only 28% of all settlement upgrading projects improved existing communities, while the remainder were green-field projects to which residents in informal settlements were relocated. The mixed-methods study contributes new evidence on households’ perceptions of basic service infrastructure, amenities and governance in a relocation site in Mangaung Township (Bloemfontein). Challenges included promotion of housing development at the expense of inclusive, sustainable communities and undermining of participatory project planning and design and limiting contributions to SDGs 3 (health), 4 (education), 6 (water and sanitation) and 11 (cities and communities).

Resources to achieve the sustainable development goals are a critical factor in delivering progress. Thus, the four chapters in Section 6 analyse the role of housing investment and finance. In Chapter “[Green Bonds and Green Buildings: New Options for Achieving Sustainable Development in Nigeria](#)”, Oluwaseun Oguntuase and Abimbola Windapo review the potential of green bonds and buildings for achieving sustainable and affordable housing and reaching a number of SDGs, including 3 (Health), 6 (Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 13 (Climate Action). The analysis reflects how the development of the Nigerian green bond market presents an investment opportunity for green buildings to achieve sustainable development. Chapter “[Homeownership in a Sub-Saharan Africa City: Exploring Self-Help Via Qualitative Insight to Achieve Sustainable Housing](#)” considers self-help financing for homeownership. Andrew Ebekozi examines the lived experiences of Nigerian middle-income groups in Lagos. The analysis highlights barriers to, and strategies for, becoming homeowners, identifying residential mobility among middle-income earners as contributing to the city’s expansion. Land purchase and building approval processes were common obstacles, while organised self-help housing provision merited further government policy support. Pro-poor policy and regulatory frameworks, it is suggested, will improve housing outcomes. Micro-finance support tools such as “soft housing-loans” with less prohibitive conditions and supporting local building schemes can contribute to achieving more sustainable homeownership for all by 2030. Chapter “[Exchange Rate and Housing Deficit Trends in Nigeria: Descriptive and Inferential Analyses](#)” presents an analysis of macroeconomic strategy in Nigeria. Using archival data from 1960–2019, John Ogbonnaya Agwu explores the dynamics between the exchange rate, rental values and the housing deficit. The results support previous findings that aggregated macroeconomic indices influence the real estate sector and that exchange rates may be a catalyst for stimulating housing development and reducing the housing deficit. In Chapter “[Analysing Hernando de Soto’s The Mystery of Capital in the Nigerian Poverty Equation](#)”, Akeem Ayofe Akinwale challenges the application of de Soto’s [7] work on “why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else” to the poverty equation in Nigeria. The review sets the literature around Soto’s ideas on poverty alleviation against the backdrop of Nigeria’s capitalist ideologies and anti-poverty programmes and also draws on Sensemaking Theory [19] to consider

alternative strategies for property rights and access to capital among the poor in developing countries.

Three chapters on Urban Design make up Section 7. In Chapter “[Beyond a Mere Living Space: Meaning and Morality in Traditional Yoruba Architecture before Colonialism](#)”, Akin-Otiko reflects on the meanings and morality of pre-colonial traditional Yoruba architecture, showing how post-colonial housing responses departed from traditional designs and meanings of home, thereby impacting negatively on attempts to solve the housing problem in Nigeria. It is argued that traditional meanings should be reincorporated into strategies to solve Nigeria's housing problems. The themes of urban sprawl versus densification and housing in Nigerian cities are explored in Chapter “[Urban Sprawl and Housing: A Case for Densification in Nigerian Cities](#)” (Saidat Olanrewaju and Olumuyiwa Adegun). It is argued that urban sustainability and resilient communities cannot be achieved without significantly changing the way housing and other urban spaces are planned, designed and developed. Reviewing research to date, the chapter concludes that the urban sprawl in Nigeria has undesirable economic, environmental and social impacts, including for housing. Compact urban housing development, including densification policies, is proposed as an urban form better suited to achieving sustainability in Nigerian cities. Neighbourhood design and security in mass housing schemes in Lagos is the focus of Chapter “[Environmental Planning in Mass Housing Schemes: Strategies for Achieving Inclusive and Safe Urban Communities](#)”, by Foluke O. Jegede, Eziyi O. Iben and Adedapo A. Oluwatayo. This chapter presents findings from a study on the influence of residential neighbourhood planning and design of housing units on the security of lives and property in 12 public housing estates in Lagos Metropolis. The results reveal how the layout of estates, housing design and construction features all influenced residents' perception of security. The study also identifies areas that need to be strengthened.

We close our volume with conclusions from Basirat Oyalowo and Taibat Lawanson on how housing and urbanisation in Africa can contribute to a sustainable future and achievement of the SDGs (Section 8, Chapter “[Housing and the SDGs in African Cities: Towards a Sustainable Future](#)”). Given that the [18] SDG platform monitors progress across all 17 sustainable development goals, this collection adds valuable new scholarship on the role of housing in the African context. We hope that readers will become further galvanised in their efforts towards future housing research and policy development across African nations, as well as engaging in more integrated actions to strengthen the housing sector as a pathway to achieving truly sustainable and socially just development for all Africans.

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