

Review Article

Urbanization dynamics: The impact on housing development in Jos Metropolis, Plateau State

Emmanuel Sambo Kudu*

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Urbanization is a global phenomenon characterized by the rapid growth of cities and towns, leading to various socio-economic and environmental changes. In the context of Jos Metropolis, Plateau State, urbanization has significantly influenced housing development patterns. This paper explores the dynamics of urbanization in Jos Metropolis and its implications for housing development. Through a comprehensive review of literature and field surveys, the paper examines the factors driving urbanization in Jos, the challenges faced by the housing sector and potential strategies for sustainable housing development. The findings suggest that rapid urbanization in Jos Metropolis has led to increased demand for housing, resulting in informal settlements, inadequate infrastructure and socio-economic disparities. However, opportunities exist to address these challenges through effective urban planning, policy interventions and community engagement. By understanding the complexities of urbanization dynamics, stakeholders can work towards creating inclusive, resilient and sustainable housing solutions in Jos Metropolis.

Keywords: Urbanization, Dynamics, Impact, Housing, Development, Metropolis

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization, the inexorable trend of population migration from rural to urban areas, has been a defining feature of global demographic shifts. This phenomenon, characterized by the rapid growth of cities and the transformation of rural landscapes, has profound implications for various aspects of societal development. Jos Metropolis, situated in the heart of Plateau State, Nigeria, stands as a microcosm of these changes, experiencing a surge in urbanization that has redefined its social, economic and physical landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rapid urbanization and population growth have caused many problems in developing countries. In Nigeria, cities grow too rapidly with resources not able to keep up with the increasing population.

Housing is one of the major problems these cities are facing today. Migrants who cannot afford proper housing are forced to build temporary structures without proper utilities. (Kudu, 2018). The National Population Commission (NPC) has put Nigeria's current population at 198 million people, with urban population growing at an average annual growth rate of about 6.5 per cent. Certain push and pull factors have contributed to rural-urban migration within Nigeria and this continuum accounts for over 55% of population growth (Toye et al., 2013).

Nyambo (2010) observed that the inability to bring about sustainable development has always reflected in the lack of sustainable urbanization and appropriate planning approach and implementation. The major problems have always been rapid growth of urban slums and urbanization of poverty as well as poor conservation of natural environment. Abuja (in Nigeria) has the highest level of urbanization in Africa and the Jos

*Corresponding author. Kudu ES, E-mail: emmanuelambokudu@gmail.com

metropolis, due to its proximity to Abuja is already experiencing the spillover effect, which has a direct bearing on the socio-economic and demographic, as well as cultural characteristics.

With a combination of push and pull factors, urban migration to these developing cities within Nigeria economy as the case may be, accounts for over 55% of population growth (World Bank, 2013). This has led to a serious shortage of proper housing. Nigeria's housing deficit is estimated around 16 million units and it requires more than N56 trillion to provide the 16 million housing units to bridge the housing deficit at a conservation cost of N3.5 million per unit in the country (World Bank, 2013).

Amanda (2009) as quoted by Kudu (2023) posits that effective planning and management of most urban and regional areas would help in bridging the dichotomy that exist between the rural and urban by increasing accessibility between the two for the benefit of both. A strong planning system, based on up to date plans, emerging from current information is needed to address the situation in most African countries because of its dynamic nature. Hence, sprawling conditions characterized by fast-growing slums make the problem grow rather than diminish.

Understanding the specific nuances of urbanization in Jos Metropolis is imperative for devising effective strategies to manage the ensuing housing demands. This study delves into the intricate interplay between urbanization dynamics and housing development, seeking to unravel the complexities that define the evolving urban landscape. Against this backdrop, the significance of this research lies in its potential to inform policymakers, urban planners, developers and local communities about the intricacies of housing in a rapidly urbanizing environment.

The comprehensive examination of urbanization in Jos Metropolis contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable urban development, providing insights that are not only relevant locally but also hold broader implications for similar contexts facing the challenges of urbanization. By exploring the multifaceted impacts on housing, ranging from demographic shifts to socio-cultural considerations, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding that can guide the formulation of effective policies and practices to ensure the development of resilient and inclusive urban habitats.

The study area

Jos Metropolis lies within latitudes 9°45'00"N to 09°57'00"N and longitudes 8°48'00"E to 8°58'00"E. Jos is the administrative capital of Plateau State. The study covered parts of Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas (LGAs). Jos North and South have population of 429,300 and 306,716 respectively based on the 2006 National Census. Jos metropolis covers an area of 249.7 km². At an altitude of 1,217m (3,993 ft) above sea level, Jos enjoys a more temperate

climate than much of the rest of Nigeria. The climate is the wet and dry type classified as tropical rainy climate and characterized by a mean annual rainfall of 1,250 mm, peaking between July and August.

The mean annual temperature is about 22°C but mean monthly values vary between 19°C in the coolest month of December and 25°C in the hottest month, April. The city of Jos is the largest settlement in Plateau State. It owes its origin to the introduction of tin mining on the Jos Plateau and railway lines linking it with Port Harcourt and Lagos, thus bringing the area into the orbit of the world economy. The tin mining led to the influx of migrants, mostly Hausas, Igbos, Yoruba's and Europeans who constitute over half of the population of the town, making it a highly cosmopolitan (Figure 1).

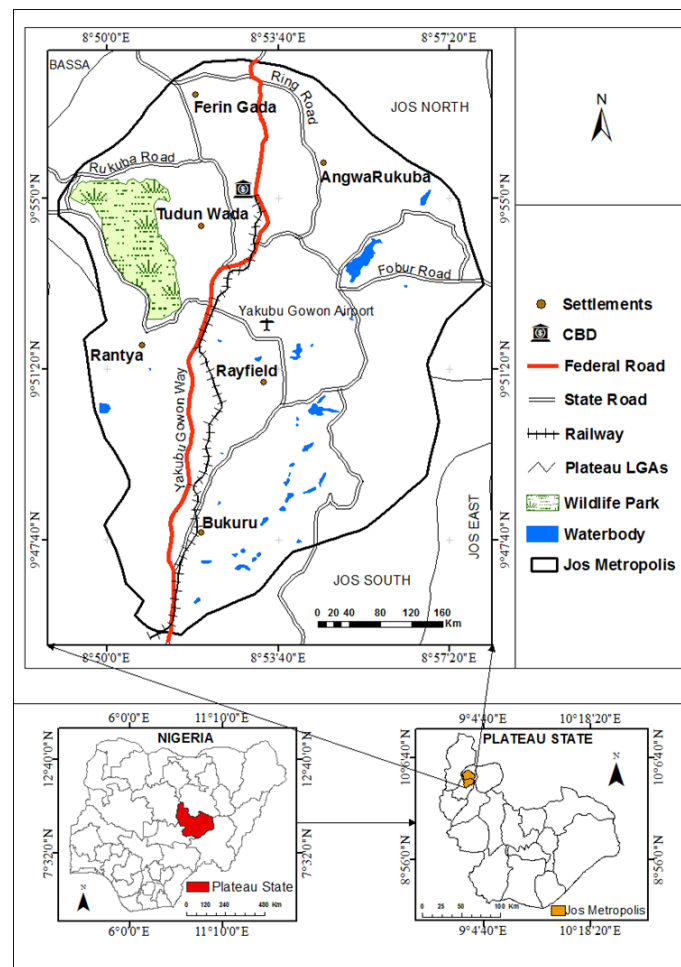


Figure 1. Jos Metropolis.

DISCUSSION

Physical features of Jos metropolis

Jos Metropolis, situated in Plateau State, Nigeria, boasts a variety of physical features that contribute to its unique character and environment. Some of the prominent physical features of Jos Metropolis and the Plateau State region include:

Plateau landscape: The area is characterized by its highland plateau landscape, which gives the state its name. The plateau is relatively flat with undulating terrain, interspersed with hills, valleys and rocky outcrops. This topography influences weather patterns, vegetation types and agricultural practices in the region.

Cool climate: Due to its elevated location, Jos Metropolis enjoys a relatively cool and temperate climate compared to many other parts of Nigeria. The altitude moderate's temperatures, resulting in cooler temperatures and lower humidity levels, particularly during the dry season. This climate has earned Jos the nickname "J-town" and makes it a popular destination for people seeking relief from the heat in other parts of the country.

Rocks and rock formations: The area is known for its unique rock formations, including the famous Riyom Rock and Shere Hills. These rocky outcrops not only contribute to the scenic beauty of the landscape but also hold cultural and recreational significance for the local communities.

Water bodies: Jos Metropolis is blessed with several natural water bodies, including rivers, streams and springs. The most notable is the Jos River, which flows through the city and provides water for domestic use, irrigation and recreational activities. Other water bodies contribute to the biodiversity of the area and support local ecosystems.

Vegetation and wildlife: The plateau landscape supports a variety of vegetation types, including grasslands, woodlands and savannas. The vegetation provides habitat for diverse wildlife species, including birds, mammals and reptiles. Protected areas such as the Jos Wildlife Park showcase some of the region's biodiversity and offer opportunities for wildlife viewing and conservation.

Farmlands and agricultural activities: The fertile soils and favorable climate make Plateau State conducive to agriculture. The plateau supports farming activities such as the cultivation of crops like potatoes, maize, vegetables and fruits. Terraced farming practices are common on the hilly terrain, demonstrating the ingenuity of local farmers in maximizing land productivity.

Urban development: In Jos Metropolis, urban development features include a mix of residential, commercial and industrial areas. The city center is characterized by high-rise buildings, markets, shopping centers and government institutions. Suburban areas consist of residential neighborhoods, schools, hospitals and recreational facilities. The urban landscape continues to evolve as the city grows and infrastructure expands to accommodate the needs of its inhabitants.

Overall, the physical features of Jos Metropolis and Plateau State contribute to its scenic beauty, cultural heritage and environmental significance. These features shape the way of

life for residents and offer opportunities for tourism, recreation and sustainable development.

Urbanization trends in Jos metropolis

Urbanization trends in Jos Metropolis, Plateau State, reflect broader patterns seen in many cities across Nigeria and the African continent. Here are some key trends:

Rapid population growth: Jos Metropolis has experienced significant population growth over the years, driven by factors such as rural-urban migration, natural population increase and economic opportunities. The influx of people has led to the expansion of urban areas and increased demand for housing, infrastructure and services.

Informal settlements: Rapid urbanization has led to the proliferation of informal settlements or slums in Jos Metropolis. Noticeable among such areas are; Tudun Wada, Jenta, Angwan Rogo, Angwan Soya, Angwan Rimi, Sabon Layi and Congo Russia. These areas typically have inadequate basic infrastructure and services such as sanitation, clean water and electricity. Informal settlements often emerge as a result of inadequate urban planning, limited affordable housing options, and poverty.

Commercial and industrial development: Jos Metropolis serves as a commercial and industrial hub for Plateau State and the surrounding region. The city is home to various commercial activities, including markets, retail outlets and trading centers. Industrial zones house manufacturing facilities, processing plants and warehouses, contributing to economic growth and employment opportunities.

Transportation challenges: Urbanization has led to increased pressure on transportation infrastructure in Jos Metropolis. Traffic congestion, poor road networks and insufficient public transportation systems are common challenges faced by residents. Efforts to improve transportation infrastructure and mobility options are essential for addressing urbanization's negative impacts on traffic flow and accessibility.

Environmental degradation: Urbanization has contributed to environmental degradation in Jos Metropolis, including deforestation, soil erosion and pollution. Rapid urban expansion often leads to the conversion of natural habitats into built-up areas, resulting in habitat loss and biodiversity decline. Environmental conservation efforts are necessary to mitigate the negative environmental impacts of urbanization and promote sustainable development.

Social and cultural diversity: Jos Metropolis is known for its diverse population comprising various ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. Urbanization has intensified social interactions and cultural exchanges, contributing to the city's vibrant and cosmopolitan atmosphere. However, urbanization also poses

challenges related to social cohesion, identity and inclusion, particularly in ethnically diverse communities.

Infrastructure development: Urbanization necessitates investments in infrastructure development to meet the growing needs of urban residents. Improvements in areas such as housing, water supply, sanitation, healthcare, education and energy are essential for enhancing living standards and promoting socio-economic development in Jos Metropolis.

Overall, urbanization trends in Jos Metropolis reflect the complex interplay of demographic, economic, social and environmental factors shaping the city's development trajectory. Addressing the challenges associated with urbanization requires holistic and sustainable approaches that prioritize inclusive growth, environmental stewardship and social cohesion.

Importance of understanding housing development implications

One may perhaps be tempted to ask why emphasis is being placed on housing. Firstly, of all man's basic needs, housing arguably, constitutes and indeed poses the greatest challenge. Secondly, a vigorous and buoyant housing sector is an indication of a strong programme of national investment and are indeed the foundation of and the first step to future economic growth and social development. Housing is a basic need of every human being just as food and clothing. It is very fundamental to the welfare, survival and health of man (Fadamiro, Taiwo and Ajayi, 2004). Okafor asserted that housing all over the world has remained an interdependent phenomenon that faces mankind and it represents one of the most basic human needs which no doubt has a profound impact on the health, welfare and productivity of every individual irrespective of social-economic status, colour or creed.

Understanding housing development implications in Jos, Plateau State, is crucial for several reasons:

Population growth management: As Jos experiences population growth due to rural-urban migration and natural increase, understanding housing development implications helps in managing the demand for residential accommodation. It enables policymakers to anticipate future housing needs and plan accordingly to avoid housing shortages and informal settlements.

Urban planning and land use management: Housing development has significant implications for urban planning and land use management. By understanding these implications, authorities can make informed decisions regarding zoning regulations, infrastructure provision and spatial organization. This ensures that housing developments are aligned with broader urban development goals and contribute to creating livable and sustainable communities.

Social inclusion and equity: Housing development has implications for social inclusion and equity. Understanding these implications helps policymakers address issues such as housing affordability, access to basic services and housing tenure security. By promoting inclusive housing policies and initiatives, authorities can ensure that housing development benefits all segments of society, including low-income households and marginalized groups.

Infrastructure provision and service delivery: Housing development impacts infrastructure provision and service delivery. It influences the demand for utilities such as water, electricity and sanitation, as well as transportation infrastructure. Understanding housing development implications allows authorities to plan and invest in necessary infrastructure to support residential areas adequately, thereby improving the quality of life for residents.

Environmental sustainability: Housing development can have significant environmental implications, including habitat loss, increased energy consumption and waste generation. Understanding these implications helps policymakers implement sustainable housing practices, such as green building standards, energy-efficient design and integrated water management. By promoting environmentally sustainable housing development, authorities can mitigate the environmental impact of urbanization and promote ecological resilience.

Economic development: Housing development plays a vital role in stimulating economic activity and promoting local economic development. It generates employment opportunities in construction, real estate and related industries, thereby contributing to economic growth. Understanding housing development implications allows policymakers to leverage housing as a driver of economic development and implement strategies to maximize its positive impact on the local economy.

In summary, understanding housing development implications in Jos, Plateau State, is essential for effective urban planning, social inclusion, infrastructure provision, environmental sustainability and economic development. By taking into account these implications, policymakers can ensure that housing development contributes to creating vibrant, equitable, and resilient communities for current and future residents.

Impact on housing development

The impact of urbanization on housing development in Jos Metropolis is multifaceted, influencing various aspects such as affordability, accessibility and quality. The increasing demand for housing has resulted in the proliferation of informal settlements, characterized by inadequate housing conditions, lack of basic amenities and vulnerability to environmental hazards.

Formal housing developments, on the other hand, often face challenges such as high land costs, limited infrastructure and regulatory barriers. As a result, there is a growing housing deficit in Jos Metropolis, exacerbating socio-economic inequalities and urban poverty.

The rapid urbanization of Jos Metropolis has had profound implications for housing development, shaping the city's residential landscape in significant ways. Several key impacts can be observed:

Increased demand for housing: Urbanization has led to a surge in the demand for housing in Jos Metropolis. As more people migrate to the city in search of economic opportunities and improved living standards, the need for residential accommodation has escalated. This increased demand has strained the existing housing stock, leading to overcrowding, housing shortages and rising property prices, particularly in well-located and desirable areas of the city.

Proliferation of informal settlements: One of the most visible consequences of urbanization in Jos Metropolis is the proliferation of informal settlements, commonly known as slums or shantytowns.

These settlements often emerge spontaneously in peri-urban areas or on the fringes of the city, characterized by makeshift dwellings, inadequate infrastructure and substandard living conditions. Informal settlements are typically inhabited by low-income households who lack access to formal housing options, exacerbating issues of poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

Housing affordability challenges: The rapid pace of urbanization has contributed to housing affordability challenges in Jos Metropolis. Rising property prices, coupled with stagnant wages and limited access to formal housing finance, have made it increasingly difficult for low and middle-income earners to afford decent housing. As a result, many residents are forced to live in overcrowded or substandard accommodations or resort to informal housing solutions in order to meet their housing needs.

Infrastructure deficiencies: Urbanization has placed strain on the city's infrastructure, including water supply, sanitation, transportation and electricity. Many neighborhoods in Jos Metropolis have inadequate basic infrastructure services, such as paved roads, drainage systems and sewage networks. Where they are available, they are not maintained thus, making housing development and maintenance more challenging. The inadequate provision of infrastructure not only undermines the quality of life for residents but also hampers efforts to attract private sector investment in housing development.

Environmental degradation: The rapid urbanization of Jos Metropolis has also contributed to environmental degradation, as land is converted for housing and infrastructure development. Deforestation, soil erosion and pollution are common environmental challenges associated with

urbanization, affecting the city's ecological balance and resilience. Informal settlements, in particular, are often located in environmentally sensitive areas such as riverbanks or hillsides, increasing the risk of natural disasters such as floods.

Social segregation and displacement: Urbanization has exacerbated social segregation and displacement in Jos Metropolis, as marginalized communities are pushed to the periphery of the city or evicted from their homes to make way for development projects. Informal settlers, in particular, are vulnerable to forced eviction and displacement, as their tenure rights are often insecure and unrecognized by authorities. This perpetuates cycles of poverty, exclusion and vulnerability, further marginalizing already disadvantaged groups within the city.

In summary, urbanization has had far-reaching impacts on housing development in Jos Metropolis, shaping the city's residential landscape and exacerbating existing socio-economic and environmental challenges. Addressing these impacts requires a comprehensive approach that addresses housing affordability, infrastructure provision, environmental sustainability and social inclusion. By recognizing the complexities of urbanization dynamics and their implications for housing, policymakers, urban planners and stakeholders can work towards creating more equitable, inclusive and sustainable housing solutions in Jos Metropolis.

Challenges faced by the housing sector

Housing is however an issue that touches on the life of individuals as well as that of the nation; a great importance is therefore ascribed to the role it plays in engendering human comfort by both nature and society. This is why Eldredge concludes that housing represents a bundle of goods and services which facilitate and enhance good living; and a key to neighbourhood quality and preservation. Likewise, Agbola notes that housing is a combination of characteristics which provide a unique home within any neighbourhood; it is an array of economic, social and psychological phenomena. In other words, housing could be seen as a multidimensional package of goods and services extending beyond shelter itself.

The World Health Organization, describes housing as the residential environment, a neighborhood, micro-district or the physical structure, which mankind uses for shelter and the environment of that structure include all necessary services/facilities, equipment and the devices needed for the physical health and social well-being of the family and individuals. Knox stressed that housing encompasses far more than the living space and shelter. Its nature and value are determined by its varied services, which include neighborhood amenities, access to education, health facilities and security, in addition to shelter. The importance of housing reveals that it is a vital component of human existence and as well, one of the major indicators of quality of life. Agbola also observed that housing as multidimensional bundle of services, encompasses the need for privacy, aesthetic value, conformity to statutory

standards, ensuring fiscal economy, security and other related issues of importance in contemporary society.

The housing sector in Jos Metropolis faces a myriad of challenges stemming from rapid urbanization, inadequate infrastructure, regulatory deficiencies and socio-economic disparities. These challenges have significant implications for housing affordability, accessibility and quality of life for residents. The proliferation of informal settlements and slums is a major challenge facing the housing sector in Jos Metropolis. As established in previous sections of this paper, these settlements often lack basic infrastructure such as water supply, sanitation and electricity, and are characterized by substandard housing conditions. Residents of informal settlements are vulnerable to eviction, displacement and health hazards, perpetuating cycles of poverty and social exclusion.

Housing affordability has also become a significant barrier for many residents of Jos Metropolis, particularly low and middle-income earners. High property prices, coupled with stagnant wages and limited access to formal housing finance, make it difficult for residents to afford decent housing. As a result, many households are forced to live in overcrowded or substandard accommodations, exacerbating issues of housing insecurity and inequality. Another issue of importance is the inadequacy of infrastructure, including roads, water supply, sanitation and electricity. Many neighborhoods lack basic infrastructure services, making housing development and maintenance more challenging. The inadequate provision of infrastructure not only affects the quality of life for residents but also hampers efforts to attract private sector investment in housing development.

Weak land use planning and ineffective regulatory frameworks contribute to the proliferation of informal settlements and unplanned development in Jos Metropolis. The absence of clear land tenure systems, zoning regulations and building codes undermines efforts to promote sustainable housing development. In addition, corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies and lack of enforcement further exacerbate regulatory challenges in the housing sector. The rapid urbanization of Jos Metropolis has led to environmental degradation, as land is converted for housing and infrastructure development. Deforestation, soil erosion and pollution are common environmental challenges associated with urbanization, affecting the city's ecological balance and resilience. Informal settlements, in particular, are often located in environmentally sensitive areas, increasing the risk of natural disasters such as floods and landslides. Urbanization has again exacerbated social segregation and displacement in Jos Metropolis, as marginalized communities are pushed to the periphery of the city or evicted from their homes to make way for development projects. Informal settlers, in particular, are vulnerable to forced eviction and displacement, as their tenure rights are often insecure and unrecognized by authorities. This perpetuates cycles of poverty, exclusion and vulnerability, further marginalizing already disadvantaged groups within the city.

Addressing the challenges facing the housing sector in Jos Metropolis requires a comprehensive approach that integrates urban planning, policy interventions and community participation. By addressing issues of housing affordability, infrastructure provision, regulatory reform and social inclusion, stakeholders can work towards creating more equitable, inclusive and sustainable housing solutions in Jos Metropolis.

Strategies for sustainable housing development

Addressing the housing challenges in Jos Metropolis requires a multi-faceted approach that integrates urban planning, policy interventions and community participation. Several strategies can be adopted to promote sustainable housing development and improve housing conditions for residents:

Urban renewal and upgrading:

- Implement urban renewal projects to revitalize blighted neighborhoods and improve housing conditions in informal settlements.
- Upgrade existing infrastructure and services in informal settlements, including water supply, sanitation and electricity, to enhance living standards.
- Provide technical assistance and support to residents for housing improvements and renovations, such as upgrading building materials and retrofitting structures to improve resilience to natural disasters.

Affordable housing programs

- Implement affordable housing schemes targeting low and middle-income earners, including subsidized housing initiatives, rental housing programs and mortgage financing mechanisms.
- Provide financial incentives and subsidies to developers to encourage the construction of affordable housing units.
- Facilitate public-private partnerships to increase the supply of affordable housing through joint development projects and land concessions.

Infrastructure development

- Prioritize infrastructure investments in housing areas, including roads, drainage systems, water supply and sanitation facilities, to improve accessibility and livability.
- Upgrade and expand public transportation networks to enhance connectivity and reduce commuting times for residents.
- Invest in green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage systems to mitigate the impacts of flooding and improve environmental resilience.

Land use planning and regulation

- Strengthen land use planning mechanisms to promote orderly and sustainable urban development, including zoning regulations, land use plans, and building codes.
- Streamline the land acquisition and registration process to improve access to land for housing development and formalize informal settlements.
- Enforce existing land use regulations and address illegal land encroachments and unauthorized developments to prevent further sprawl and land degradation.

Community engagement and participation

- Engage local communities in the decision-making process for housing development projects to ensure their needs and priorities are taken into account.
- Foster partnerships between government agencies, civil society organizations, and community groups to collaborate on housing initiatives and empower residents to participate in housing management and maintenance.
- Provide training and capacity-building programs for residents on topics such as construction techniques, housing finance and community organizing to strengthen their ability to advocate for their housing rights and interests.

Environmental sustainability

- Promote sustainable building practices and green building standards to reduce energy consumption, minimize waste and enhance the environmental performance of housing developments.
- Encourage the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar power and biogas, to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.
- Implement green infrastructure initiatives, such as urban greening and rainwater harvesting, to improve urban biodiversity, enhance resilience to climate change and create healthier living environments.

By implementing these strategies in a coordinated and integrated manner, stakeholders can work towards promoting sustainable housing development and improving housing conditions for residents in Jos Metropolis. By prioritizing affordability, accessibility, environmental sustainability and social inclusion, the city can build resilient and inclusive communities that enhance the quality of life for all residents.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the dynamics of urbanization in Jos Metropolis, Plateau State, have profoundly influenced housing development patterns and shaped the city's urban landscape. Rapid population growth, economic expansion, infrastructure deficiencies and regulatory challenges have posed significant obstacles to sustainable housing development in the city. However, despite these challenges, opportunities exist to

address housing needs, promote inclusive urban growth and improve living conditions for residents.

The strategies outlined in this paper, including urban renewal and upgrading, affordable housing programs, infrastructure development, land use planning and regulation, community engagement and environmental sustainability, provide a roadmap for stakeholders to address the housing challenges in Jos Metropolis. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates these strategies and fosters collaboration among government agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector and local communities, it is possible to create more equitable, resilient and sustainable housing solutions in the city.

Furthermore, it is essential to recognize the importance of addressing housing issues within the broader context of urban development and social inclusion. Housing is not just a basic need but also a fundamental human right that underpins people's well-being, dignity and socio-economic opportunities. Therefore, efforts to improve housing conditions in Jos Metropolis must be accompanied by initiatives to address poverty, inequality, access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

Ultimately, the success of sustainable housing development in Jos Metropolis will depend on political will, effective governance, resource mobilization and meaningful participation of all stakeholders.

By prioritizing the needs of marginalized communities, promoting inclusive growth, and fostering environmental stewardship, Jos Metropolis can emerge as a model for sustainable urban development in Nigeria and beyond.

In closing, it is imperative for policymakers, urban planners, developers and community leaders to work collaboratively towards realizing the vision of a vibrant, inclusive and resilient city where all residents have access to safe, affordable and sustainable housing. By harnessing the potential of urbanization and addressing housing challenges in a comprehensive and proactive manner, Jos Metropolis can thrive as a place where people can live, work and flourish for generations to come.

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