

FUTURE OF AFRICAN CITIES PROJECT

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Lagos: Is it Possible to Fix Africa's Largest City?

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*Strengthening Africa's
economic performance*



Executive Summary

Lagos is Africa's Everest. With an estimated population of 21 million, to which 3 000 new migrants are added each day, Lagos represents both the promise of economic opportunity and the burden on city governments to provide urban infrastructure, especially decent housing, mass transport and adequate electricity supply. Lagosians spend nearly three billion hours in traffic each year, and two-thirds of the city reside in slum conditions. What stands out, however, is the resilience of Lagosians themselves, equipped with fortitude and determination in the absence of functioning systems. Still, there is a dire need for public projects to be planned, financed and executed better.

This Discussion Paper provides insight into how Lagos functions, the challenges it faces across the sectors of Governance, Economic Growth, Housing, Infrastructure including Transport, Electricity and Waste Management, and how policy has tried, and at times failed, to address them. Drawing on examples of international best practice, it presents the Brenthurst Foundation's low-cost, *in situ* housing scheme developed in partnership with the Lagos State Government that may not only provide a solution to Lagos' housing crisis, but the continent's.

As Africa's most populous city, Lagos encapsulates the continent's urban development challenges at scale and proves useful for study by other, burgeoning cities.

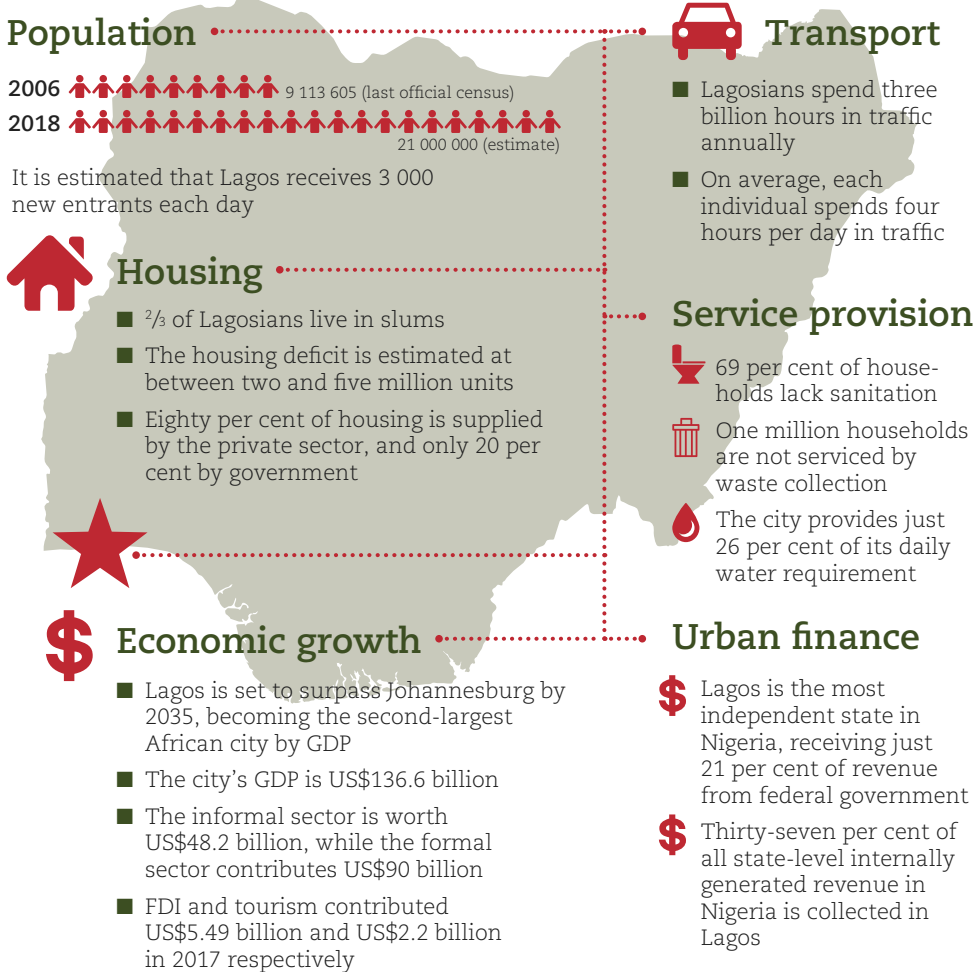
LAGOS

Key facts and figures





Lagos is Africa's largest city by population
It is Africa's third largest city by GDP, after Cairo and Johannesburg

NIGERIA



Population

2006  9 113 605 (last official census)
2018  21 000 000 (estimate)

It is estimated that Lagos receives 3 000 new entrants each day

Transport

- Lagosians spend three billion hours in traffic annually
- On average, each individual spends four hours per day in traffic

Housing

- 2/3 of Lagosians live in slums
- The housing deficit is estimated at between two and five million units
- Eighty per cent of housing is supplied by the private sector, and only 20 per cent by government

Service provision

- 69 per cent of households lack sanitation
- One million households are not serviced by waste collection
- The city provides just 26 per cent of its daily water requirement

Economic growth

- Lagos is set to surpass Johannesburg by 2035, becoming the second-largest African city by GDP
- The city's GDP is US\$136.6 billion
- The informal sector is worth US\$48.2 billion, while the formal sector contributes US\$90 billion
- FDI and tourism contributed US\$5.49 billion and US\$2.2 billion in 2017 respectively

Urban finance

- Lagos is the most independent state in Nigeria, receiving just 21 per cent of revenue from federal government
- Thirty-seven per cent of all state-level internally generated revenue in Nigeria is collected in Lagos

As a result of reforms introduced by the Lagos State Development Plan for 2012–2015, Lagos has moved from the 169th to the 145th position in the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business Index*

What the Polls Tell us ...

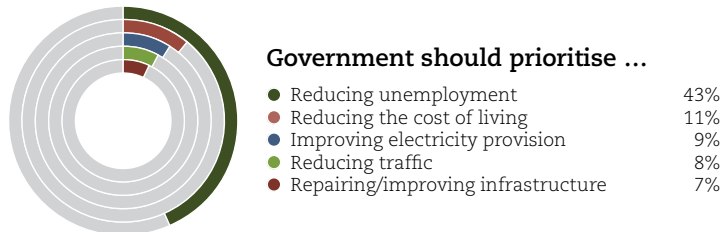
During July and August 2017, the Brenthurst Foundation commissioned a survey of more than 500 Lagos-residents to determine underlying perceptions about housing, employment, government and infrastructure. Focus groups were also consulted for more in-depth responses. These results were recorded and are included in our analysis.



Economic growth



Government should prioritise ...



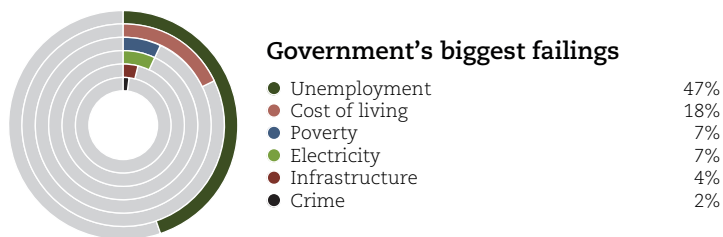
Government's greatest achievement



Reasons for moving to Lagos (migrant)



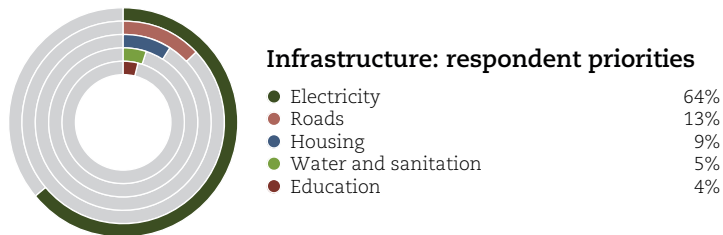
Government's biggest failings



Reasons to stay in Lagos (non-migrant)



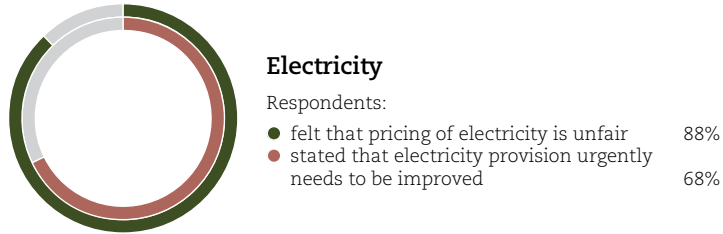
Infrastructure: respondent priorities



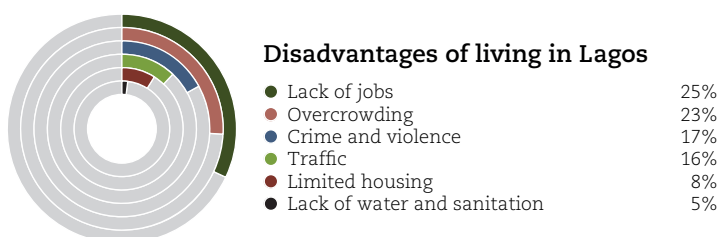
Advantages of living in Lagos



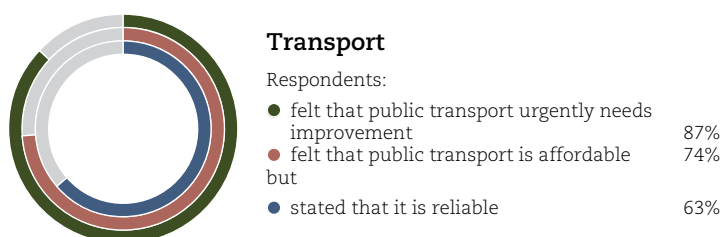
Electricity



Disadvantages of living in Lagos



Transport



Introduction

Lagos epitomises the future challenges that African cities face, but on a scale that amplifies the stresses and strains of urbanisation. The city may seem an extreme example, but many African cities could follow in his footsteps as the continent rapidly urbanises.

It is estimated that 85 per cent of the world's urbanisation will take place in Africa, with the African urban population projected to surpass 1.7 billion by 2050. The population of Lagos, already Africa's largest city, is expected to more than double by 2050, making it the world's third most populous city.



Growing into the water: Lagos attracts 86 people per hour, but most migrants live in ad hoc structures like those in Makoko, above. It is estimated that the 21 million-strong population will double by 2050, making Lagos the world's third-largest city.

Around two-thirds of Lagosians live in slum conditions. Attempts to reduce the housing deficit, estimated to be at least two million units, are made more difficult by mortgage interest rates of up to 38 per cent, a reflection both of heavy government borrowing in the market to fund its own needs and high risk. Owning a house is constrained by the high cost of building materials, legendary difficulties in determining land title, opaque building regulations and a sedentary legal system.

This has hampered low-cost housing schemes. Upgrades to slum areas have also been hobbled, by a lack of continuity between governments. A pet project for one governor is not necessarily the same for the next.

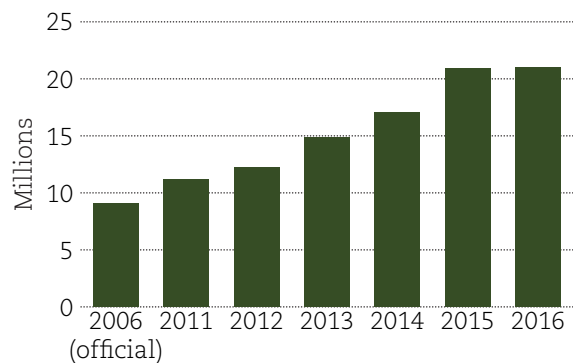
As a result, many people live in extremely tough conditions, amid open sewers and strewn plastic garbage. Up to 60 per cent of Lagos State¹ experiences floods each year. The city produces

210 million litres of water per day against a requirement of 794 million litres. Sixty-nine per cent of households lack access to sanitation and a million-plus families do not have their waste collected.

The level of mistrust between government and citizens has been compounded by episodic slum demolition. Many people prefer to remain put in the absence of visible alternatives; as one community leader put it, 'they are frightened that they will lose what little they have'.

A poorly integrated transport system, and a failure to fully employ the city's numerous waterways, means that Lagosians spend nearly three billion hours in traffic annually, an average of four hours each per day. Although the government has introduced a Bus Rapid Transport system alongside its existing LAGBUS network, is building a monorail and plans to introduce a new ferry system – so far the promise has outweighed delivery. There is little doubt that Lagosians deserve better than the service provided by thousands of yellow minibus *Danfós*, famous for their lack of road manners and touts hanging out of the open doorways.

Figure 1: Estimated Population of Lagos State



Source: Nigerian Population Commission

Lagos State Governor Akinwunmi Ambode, elected in May 2015, had an ambitious agenda to transform the city into the continent's third-largest economy. Such bold plans required resolute political will, considerable determination and a mastery of the detail. The backdrop of attempts to address the critical areas of housing, transport and electricity is a cocktail of weak governance,

widespread corruption, a time-consuming legal system, and anaemic economic growth highly vulnerable to the vagaries of the oil price.

Future growth at the rate Lagos requires will be dependent on moving goods and people cheaper and quicker, giving people a stake in the system through improved housing, and by adding value through increased electricity supply. Underpinning all of this will be Nigeria's ability to attract the necessary capital. That will depend on ensuring a rate of return commensurate with risk. Currently investors expect a return of investment at around 25 per cent precisely because of the risk; for the economy to grow, this needs to be reduced.

But Lagos has one tremendous asset, often parodied and overlooked in caricatures of urban chaos, risk and corruption: its people.

Balogun Market epitomises this strength – on the surface a thrusting, hustling and bustling shopping place, undeniably dynamic, yet also extremely well-organised. As we walked through the market, we stopped to chat to Chioma, selling a small stack of vegetables. She makes N10 000 per day (US\$28), paying N50 000 per month to rent her small square of tar to the local organisers. The fish sellers from the Makoko community pay N300 a day for their stall, as well as a monthly fee.

The most impressive trait of Lagosians is their relentless energy, driven by a knowledge that no one will help them but themselves. 'The guy selling things in the traffic,' says one hotel manager, 'will make 350 Naira in the morning, perhaps, with which he will buy lunch. And he will run around for another five hours in the afternoon to make the same for his dinner.'

Lagos is not only the largest city in Africa, surpassing Cairo in 2012, but also the fastest growing one. Turning Nigeria's oil into wealth has so far worked well for an elite. Translating the widespread energy of Nigerians into wealth for the wider population is much more difficult, depending on resolute political will, better governance, government planning, persistence and execution.² Lagos offers thought-provoking insights on how cities can create systems of self-governance in the absence of formal structures, as well as a cautionary tale of informal governance structures that provide more legitimacy than due process.

It encapsulates the continent's challenges in urban development, and presents lessons on what drives change. Lagos is Africa's Everest: if you can fix Lagos, you will be able to fix the challenges of any other African city.



In 2017, the Brenthurst Foundation was tasked by the Lagos State Government to identify ways to make Lagos Africa's third-largest economy. The Foundation conducted over 150 interviews with government and private sector stakeholders, alongside commissioning a poll to 1 000 respondents and select focus groups, to determine the drivers for change. Through consultation, housing and transport were identified as key sectors with which the state has grappled but still need to be solved. As such, the Foundation's research focused on a low-cost housing solution for Lagos, employing the designs of architect Sarah Calburn.

Governance

Lagos is an almost ungovernable city due to its rapid population growth, poor service delivery, high levels of informality, and history of military dictatorship. But it's the *almost* that's important, because amidst its complexity, Lagos remains one of Nigeria's best-performing states.

Lagos is a city-state that operates under Nigeria's three-tier federal system. Created in 1999 at the end of military rule, the system places the federal government on top with the primary legislative authority, the state government beneath it with the administrative responsibilities and the local government as the final tier, linking citizens to the bureaucracy.³ The head of the state is the Governor, supported by a 40-member House of Assembly that enacts legislative decisions.

The restoration of civilian governance and democratic elections in 1999 promoted political competition and strong incentives for reform. Historically, Lagos has been an opposition-led state with the All Progressive Congress (APC) party in power since 1999. However, with the APC winning the national elections as well in the 2015 and

2019 elections, Lagos and Abuja, Nigeria's capital, are in political concert. Despite this perceived continuity, Lagos faces severe challenges in policy follow-through. New Governors have consistently introduced competing policies that replace those of their predecessor, often reversing progress along with them.

The governance of Lagos State is divided into Metropolitan Lagos (the urban centre) and Greater Lagos Metropolis (the urban periphery). The Metropolitan occupies 37 per cent of the State's total land mass and is home to 85 per cent of its population.⁴

Lagos has 20 constitutionally recognised Local Government Areas (LGAs), 16 in the urban centre and four in the periphery. In 2003, in response to the growth of the city, an additional 37 councils called Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs) were created under the administration of Governor Tinubu. This decision was highly controversial and led then-President Olusegun Obasanjo to cut Lagos' access to funds from the federal account – an incident attributed to the advancement of Lagos' Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) services, which significantly surpass those raised by other Nigerian states.

Lagos' institutional framework presents a major challenge for the fiscal and administrative autonomy of its LGAs. While there are high expectations for service delivery placed on the local level, the LGAs are perceived to lack real autonomy within the federal system.

Constitutionally, LGAs are mandated to provide primary health care and basic education, water supply and sewer reticulation, public infrastructure upgrades and agriculture services. However, at least 60 per cent of LGA budgets is allocated to capital projects, leaving scant resources for critical services.⁵ LGA Chairmen complain about their budgets being far too small to deliver against their mandate. While they are permitted to raise funds of their own, LGA fund-raising is restricted to 20 sources listed in the Lagos State Local Government Levies Law. On the public end, the budgetary information of LGAs is often not published, nor transparent, which limits public access to spending tracks and undermines democracy.

The newly-elected Local Chairman of Lagos Island, Tijani Adetoyese Olusi, remarked, 'we are closest to the people on the ground, yet we cannot afford to fulfil our responsibilities. Lagos State needs to work out how best to use LGAs efficiently and effectively.'

Corruption

Public sector corruption is a constant challenge in Lagos, making the city's development all the more difficult. Corruption drains funds for key projects and deters international investors. Some 72 per cent of ordinary Nigerians perceive the level of corruption to have increased significantly in Nigeria over the last two years, particularly among civil servants.⁶

The continued governance of Lagos by the APC⁷ has raised concern over the depth of political patronage networks within the party and the State itself.⁸ Corruption in the Lagos State Police Command of the Nigerian Police Force is perceived to be even worse. More than 80 per cent of survey respondents admitted to bribing the police in 2016, followed by 22 per cent to the tax services and 24 per cent to the Judiciary.⁹

The private sector faces serious difficulties when engaging with the government of Lagos. Despite being Nigeria's commercial hub, the city ranks 31 out of 36 states for ease of registering property and comes in last for dealing with construction permits on the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business* report.¹⁰ The process for allocating urban land is unclear, with regulations such as the State Building Code rarely enforced while over-regulation occurs elsewhere.

Urban Finance

Lagos is Nigeria's most financially independent state. In 2016, only 21.67 per cent of the State's revenue came from the federal government.¹¹ Its collections accounted for 37 per cent of state-level internally generated revenue (IGR) across Nigeria. The majority of collections come from the formal sector, with limited penetration in Lagos' informal sector whose GDP accounts for anywhere between 50 per cent to over a 100 per cent of the city's formal sector .

The Nigerian Constitution mandates that state governments provide social services and infrastructure, resulting in over a quarter of all federal revenue from the Federal Accounts Allocation Committee (FAAC) being channelled to state governments, commonly known as the federal allocation.¹² The federal allocation is supposed to act as a supplement to the revenue collected through state taxes, however, very few states' Internally Generated Revenue surpass or even equal the amount provided by the federal allocation.

Lagos, however, is the exception. Not only does the State generate nearly 80 per cent of its revenue internally, its IGR is nearly seven times the national IGR per capita.

The Lagos Internal Revenue Service (LIRS) is responsible for collecting most of the city's taxes, notably:

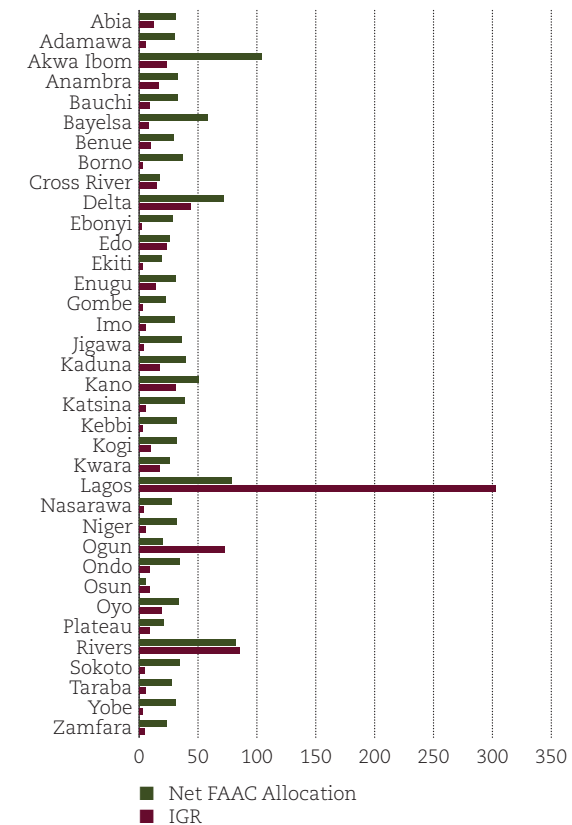
- ▶ **Personal Income Tax** – a tax on individual incomes collected as PAYE for those formally employed and as Direct Assessment for self-employed persons.
- ▶ **Individual capital gains tax** – a tax on profits made on the sale of capital assets.
- ▶ **Stamp duties** – a tax on the legal instruments executed by individuals, usually on the transfer of homes, buildings, copyrights, and, patents and securities.
- ▶ **Hotel occupancy and restaurant consumption tax** – a tax paid by consumers on goods and services consumed in restaurants or hotels.
- ▶ **Withholding taxes** – a tax deducted at source from payments for services or remittances from investments. The tax is levied on all contracts except for those to limited liability companies as those taxes are collected by the Federal government.¹³

Introduced by Governor Tinubu in 1999, LIRS collected an average of N600 million a month, the bulk of which is made up of PAYE. In 2006, Lagos State introduced major reforms in its tax collection process, such as creating mini tax offices in markets across Lagos that make it easier to pay taxes. Following this, in 2008 it introduced the Self-Assessment and Filing System to capture some of the revenue from Lagos' formidable informal sector.¹⁴ This decade of innovation has resulted in

an annual collection of N302.6bn in 2016, 42 times more the amount collected in 1999.

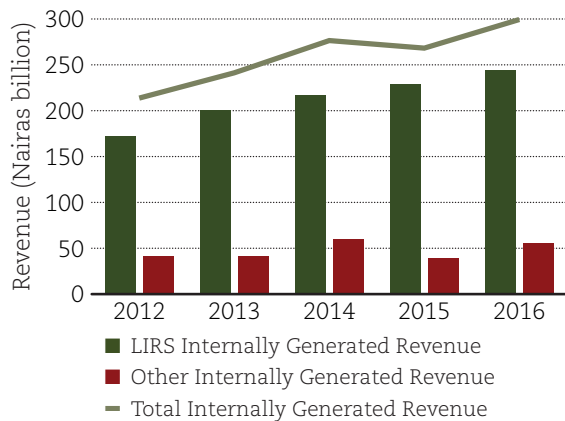
Despite the advances in collections, the informal sector remains largely untouched: a market with a GDP estimated at US\$48.2 billion in 2013, outstripping the formal GDP estimates of US\$42.6 billion.¹⁵ While informal operators in Lagos' commercial and transportation sectors often report having to pay 'taxes' daily to various consultants, these collections do not make it into the official funds and are not part of the LIRS formal payment system. Lagos has an estimated 10 million eligible tax payers, yet only 5.8 million currently pay taxes through formal routes.

Figure 2: IGR vs Federal Allocations in billions of Naira

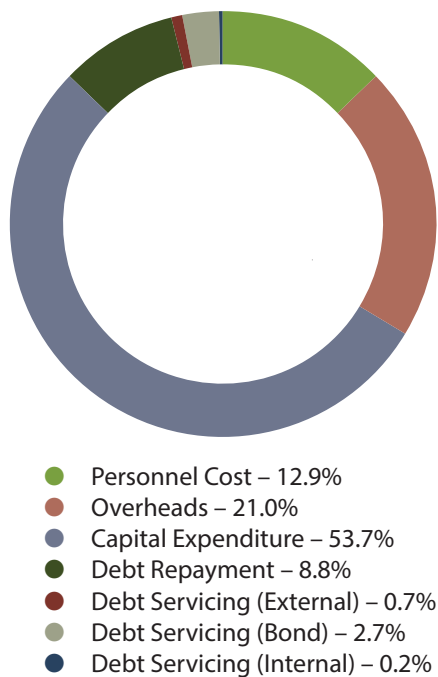


Source: *BudgIT State of the States 2017*

In the 2017 Lagos State Budget, the majority of expenditure was dedicated to capital investment that the city desperately needs. However, Lagos' budget statements have gained notoriety for being purposefully vague and lacking the detail that would allow policy makers and citizens to hold the state accountable for its expenditure.¹⁶

Figure 3: Lagos' Internal Revenue Generation

Source: BudgIT (2017)

Figure 4: 2017 State Costs as a % of Expenditure

Source: BudgIT (2017)

As one research participant said, 'If there's something in Lagos that doesn't seem to make sense, a project or problem that could be easily fixed but isn't. Just wait, because in time it will become apparent who is benefiting from the way things are.' An insight that explains the state's financial system and how some sectors are managed with extreme expertise, yet other lucrative areas are left untapped.

Governance of Lagos State is emblematic of the city's mystique. Its governance systems manage to be both sophisticated, achieving the complex feat of generating revenue through taxes in a challenging environment, and opaque, failing to provide basic services to residents. Citizens and the private sector have come to see the State as an organisation that works around patronage as opposed to one serving its people. There will need to be a distinct change in the social contract between the state and individuals if Lagos is to achieve its full potential as one of Africa's megacities, because at present 37 per cent of survey respondents were not able to list a single achievement of government.

Economic Growth

Lagos is an economic powerhouse and stands out as a continental hub – in 2014 it was ranked as the continent's seventh largest economy ahead of Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire.¹⁷ A position that inures investors to the considerable challenges of doing business, most notably, inadequate infrastructure, expensive power and a sticky bureaucracy.

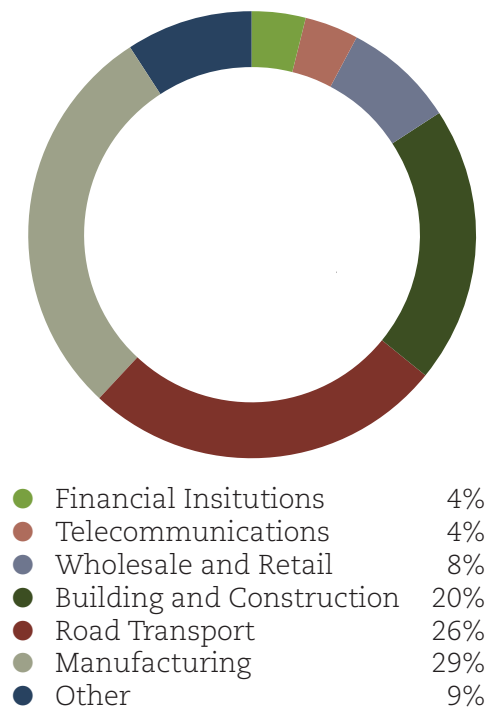
Lagos has strong services and manufacturing sectors, rendering the economy significantly less dependent on oil and gas than elsewhere in Nigeria. Some large businesses, such as Tata Motors, have set up assembly plants in the city, alongside the existing 3.2 million small, medium and micro enterprises. Lagos has an estimated GDP of US\$136.6 billion.¹⁸

Historically, the capital of Nigeria, Lagos has been a longstanding entry point for foreign investment in the country, and in 2017, received US\$5.49 billion of foreign investment towards telecommunications, financial services and real estate sectors.¹⁹ Approximately 60 per cent of industrial investments in Nigeria are directed to Lagos, while 90 per cent of companies across Nigeria have chosen to locate their headquarters in the city.²⁰ It also recently became the fifth leading destination in the Middle East and African regions on the Fortune 500 list.²¹

Lagos serves as Nigeria's largest port, contributing the lion's share of N232.42 billion annual revenue.²² In doing so, it directly connects Nigeria

with the rest of West Africa and the world. To leverage its position, the state is attempting to develop free trade zones across the city that encompass one-stop shops that ease trade and investment building on the city's role as the Gateway to Nigeria. However, the Lekki Free Trade Zone, the largest of the projects, has been under construction since 2006 and shows no immediate signs of making a profit.

Figure 5: The economic make-up of Lagos



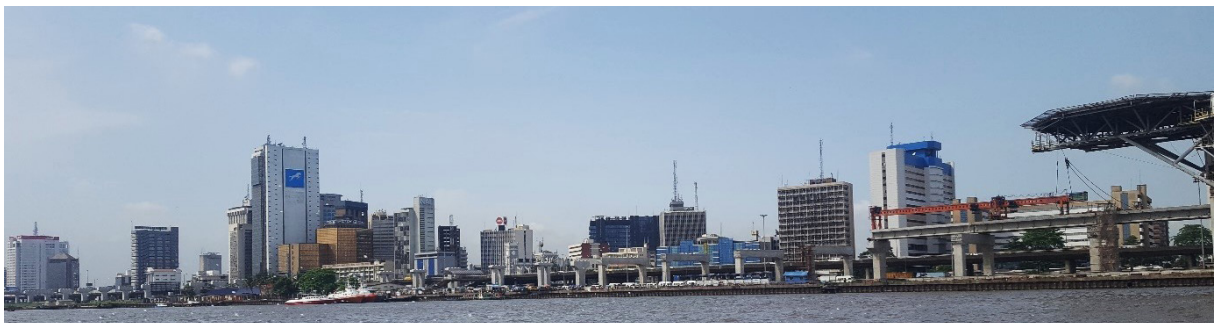
Source: Lagos State Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (2017)

The Lagos State Development Plan for 2012–2025 aims to build on the city's economic prowess and develop Lagos as 'Africa's model mega-city and global, economic and financial hub by 2025.'

These efforts have resulted in a notable improvement for Lagos on the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business*, ranked 169th in 2017 and jumping to 145th in 2018, and registering as a top ten improver across all global cities assessed by the Bank.²³ As the economy keeps growing, and policy reforms are implemented to expand key productive sectors, Lagos is set to surpass Johannesburg by 2035 and become Africa's second-largest city by GDP behind Cairo.²⁴ It is then a question of whether this expansion is able to absorb the future labour force.

The city's success attracts the best and brightest of the country's labour force, with 21 per cent of Lagosians holding at least one degree from a tertiary institution. Roughly 86 migrants per hour flock to Lagos hoping to be absorbed into the labour market.²⁵

One sector that has shown labour absorptive growth is the informal economy. In the last quarter of 2015, 95.4 per cent of new jobs were created in the informal sector, relative to 5.5 per cent in the formal sector.²⁶ Sixty-five per cent of Lagos' working population is in the informal sector and it accounts for an estimated 42 per cent of all economic activities.²⁷ Throughout the interviews, the informal economy was revealed to be a resilient and systematic structure with efficient rules and procedures that were excluded from the formal sector, though not technically illegal. The informal economy accounts for much of the transportation, manufacturing, real estate, building and construction, retail and wholesale and Nollywood sectors. In fact, with the low levels of government service provision it would be impossible for Lagos residents to commute without the services of the informal transportation industry, made up of the



Doing business: Lagos was originally Nigeria's capital city and became home to some of the country's first international companies. Today, it hosts the headquarters of 90 per cent of companies in Nigeria

Danfos, Okadas and Keke Mawras. The informal economy is the backbone of the city's economic prowess, providing nimble solutions to the bureaucratic stickiness that holds Lagos hostage.

Lagos is a city where US\$600 swimsuits are sold on a street filled with potholes and poor drainage. Where, depending on which part of town you're in, you're just as likely to bump into a Harvard educated millionaire as you are to someone living on less than a dollar a day. Lagos doesn't fit easily into any traditional narratives. The high density, mobility and purchasing power of its market are enough to warrant investment. As the head of Investor relations at Africa Capital Alliance, Kikelomo Longe said, 'Lagos is looking to be the financial hub of West Africa, and investors are ready to come, they just need to find bankable projects.'



Bustling informal sector: In 2013, the informal economy was estimated at US\$48.2bn to its US\$90bn informal counterpart

Housing

Nigeria suffers from a massive housing deficit, that is currently estimated at 17 million units. In Lagos alone, the shortfall varies between 2 and 5 million with around 70 per cent of Lagosians living informally without access to basic

services.²⁸ A problem that is compounded by the fact that 3 000 migrants move to the city each day. This section examines the nature of Lagos' housing crisis and the possibility for state-sanctioned self-build initiatives to change the city's housing landscape.

The provision of housing in Lagos is dominated by the private sector, with public provision at just 20 per cent.²⁹ Property prices mirror the city's inequality, ranging from US\$4 000/m² (N1.4 million)³⁰ on the Eko Atlantic estate, to monthly rentals of US\$8 (N2 880) in an informal settlement.

The polarisation of the housing market has led the private sector to invest heavily in medium- to high-end property development, leaving few options for low-income families. Lekki is one such example – ten years ago most of the area was thick forest. Today, it is packed with housing estates and office blocks, envisioned as Lagos' new commercial centre for the needs of high-income residents.³¹ 'The low end of the market is not profitable,' shared Lamre Sola-Olumofe of Brook Assets and Resources Ltd, 'We are not charities. Building materials and land cost the same, and we have to build to sell.'

On the supply side, the provision of affordable housing is marred by difficulty at all levels of the building process. Financing is onerous to acquire, with high lending rates across the board. The official procedures for proper building approvals are incredibly slow and many developers are encouraged to pay bribes to smooth the process. Lagos produces very few of its own building materials, leading to input costs that are at least double what they would be elsewhere. The city also suffers from a shortage of skilled labour and artisans who are often brought in from neighbouring countries. All of this land on top of the traditional challenges of building a city on an island. As a member of the Ministry of Physical Planning remarked, 'Land supply is fixed but demand for land keeps growing, we need to densify but that also comes with issues.'

Lagos also faces acute challenges on the demand side of housing. Whilst demand for housing exists at all income levels, earners on the minimum wage are unable to afford housing contributions

above US\$15 (N5400) a month. In addition, Lagos' poorly developed mortgage market limits access to well-priced, long-term mortgages. So, even people who can access loans are deterred by exorbitant interest rates of up to 24 per cent. This has created a dynamic where residents are unable to buy property unless they can provide the full cost of the house upfront. As one survey respondent noted, 'If the economy continues the way that it is ... they may not afford to live in Lagos. People will actually have to go back.'

The Lagos Housing Ministry has not been able to provide a public solution to the housing shortage. Between 1979 and 2017, only 25 880 housing units were constructed by the Ministry,³² the majority of which occurred during the tenure of Governor Jakande (1979–1983).³³

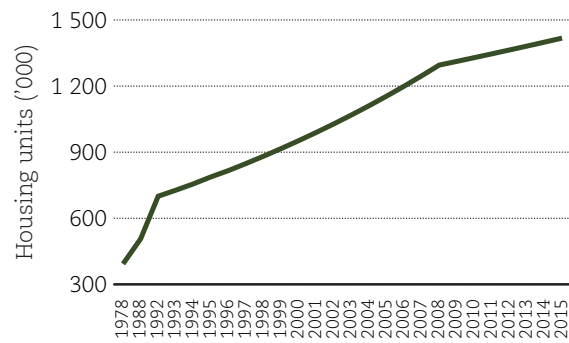
Building the required 2–5 million houses falls outside the government's financial scope. In 2017, the allocated budget for Housing and Community Amenities was N50.344 billion (US\$140 million), 6.2 per cent of the State's N813 billion-strong (US\$2.26 billion) budget. Whilst 6 000 units are currently under construction out of a total 20 000 over the next three years, these units are nowhere near the numbers required to meet the housing backlog.

Additionally, the new government units are priced well out of the average low-income family's reach. These range from N3 to N15 million, with a minimum bond repayment of over N60 000/month on a 20-year loan. It appears even state-driven housing solutions crowd out many Lagosians.

Several housing initiatives have been launched during Governor Ambode's tenure. One such program is a state mortgage scheme operated by the Lagos Building Investment Company (LBIC). However, this has produced only 27 mortgages due to underfunding and underspending since its inception.

In the absence of a housing market that caters to their needs, most Lagosians are left to build housing on their own. For low-income residents, this often means informal and unsafe building practices in areas where secure tenure is unheard of. For wealthier residents, the self-build process is more formal and relies on houses being built over years as both funds and building permissions trickle in.

Figure 6: Housing Units Supply Trend



Source: Pison Housing Company (2016)

The Lagos Urban Renewal Authority (LASURA) is driving a different approach to housing that looks at options for *in situ* upgrading.³⁴ 'The government should not be in the business of building houses from scratch,' said Lateef Sholebo, 'it must create an enabling environment for others to do so. If best practices are used, there is room for improvement,' assured Sholebo, 'but if more of the same happens, Lagos could become 95 per cent slum.'



Housing in crisis: 70 per cent of Lagosians live in slums, with a housing deficit of up to 5 million units

The problem of suitable housing is one that is too complex for government to solve alone. Lagos needs to develop the means to deal with its current

backlog as well as a way to prepare for its future growth. The state system in place has been to promise new housing developments at the start of each Governor's term, with limited commitment to complete the housing projects already under construction. The response of the private sector has been to create high cost housing with guaranteed returns. Whilst both strategies have been

pragmatic in terms of political and financial expediency, they have led to the enormous shortage we see today. Until the city taps into the self-build model currently utilised by citizens, as well as the resources available in both the private and the public sectors, a solution to the city's housing crisis seems unlikely.

A New Housing Model for Lagos

During our time in Lagos, the Brenthurst Foundation worked with renowned South African architect, Sarah Calburn, to develop a three-storey multi-use housing model aimed at *in situ* inner city slum upgrading. The model was designed with the primary motivations of keeping costs low, preventing the displacement of residents, and harnessing and developing local skill through self-build and maintenance strategies.

The housing model proposes a four-storey concrete beam and slab structure on piles, erected in existing open space on access routes through slum areas, allowing residents to largely remain in place during construction. This structure would be developed either by Lagos State or a suitable private partner, and its construction could induct local young people into the construction industry. The beam and slab structure is designed with centrally-located sanitation and garbage disposal facilities on each floor, installed during construction, that alleviate pressure on municipal service provision. Training would be provided for local residents to service the building.

The ground floor of the frame would be constructed at double height to function as pedestrian commercial open space. A mix of market stalls, formal shops, public loos and garbage rooms from ducts above form part of the space, which is permeable along its street edges and in a multi-block format to encourage mass pedestrian movement in all directions. Effectively, the frame and open space seek to replicate the crowded pavement space of Lagos so that a walkable urban terrain is formed. Smaller forms of transport, such

as bicycles, can also safely negotiate the terrain. This strategy provides weather-protected public space, and allows for unimpeded maintenance of services at ground level such as sewerage, water supply lines and power.

At completion of the framed levels, local residents would enter a self-build programme for the units themselves, as all structural elements (floors, roofs, service ducts) are now in place. Walling techniques could comprise low-skill, cheap and well-insulated sandbagging construction, for example, as Lagos Lagoon is permanently in the process of dredging. Clay bricks, breezeblocks and windows would be locally sourced. Design principles include cross breezes at all points, large spiral staircases and common bathing, laundry and wash up facilities. Unit sizes are flexible. The main access corridors are wide enough for home industry at each unit, so that circulation through the floors between the staircases results in a neighbourhood with the same intimate and vibrant feel as neighbourhood streets.

In **stage one** of the project, the appointed housing agency would insert a piled 8 x 8m column grid and build large spiral staircases at 32m centres along open access routes in a target slum.

In **stage two**, the areas directly around the buildings would be cleared, and the first- and second-floor precast concrete slabs would be laid.

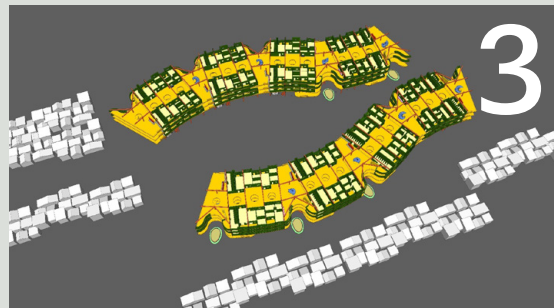
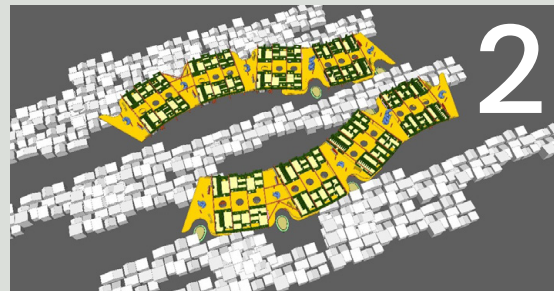
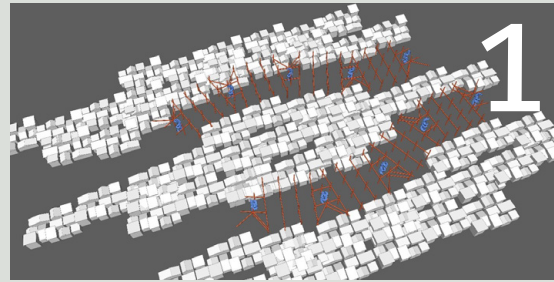
In **stage three**, residents would move up and build the walls between the first and second floor slabs. Modular systems of housing clusters can be seen in the plan on page 15, with stairs in blue, and a wide, common well-ventilated street running through the centre of the housing clusters. Each stair core coincides with common laundry, garbage and sanitation facilities, as well as open

air gathering spaces overlooking the street. With an intention to reproduce the lively dynamic of Lagos and its people, construction is modular yet flexible, obtaining gently curving buildings at human scale with no resemblance to 'soviet' style housing blocks.

After accommodation of all surrounding units, the ground plane between the new buildings is freed up to become park and play space, or parking space off the roadway, for example. Existing historic buildings, like churches, could remain to form a new urban terrain that is lively and dense, yet breathable. Weather events such as flooding are made easily manageable in this building structure and no longer threaten residents' homes.

The roof plane has been developed as safe play space for children, and could accommodate a crèche or school-type facility, vegetable gardens or residents' park with ease. Until power supply is guaranteed in Lagos, housing solutions cannot rise above three-storey walk-ups. This housing proposal, however, suggests that piles are sunk to permit future vertical extension of the building to six or seven storeys once elevators become feasible. Upper levels could also take larger and more luxurious housing at a later date. The facades of the building are permeable and varied, which enables many types of personal expression. All units have balconies and windows onto the street so that human connection at all levels is maintained and encouraged. Tree planting is a vital element in this scheme as can be seen in the image on the right.

This project aims to create a strategic framework for housing in the city that allows in situ upgrading in its densest and most chaotic parts. It harnesses the self-build energy, vitality and responsibility of residents in their own neighbourhoods, while stimulating agency and belonging for all. It effectively allows government to install sustainable frameworks for the safety, growth and prosperity of its people both in the now, and towards the long-term. A project of this nature would establish a new kind of African Urban Terrain – one that is not imported, and not imposed from elsewhere. The project is a truly local housing solution that

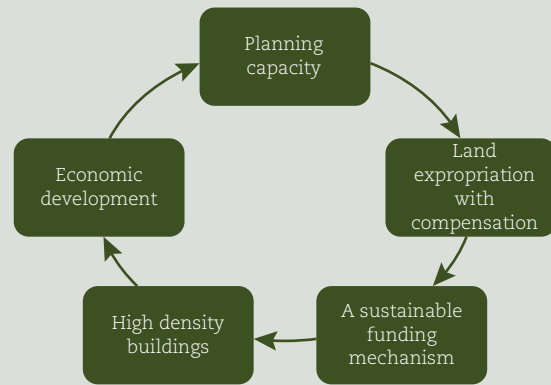


is exceptional and uplifting, both materially and socially, and fosters natural growth of Lagos and Lagosians.

The implementation of large-scale housing innovation is not without significant challenges. However, the case of Singapore's Housing Development Board proves that such challenges are not insurmountable. Like Lagos, Singapore faced a growing population in a tightly constrained space. In order to overcome the first challenge of access to suitable land, the state introduced the 1966 Land Acquisition Act, which allowed the government to

obtain land quickly and with some compensation. By 1979, 80 per cent of land was under government control and sold to developers through long-term (usually 99-year) leases. To address the perennial problem of funding, housing units were funded through compulsory savings schemes where employers and employees contributed a maximum of 20 per cent of their salaries. Building costs were kept low by prioritising a 'no frills' approach as well as the adoption of building technologies suitable to the local context. Development didn't stop at housing, the government pursued broader urban development strategies to spur economic growth and create a positive cycle of housing, employment and funding.³⁵

For such a housing model to succeed, the state will need to implement the principles highlighted in the Singaporean example, as illustrated on the right. A dedicated team will need to be tasked to manage the process efficiently and



effectively. There will need to be a clear policy on land acquisition that ensures current residents and beneficiaries of any new developments are adequately compensated. The funding for the plan should be dynamic, making use of both resident and state funds to ensure local investment in the programme. This plan will need to fit into broader policy measures for economic growth in the city so as to create a sustainable cycle of development.

Transport

Moving around Lagos is a daunting experience. An island city, Lagos's business activity is concentrated on Victoria Island with the majority of the city's administration and residential areas located on the mainland and accessible by three bridges, the Carter Bridge, Eko Bridge and Third Mainland Bridge, Africa's second-longest bridge at 10.5km.³⁶

After half past three in the afternoon, it is impossible to cross the Third Mainland Bridge without bumper-to-bumper traffic. Meetings are frequently scheduled around traffic flow. Lagosians endure an average commute time of four hours each day, a total of three billion hours a year.

Despite the abundance of waterways throughout the city, road travel makes up the bulk of the city's transportation. Every day, more than 2 million vehicles move across the 7 598km of state road, about 264 vehicles/km, making roads highly congested.³⁷ Not only does Lagos move its large population, it also serves as the main port of entry for goods into Nigeria. In the absence of a functioning railway system, freight vehicles

move along its main road corridors, adding to the congestion.³⁸

One of the reasons for Lagos' poor road infrastructure is the division of roads between the three tiers of government. The state has jurisdiction over 59 per cent of roads, with LGAs looking after 36 per cent and the Federal Government at 5 per cent.³⁹ This interdependence means that while one road may be well-maintained, turn off to another road that may have a gaping pothole that prevents traffic flow.

One such example is the ongoing repairs on the Apapa-Oshodi Expressway. Though the Expressway is under Federal jurisdiction, its repairs were awarded to the Dangote Group as part of a tax incentive scheme to encourage private actors to invest in infrastructure⁴⁰, however, the slow progress of the project has severely increased travel time to and from the port. At the time of research trucks sat for an additional five days on the road in a multi-kilometre queue that blocked a lane of traffic across swathes of the city. Expressing his frustration at the process, Gavin Riaan of the Imperial Group in Nigeria remarked, 'Our drivers take five days to enter the port and

four days to exit – this has a knock-on effect on our logistics service and the credibility of our assets.'

In addition to its poor road infrastructure, Lagos also suffers from poor public transport. Public transport services in Lagos account for less than 3 per cent of daily mobility. The State's Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA) has tried to improve this figure by introducing two bus services: the Lagos Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with dedicated lanes on main transport corridors, and LAGBUS, a feeder system on smaller routes. But, these have failed to take off.

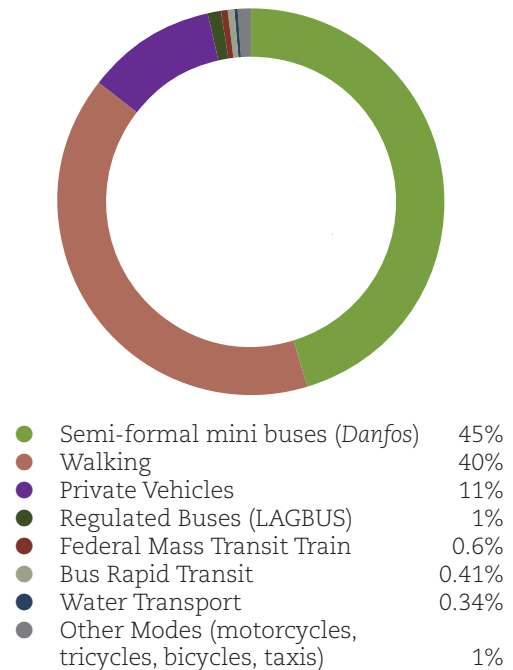


Beneath the bridge: The Third Mainland Bridge is 11.8km long and handles 7 000 vehicles a day – vital infrastructure. Still, it is often congested and poorly maintained

Forty-five per cent of Lagosians use *Danfoss* – the rickety yellow vehicles that dot the city's landscape 40 per cent walk, and 11 per cent use private cars. These journeys are supported by motorcycles called *Okadas* or tricycles known as *Keke Marwas* for shorter distances. Ride-sharing apps such as Uber and Taxify are starting to make a dent in the market but face challenges of mapping and traffic congestion and driver relations.⁴¹

The pie chart below illustrates the breakdown of transport usage across the city.⁴²

Figure 7: Lagos' Modes of Transport



Source: Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (2017)

The State has attempted to introduce non-motorised transport in the form of its Blue Line rapid rail network. Construction of the rail began in 2009, with operation scheduled for 2016. Funding was mobilised through a mixture of Lagos State and Chinese state-owned enterprise funds, notably from the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation. However, construction on the rail has stalled indefinitely.⁴³ Critics have said that railway development is more expensive and complex than an upgrade of the current BRT system, which should be prioritised instead.

A Lagos Icon: The Danfo

Danfos are privately owned and operated, offering the cheapest and most efficient way for Lagosians to commute. There are currently 50 000 vehicles registered.⁴⁴ 'Danfos are flexible, they can navigate the difficult, narrow roads of informal settlement areas,' shared Lookman Oshodi of Arctic Infrastructure.

However, the vehicles are poorly regulated and often poorly maintained, with reckless drivers at the wheel who cause accidents and contribute to the city's widespread traffic friction. A plan is in motion to phase out the Danfos within the next year and introduce a new fleet of 5 000 buses⁴⁵ in replacement. This fleet is envisioned as an entirely new public bus service that will run alongside the existing LAGBUS and Lagos BRT. It reflects the State's *modus operandi* of replacing competitive

informal service providers with one formalised entity – an approach that has so far yielded mixed results. As Oshodi quipped, 'you can't surrender the transportation mandate of a city as big as Lagos to just one company.'



Dangerous Danfos: 45 per cent of residents use the semi-formal buses

At present, there are plans underway to provide more infrastructure for water travel. Thirty ferry routes have been identified to be dredged, the start of the first four have been commissioned.⁴⁶ In late 2018, MTN Nigeria donated a ferry terminal to Lagos State as part of a public-private partnership to increase the use of water transport.⁴⁷ However, it is too soon to tell the levels of public uptake.



Bus transport in Lagos is less than 2 per cent of the city's transport use

Moving around Lagos is a process that is fraught with frictional costs and the need for specialised knowledge on which routes to take and when to take them. The state has acknowledged the problem. However, the current policies in place do little to address the backlog. The private sector has been

a champion in the city's transport network that has kept citizens moving but, Lagos' traffic woes, show the need for coordinated transport policy across the city.

Electricity

Despite its status as Africa's largest oil producer, with some 2.4 million barrels per day in 2016, Nigeria is electricity poor. The country has an installed capacity of just 7 100MW, of which 4 100MW is available for generation to supply its 190 million residents. A figure well below the international rule of thumb of 1 GW per 1 million residents and lagging regional counterparts such as Ghana that has similar capacity for a country of 30 million and South Africa with 50GW for a population close to 60 million.⁴⁸

On average Lagos receives just 700MW of this capacity and has an estimated deficit of over 10 000MW in 2014.⁴⁹ Just 45 per cent of the population has access to the power grid. Despite this, the city has a thriving economy with over 50 per cent of Nigeria's manufacturing sector located in Lagos.⁵⁰

The majority of the city's electricity comes from generators. Power from the national grid

costs approximately N30/kwH but, because it is notoriously unreliable most people generate their own electricity at a rate of N97/kwH, an expensive intervention that drives up the cost of goods and services within the city.

Lagos' power woes are part of a larger, Nigerian problem. In 2001, the National Electric Power Policy in 2001 was the beginning of an unbundling and privatisation of Nigeria's electricity supply industry with generation and distribution privatised and transmission as a national asset.⁵¹ However, privatisation failed to address the root causes of the country's electricity backlog; an inability to guarantee cost-reflective payments across the supply chain and to secure available gas and gas supply infrastructure.⁵² Leaving Nigeria unable to develop a functional electricity supply industry that meets the needs of all citizens.

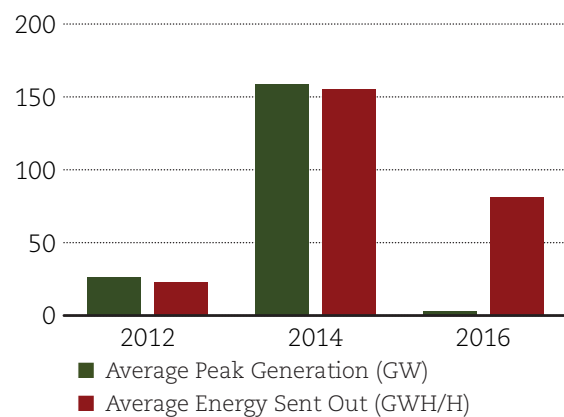
Until recently, Nigeria's legislation prevented individual states from generating their own electricity. Power was conceived as nationally significant and thus placed on the exclusive list of services provided only by the federal government.⁵³ State authorities, like Lagos, could do very little.

All on-grid power was sent from the national generator and distributed regionally through private distribution companies, for Lagos, the Eko Electricity Distribution Plc on the island and Ikeja Electricity Distribution Company on the mainland. However, there was a provision for embedded power/own-use generation and the state government was permitted to contract independent power producers (IPPs) to provide 48MW of supplementary power for Lagos' main government offices.

In 2017, Governor Ambode presented the ambitious Lagos State Electric Power Sector Reform Bill in an attempt to overcome the electricity impasse. The Bill has passed through several legislative hurdles and should it be implanted in its current form, it will allow the state to generate and consume its own power through an embedded power generation scheme with the IPPs.

The Bill forms part of the plans to expand the Governor's 'Light Up Lagos' initiative. 'Light Up Lagos' is the State's plan to provide 3 000MW of additional power to the city by 2022. Power generated from the plan will bypass the transmission networks and be supplied directly to the distribution companies, classifying it as 'embedded power'. The power will be generated from a number of independently-owned power barges fuelled by liquefied natural gas (LNG). Lagos State will act as a guarantor for both the fuel inputs and the generation infrastructure. A special purpose vehicle will administer the tariff collection process and ensure that the various stakeholders are given their appropriate share. There are plans to expand, should the first 3 000MW be successful.

Figure 8: Nigeria's Unstable Electricity System



Source: Nigeria Bureau of Statistics and Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) (2016)

'Light Up Lagos' was born from multi-stakeholder engagement meetings, over 19 months, with concerned actors in the electricity supply industry including IPPs, Distribution Companies, regulatory authorities and others. 'Light Up Lagos' needed immense political will,' explained Ibilola Kasunmu, the General Manager of the Electricity Board (LESB), 'but governments need to be held accountable for electricity. If not, there must be alternatives.'

Privatisation Gone Wrong: The Case of Waste Management

Lagos generates approximately 17 000 metric tonnes (mt) of waste per day. At present, more than 1.2 million Lagosians do not have access to waste collection services. The waste collection deficit chokes storm water drains and has been implicated in the city's high incidents of flooding.

In 2016, in an attempt to address the challenges in waste, Governor Ambode introduced a new privatisation scheme called the Cleaner Lagos Initiative (CLI), inspired by global cities like London and Dubai. CLI would centralise the majority of the city's waste management services under a single operator, Visionscape Sanitation Solutions, who would be responsible for the collection of all household waste and the management of all landfills. CLI was introduced by an Executive Order with the tender given to Visionscape quickly and non-competitively, without stakeholder engagement or public consultation.

Prior to CLI, a system known as 'Operation Clean Lagos' was in place. Introduced in 2000 during the Tinubu administration (1999–2007) and continued under Governor Fashola (2007–2015), Operation Clean Lagos employed 450 small to medium private sector participants (PSPs) contracted through the Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) to collect household waste. This was augmented by an abundant informal community of scavengers and waste pickers, many of whom are trade association members. In this system, 10 per cent of LAWMA's role was to regulate the PSPs, and the

remaining 90 per cent was operational, managing the transfer loading stations and dumpsites, cleaning public areas.

The 2016 overhaul transferred responsibility from multiple individual actors to the privately operated Visionscape. 27 500 workers were employed with 600 trucks, LAWMA's primary role was to regulate the system and informal waste collectors were no longer recognised as a part of the waste economy.

By 2017, challenges of poor coordination and incapacity in the CLI system had emerged as rubbish began to pile up on Lagos' streets. As a member of the Waste Management Society of Nigeria (WAMASON) remarked, 'Waste doesn't wait for government bureaucracy, ... its collection and management is a 24-hour business.'

During our interviews, Visionscape assured us that any problems in the system were the teething problems of a pilot phase. However, in October 2018, the Lagos Assembly voted to scrap Visionscape completely and reinstate the PSP operators. Speaker of the house, Mudashiru Obasa stated, 'We insist that we don't know anything about Visionscape because we were not consulted before they started work.'⁵⁴

The intervention in Waste Management reveals how the poor integration of private sector actors in the delivery of public services can undermine the very systems they are brought in for support. In order for the private and public sector to work together effectively, private partners need to be properly vetted and assessed on their ability to get the job done.

Conclusion: A Model for Africa?

Lagos is an amazing illustration of what people can accomplish when a government does not have the resources to manage its growing population. The perceived chaos of the city is in fact a complex web of competing interests, as illustrated in the account of privatisation of Waste Management Services. Lagos, works. However, it only works for

those who have the political and financial means to control the process. For the average Lagosian, life is hard and non-stop hustle to meet basic need such as water, electricity and housing.

Lagos' residents keep the city turning. In the absence of formal systems they create their own with clear processes and a logic that may be opaque to outsiders but serves the needs of its residents. However, as demands on the system multiply, due to a rapidly steps need to be taken

to ensure that Lagos has the basic infrastructure to meet the needs of its people. Because in its absence, there is a real threat that the center will not hold as the city prepares to double by 2050.

The *in situ* low cost housing plan presented by the Brenthurst Foundation is one step to introduce a mechanism to address the infrastructure backlogs of the city whilst also harnessing its most valuable resource, its citizens. The plan draws on international examples of successful housing schemes, such as Singapore, to understand the requisite pillars to get low-cost housing right. Advocating for densification in low-income areas. Limiting the immediate need for government services whilst requiring local community and

government buy in. If this project is successful in Lagos, it could provide an example of continental best practice.

Lagos is a city that shouldn't work, with a population of over 20 million, infrastructure services for less than half of its residents, formal job creation at 5 per cent of all new jobs. But, it does. For the continent to succeed as we embark on an urbanising century, there is a need to further distil how it manages to do so. What lessons are transferable and which of the current operating systems hinder further growth. Because whilst the city is a challenge, we can rest assured that Lagos *no dey carry last*.

Endnotes

1. Lagos is both a city and a state. Under Nigerian legislation, it is one of 36 states in the federal republic. However, as the smallest state geographically, it also operates as a single metropolis.
2. The introduction is extracted from an op-ed titled *Lagos, the Relentless City*, written by Greg Mills and Dickie Davis and published on the *Daily Maverick* in October 2017. It is used here with permission from the authors.
3. This setup created one Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in Abuja, 36 states, and 768 LGAs across Nigeria, embodied in the 1999 Constitution, to distribute national revenue fairly and devolve administrative duty where necessary.
4. See, *The History of Lagos* available at: lagosat50.org.ng.
5. See Governance Institutions: Local Government in Lagos. CPPA Research, 2015.
6. See <https://www.transparency.org/gcb2013/country?country=nigeria>.
7. All Progressive Congress was previously Action Congress of Nigeria.
8. Transparency International 2013 Global Corruption Barometer. Available <https://www.transparency.org/gcb2013/country?country=nigeria>.
9. Ibid.
10. World Bank. 2014. Subnational Doing Business: Doing Business in Nigeria.
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13. Lagos Internal Revenue Service (LIRS), see <http://www.lirs.gov.ng/>.
14. See <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/06/self-assessment-practice-in-nigeria/>.
15. Jointly published by the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Nigeria and BudgIT. 2017. 'Lagos' Informal Sector: Taxation and Contribution to the Economy. Available: <https://ng.boell.org/2017/02/22/working-poor-informal-sector-and-their-contribution-urban-economy>.
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17. See, <https://qz.com/africa/676819/lagos-is-africas-7th-largest-economy-and-is-about-to-get-bigger-with-its-first-oil-finds/>.
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19. See http://www.developingmarkets.com/sites/default/files/Spotlight%20on%20Investment%20-%20Yewande%20Sadiku%20-%20NIPC_0.pdf.
20. See, PwC Investors Guide, 19.
21. See, <http://venturesafrica.com/the-africa-ceo-forum-sets-out-its-program-for-transforming-the-african-private-sector/>.
22. See, <http://yourbudgit.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NIGERIAN-PORT-AUTHORITY-2017-Financial-Report-Analysis.pdf>.
23. World Bank. 2018. 'Doing Business in 2018: Reforming to Create Jobs'. Available: <http://www.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/media/Annual-Reports/English/DB2018-Full-Report.pdf>.
24. See <https://www.fin24.com/Economy/lagos-set-to-overtake-johannesburg-as-2nd-largest-african-city-by-gdp-20171224>.
25. See <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/02/86-migrants-enter-lagos-every-hour-ambode/>.
26. See, https://ng.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2017/02/budgit_final_report_30.1.17.pdf.
27. Ibid.
28. The deficit depends on how estimates are calculated.
29. Olatubara, C.O. 2007. 'Fundamentals of Housing. Housing Development and Management, a Book of Reading' Edited by Tunde Agbola, Layi Egunjobi and C.O Olatubara.

30. Currency conversion was done at the exchange rate at the time of writing, US\$1 = N360.
31. See <https://estateintel.com/the-future-of-lagos-property/>.
32. Lagos State Government Ministry of Housing. 'Number of Houses Built between 1979–2017.' Hard copy document provided.
33. Governor Jakande was Lagos's last civilian governor before the advent of military rule in 1983.
34. LASURA was established in 1991, formerly Lagos State Urban Renewal Board and renamed in 2005.
35. Greg Mills. 2016. 'Up the Creek with a Paddle: Building Modern Singapore'.
36. See, <https://www.pulse.ng/lifestyle/food-travel/world-records-these-are-the-longest-bridges-in-africa-third-mainland-bridge-is-one-of/5bjgxf5>.
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38. Lagos State Government. 2016. 'Towards Reforming Lagos' Transport Sector'. Available: <https://lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2017/03/28/towards-reforming-lagostransport-sector/>.
39. Urban Planning Processes in Lagos, 2016.
40. See <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2017/09/16/fg-hands-over-35km-apapa-oworonshoki-expressway-to-dangote-for-repair/>.
41. See, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/08/uber-monthly-passenger-base-in-nigeria-hits-267000/>.
42. Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (2017).
43. Urban Planning Processes in Lagos, 2016.
44. Ibid.
45. Lagos State Government. 2016. 'Towards Reforming Lagos' Transport Sector'. Available: <https://lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2017/03/28/towards-reforming-lagostransport-sector/>.
46. See, <http://www.businessdayonline.com/ambode-orders-dredging-4-ferry-routes/>.
47. See, <http://thisislagos.ng/mtn-nigeria-gives-lagos-state-an-ultra-modern-ferry-terminal/>.
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53. See <https://elombah.com/nigeria-exclusive-legislative-list-a-great-impediment-to-regional-development/>.
54. See <https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/lagos-assembly-disowns-visionscape-orders-bsp-back-to-work-id8993684.html>.