



Urban Issues and Challenges

Challenges of Urban

Growth in Lagos



read

quiz



The Big Picture



Key Terms



Sanitation – Measures designed to protect public health, including the disposal of sewage and waste.



Informal sector – Employment done without official knowledge of the government without paying taxes.



Social Challenges



Health Care – Healthcare is available but not always free. There are long waiting times to see a doctor. Vaccinations for children usually need to be paid for. Investment in healthcare is not keeping up with the growth of Lagos. Residents are at risk from infectious diseases such as typhoid and malaria.



Education – The government offers free school places for all younger children. However, in poorer families children often have to work. Secondary schools are limited and most are private. There are not enough university places for the city.



Unemployment – Unemployment is relatively low at around 10%. However, there is no unemployment benefit. People must earn money either in the formal sector where they pay taxes or illegally in the informal sector. Informal jobs such as street vending, car washing and waste recycling or typically poorly paid, unregulated and often dangerous.



Water supply – Only 10% of the population has access to safe piped water. Most people dig wells or boreholes to extract water from aquifers. Some people buy water from street vendors.



Sanitation – The majority of people do not have access to flushing toilets. Many use pit latrines which can lead to groundwater supplies being polluted. Lagos Lagoon is heavily polluted with raw sewage.



Energy – Despite Nigeria's vast oil reserves, energy is a significant issue in Lagos. Most organisations rely on backup diesel generators. New power stations are planned.



Crime – Crime rates are high, particularly those involving drugs, vandalism and theft. Rates of armed robbery, and assault are high. Violent clashes occur between gangs known as area boys.



Managing Urban Growth – The lack of affordable housing has led to millions of people building homes in temporary settlements. Most homes are constructed from waste materials such as corrugated iron and wood. 75% of occupants occupy a single room. Over 50% of households lack a kitchen, toilet or bath. Only 11% have access to safe piped water.



Environmental Issues



Waste Disposal – Only 40% of the 10000 tonnes of waste produced in Lagos is collected by city authorities. Only 13% of waste is recycled. Waste is dumped at large landfill sites such as Olusosun.



Pollution – Air pollution is five times higher than the recommended limit. This is largely due to poorly maintained vehicles and diesel electric generators. Water pollution is a significant issue.



Traffic Congestion – Lagos is one of the most congested cities in the world. The average commuter spends 3 hours in traffic each day.