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EDITORIAL

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The Journal of Inclusive Cities and Built Environment Issue Number 3 Volume 2 of 2022 comprises of eight (8) papers. These papers revolve around critical issues that have been trending globally and negatively impacting on cities. While some of these issues have become a perpetual negative emblem of cities (such as informal settlements and spatial exclusion); others (such as floods and covid-19) are new entrants with equally devastating effects on cities. These papers are contextually driven by imperial evidence from African cities – however, their depth of analysis goes beyond the African context. Hence cities, across the global, can be depicted in the same context especially when observed from the marauding effect of floods and the covid-19 pandemic.

Among the paper in this Volume is the paper by Moloj on *Effective Service Delivery Strategy Adoption and Implementation: A Panacea for Social Inclusion in Inkosi Langalibalele Municipality*. Over the past twenty years, service delivery has increasingly received much attention to promoting positive social effects that address social inclusion and exclusion issues. A growing body of research suggests that central to the need to improve service delivery, at both national and local government level, is the need to guarantee that all groups within the community are integrated in sustainable development trajectory thrust. This paper investigates the role of service delivery in fostering social inclusion in a typical local municipality in post-apartheid South Africa. The study used a qualitative case study approach to examine the role of service delivery in promoting and ensuring inclusive communities in Inkosi Langalibalele Municipality. The research had two main interests: (i) to unpack the service delivery strategies implemented in the Inkosi Langalibalele Municipality; and (ii) To find out if these service delivery strategies are enhancing the prospects of social inclusion. Three broad strategies were identified from the data: increasing citizen participation, flexible response to service user complaints, and partnering with other players and outsourcing services. The results of this study reveal that, while the strategies may have enhanced the prospects of an inclusive municipality, the Inkosi Langalibalele municipality needs to do more to ensure that their strategies are equitable and thus inclusive and foster social inclusion.

The Covid-19 pandemic scourge is brought to the fore by Usman et al who present a Developing Predictive Model for Poverty and COVID-19 Incidences in Nigeria. Indeed, poverty is one of the greatest challenges facing the world today. This is because it is a major cause of ill-health which forces people to live in dirty environments and a barrier to accessing health care, especially in the developing world. As a result of these, it was predicted that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic would pose a devastating impact on households living beneath the economic, social, health and educational services thresholds. It was believed that this impact would stem from the direct and indirect effects of the illness and the transmission control policies of governments. Consequently, this study assessed the COVID-19 preventive strategies adopted as well as the statistical relationship between the pre and post-lockdown household income poverty in Minna, Nigeria. The study similarly developed a predictive model for the nexus between poverty headcount ratio and the incidence of COVID-19 in Nigeria. Both the primary and secondary sources of data were employed for this study and the data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (t-Test and regression techniques). The outcome showed that there exists a statistically significant difference between the pre-lockdown poverty rate and the post-lockdown poverty rate in Minna. The study also revealed that for each unit increase in poverty headcount ratio, the incidences of COVID-19 cases and its fatalities decreases respectively. The study, therefore, recommended the domestication of

the existing social intervention programmes of the Federal Government, by States Governments in order to enhance the standard of living of more households.

The issue of inclusivity is taken to yet higher levels when Simbanegavi questions whether “inclusive housing development depress neighbourhood house prices?” using the South African context of Cosmo City in Johannesburg. This debate comes at the backdrop of South Africa joining the global world in building inclusive housing, known as Mixed Income Housing (MIH) as a way to integrate and transform residential markets previously distorted by the discriminatory apartheid regime. However, despite the benefits of MIHs in deconcentrating poverty and boosting housing supply, these inclusive neighbourhoods often experience amplified cases of ‘Not in My Back Yard’ (NIMBY) for various reasons. Thus, the approval processes of these inclusive housing developments get to be highly contested in courts, which causes huge delays in their completion. The paper aims to investigate the effect of NIMBY on the prices of houses in a mixed-income neighbourhood using a cross sectional hedonic model on houses sold in the neighbourhood of Cosmo City MIH. Emerging results show that Cosmo City had negligible effects on neighbourhood house prices. This is rather surprising given the unfavorable perception encountered during its development. The practical implication is that improving infrastructure such as roads to reduce traffic congestion, building new schools, new hospitals, security services, and new shopping centers reduces pressure on available services and amenities making inclusive housing acceptable in its neighbourhood. The social implication is that the inclusive housing developments default into supplying the much-needed social housing in South Africa. Scientifically measuring perception on accepting MIH development projects in well-established neighbourhoods do contribute to understanding the plight of housing shortage by the public in ways that accepts inclusivity from an investment perspective.

The Covid-19 pandemic is yet revisited in this issue by Olufemi et al who “*Evaluated the Interface between the Lassa Virus epidemic, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Food Environment in Nigeria using a One Health Approach*”. For the Nigerian populace, social and health inequities continue to be disproportionately heightened due to the triad of Lassa virus epidemic, COVID-19 pandemic and worsening food security. The study uncovers significant challenges relating to hunger, poverty, food insecurity, food loss and malnutrition driven by both Lassa virus and COVID-19. The spread of zoonotic diseases transmitted from animals to humans are worsened by unplanned urbanization, urbanization of poverty, insufficient management information systems, population increase and climate change. The paper discusses practical measures for state of preparedness and suggests that priority be placed on strengthening the local food environment to encourage better food diversity, access, and affordable options. A One Health approach is a holistic, inclusive community-driven measure which is supported by sustainable infrastructure, a healthy biodiversity and functioning ecosystems, which are necessary for human and environmental health.

Infrastructure and spatial exclusion in the issue is also discussed by Adebayo and Kawu who analysed it from a perspective of “*Bus Rapid Transit with a focus on opportunities and challenges of sustainable urban transportation in Metropolitan Kano, Nigeria*”. Kano metropolitan area is witnessing increasing population growth with transportation problems that continue to pose serious mobility characterised by gross traffic congestion. With growing inadequacy of public transport services, benefits of efficient planning for sustainable transportation system for a city like Kano cannot be overemphasized. This research assessed the likely challenges and opportunities of the proposed Bus Rapid Transit Operations (BRT) in Kano Metropolis. Through quantitative data survey and analysis, the study revealed that Kano metropolis public transport is commonly used by low-income residents and often fall short of demand. Although, the Kano State Road Traffic Agency (KAROTA) has been managing traffic problems in the metropolis, introducing a BRT can contribute towards realization of the goals of 21st urban transport services. Even though Kano is an ancient city, it is anticipated that there will be little challenges in the introduction, building and operations of the proposed BRT with regards to structural construction. Generally, the low-income level of city residents coupled with equally low revenue base of the state are also issues that should be taken into cognisance in this project. The authors conclude observing that the city has been undergoing transport revolutions - just as the pre-colonial Trans-Sahara traders and the 20th century north-south movements were aided by camels and trains for the city of Kano, this same ancient city is yet on the verge of receiving another veritable impetus of urban and regional economic development in this 21st century through the BRT.

A city is a living organism whose life can be rejuvenated when it is clogged with challenges. Inner cities, for instance, always face challenges resulting in infrastructure decay and economic decline. Mnikati and Chipungu’s paper explore this aspect in their paper about the “*Inner city decline of the Durban Point Precinct in South Africa*”. With their focus being on the Durban waterfront where the Point Development Area is located, the authors bemoan continual inner-city decline which is characterized by property abandonment, crime, high unemployment and rundown of inner-city services. This unfortunately, have led to the flight of capital thereby leading to the failure to attract new investments. Using both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the study area, the authors observe that through private-public partnerships, deteriorating inner-cities can breathe a new life if proper planning in implemented as in the case of the Point Waterfront Area. New mixed developments in the form of offices, housing apartments, schools and theme parks are emerging in the area which was once abandoned. Such new developments are supported by

existing and new infrastructure. The article concludes by noting that urban regeneration does not only resuscitate degenerating inner cities – but also provides a platform for rebranding the city.

Finally, Ndanusa, Musa, Hudu, and Isma'il, assessed the "*Multi-dimensional Model for Flood Vulnerability Assessment in Mokwa using a Case of Downstream Communities of Kainji Dam, in the Niger State of Nigeria*". One of the most devastating and expensive natural hazards in the world today is flooding. Hence, several attempts are being made by different scholars and researchers across the globe to study flood vulnerability. This study attempted to quantify the vulnerability indicators using the participatory approach with the intention of developing a multi-dimensional approach for flood vulnerability assessment in Mokwa. Vulnerability was explored through the lens of four dimensions (economic, environmental, physical, and social) and eighteen indicators. The indicators were scrutinized and standardized for easy aggregation and comparability. The flood vulnerability index revealed that the communities experienced high flood vulnerability from all dimensions i.e. economic, physical, social and environmental. The study concluded by advocating that a multi-dimensional approach to flood vulnerability provides valuable information for the vulnerable population.

The point of convergence of the various papers considered in this issue is that they are basically city-related and borders on both wellbeing and value of urban space. Though most of the articles have their study on spaces with the scope focusing on the African setting, the authors' locations are diverse ranging from those within and outside Africa. This situation gives credence to the fact that the journal has continued to receive a good deal of acceptability in terms of quality and high standard amongst scholars. Therefore, the insight and analysis being provided has a diverse input which allows for global generalisation. While acknowledging the fact that the best solution can be found by analyzing a particular context, it is also worthy acknowledging that emerging solutions and recommendations can be customized to fit into diverse settings.

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