



## Proceedings of the Resilient Cities 2017 congress

**Session: City-to-city collaboration and other strategic partnerships to enhance urban resilience**

### **The Nigeria Resilient Cities Network**

**Establishment and progress to date: from a national dilemma to a workable organisation**

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#### **Abstract:**

The newly founded Nigeria Resilient Cities Network aims to provide a 'people-based' approach to city governance and development, with practical assistance to state and local governments in developing improved urban management, service delivery and resilience strategies. This will underpin economic development in the cities, in the face of an expected doubling of the current 85 million urban population over the coming 30 years. The growing national representation of the Network is in each of the six geopolitical zones of the country, supported in each State by the respective governors. This includes the existing Rockefeller Foundation recognised Resilient Cities of Enugu and Lagos, plus participation and membership from the Federal Capital, Abuja, together with Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Minna and Bauchi in the north of the country, and Port Harcourt in the south. The Network is thus fully established as a national NGO, and formally registered at the national Centre for Spatial Information Science (CSIS) at Ahmadu Bello University, one of the oldest established universities of Nigeria, based within the City of Zaria.

By being based at the University's national Centre for Spatial Information Science, the network has secured a long-term future, with vital Vice Chancellor support, and as such also training and new courses in urban management. The Network's 'Effective Cities Archive' of relevant experience and technical resources is also based at CSIS.

Being represented locally in each city by a 'network of networks' the Network has secured participation at the broadest level, in addition to their respective state government, local government, and traditional chiefs involvement, as well as private sector and civil society active in pursuit of their long-term resilient city goals.

The interactive session at ICLEI Resilient Cities 2017 congress brought insights to the long-term benefits of such networks and encouragement for its expansion across Nigeria, as well as potential as a model for other countries to adopt. The congress sought updates on progress in future years.

**Keywords:**

Cities, Models, National, Networks, Resilience

## **1 Background**

The Nigeria Resilient Cities Network (NRCN) has been set up with its secretariat at the national Centre for Spatial Information Science (CSIS) at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. The focus on urban resilience has captured the imagination and successfully engaged government actors at different levels and non-government actors, as well as international actors. The Network has close links with the global 100 Resilient Cities programme instigated by the Rockefeller Foundation, which provides direct support to the city of Enugu and more recently, to Lagos.

Cities in Nigeria have no dedicated administrations – there are no ‘Mayors’, while urban affairs lie within the jurisdiction of the state governors. The Network aims to provide practical assistance to state and local governments in developing improved urban governance, management and service delivery and resilience strategies to underpin economic development in their cities, with an expected doubling of the current 85 million urban population over the coming 30 years.

Emerging concepts around Resilient Cities will help drive forward a more ‘people-based’ approach to city governance and development involving local communities, particularly to strengthen their ability to withstand shocks and challenges to their economic and social well-being in the context of climate change impacts.

The concept of forming a national network of cities was explored and debated at the international annual conference of the Commonwealth Association of Surveyors and Land Economists (CASLE), February 2016 in Abuja, and at the Habitat-III Africa Consultation Forum, also held in Abuja, hosted by the Nigerian Federal Minister for Power, Works, and Urban Development, and followed up as a national coordination device for the major cities.

In its initial founding stages, the Network received support from the UK government-funded Nigerian Infrastructure Advisory Facility (NIAF) ‘Effective Cities’ programme. An archive of the experience gained over the five-year period of the NIAF programme now forms the core of an NRCN Effective Cities Resource Centre, which will benefit the member cities across the country.

The Network’s Effective Cities Archive and Resource Centre is being supplemented by a range of resources for knowledge sharing, training and capacity building, with assistance from its international partners. In turn this will contribute to future knowledge sharing and advocacy in the development of improved urban governance, service delivery, infrastructure and economic development in Nigeria.

The University has recently inaugurated Nigeria’s first MSc in Urban Management, which is seen to be the basic establishment of this as a profession in its own right.

## **2 Initial Establishment of the Nigeria Cities Network**

The Network was inaugurated at a Stakeholder Workshop held at ABU, Zaria, 14th July 2016, at which the “**Zaria Declaration**” was agreed as a set of objectives for the Network. A further second national stakeholder workshop has since been held at the Federal Capital, Abuja, in November, with representation from cities in each of the geo-political zones of the country, national dignitaries, and attendance, ratifying the Zaria Declaration. A Keynote Address was made by the Associate Director, Africa, from the New York headquarters of the Rockefeller Foundation.

The Network has now been formally registered as an NGO with a Board of Trustees and taken to a national scale. As well as representatives from the two existing Rockefeller-recognised resilient cities, Enugu and Lagos, the Network has attracted the representation of the cities Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Minna and Bauchi in the north and Port Harcourt in the south of the country, as well as the Federal Capital City, Abuja.

The Federal Ministry of the Environment, which is currently focused on growing concerns with the linkages between climate change and conflict in the country is also engaging in its activities. The Rockefeller Foundation will now support the 2017 programme of the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network with three further stakeholder workshops – firstly in alignment with the kick-off workshop for the Lagos programme; followed by an Annual meeting at ABU, Zaria; and a final meeting ahead of the National Council on Lands Housing and Urban Development in Minna, in November 2017, to be chaired by Federal Minister, Power, Works, Housing (and Urban Development).

The following “Zaria Declaration” was signed by the participants of the first Stakeholder Workshop of the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network held in Zaria on 14th July 2016, and thus represents the ‘demand-led’ purpose of the Network as conceived by the representative delegates at the conference.

## **3 The Nigeria Resilient Cities Network “Zaria Declaration”**

“We the assembled delegates at the first Consultative Stakeholders Forum of the Nigerian Resilient Cities Network (NRCN) hereby agree to this Statement of Principles, which shall guide this association of cities, towns and urban local government areas:

- 1) NRCN: We stand in agreement that this umbrella association shall be named the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network (NRCN), whose secretariat shall be domiciled at the Centre for Spatial Information Sciences (CSIS) Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and shall upon formal incorporation be open for membership to all urban areas in Nigeria.

- 2) **City Advocacy:** We shall actively promote and advocate on behalf of cities at the highest levels in Nigeria and internationally; their establishment as distinct entities, with adequate provisions, sense of ownership and effective management. We will draw attention to the precarious condition of our cities and their importance as economic centres, coupled with their vulnerable status in an age of multiple challenges.
- 3) **Local Government Autonomy with Accountability:** We shall promote the idea and practice of effective local governance for cities, through State, Local Government, Business and Community agents and agencies. In particular, we will seek more effective local authority and service delivery to the cities.
- 4) **Integrating Informal Areas:** In our respective cities and jurisdictions, we shall actively pursue and support measures to integrate informal and unplanned areas into the formal planning and development frameworks of our cities.
- 5) **City Resilience Strategies:** We shall advocate and promote the incorporation of resilience strategies in urban plans and economic development for our cities.
- 6) **Peer Learning:** We commit to the principle and practice of collaboration, knowledge sharing and mutual support through peer learning and review.
- 7) **Stakeholder Engagement:** We recognize that there are many voices in the city, many agents already working hard, but not always working together. We therefore commit to promoting deeper collaboration, cutting across the silos of departmental, socio-economic and cultural divisions.
- 8) **Local Land Markets:** We commit to seeking strategies and plans to make land easily accessible and by promoting the concept of 100% coverage by Certificates of Occupancy (CofO).
- 9) **Development Control:** We commit to seeking more effective means to collaborating with traditional authorities, local agencies and any other stake-holders into the formal land administrative system and development control, from the local level up to Governor level.
- 10) **Local Revenue Generation:** We commit to promote independent, alternative, local revenue streams, which can be captured and targeted to meet local services and needs of the city. Dependence on central allocations should be overcome by putting in place effective local strategies for boosting internal revenue generation for the city.

The stage was thus set for a national Network of the cities of the country, promoted by local networks within each of the participating cities, and supported by universities with urban management programmes.

## **4 Current activities that support and cement the concept of the Network across the country**

There are a number of case studies that provide examples of how the Network is extending its operational activities. The first is on the doorstep of the Network's secretariat at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) and within the host city of Zaria where the Samaru neighbourhood within the Tudun Wada District where support has been given to local committees – firstly on solid waste collection, but also on local upgrading projects within the community. Second example is in the City of Katsina where, with support from UN-Habitat and the German cooperation agencies, there has been a radical re-think of approaches to local housing systems whereby extremely cost-effective new houses are constructed within the local traditional neighbourhoods by members of the community.

This approach to cost-effective self-built housing is being further promoted in the City of Minna – the capital of Niger State, a city that has linked into global city index databases, and where the 2017 annual meeting of the official National Council on Lands, Housing and Urban Development will be hosted by the State Government, although held under the auspices of the Federal Government Ministry of Power, Works, Housing and Urban Development.

Further work is also being undertaken through the USAID Civil Society Project (SACE) that will enable the cities of the Network to prepare their own approach to City Resilience Strategies as they move forward to engaging with their own communities.

In addition, close links are being maintained by the Network secretariat with the global 100 Resilient Cities of Enugu and Lagos and their respective 'Network of Networks' local organisations.

With these examples of cooperation for city resilience and development, the Network can be seen to be operational and useful as a coordination device across the country. The Network will continue to further their objectives with these practical working projects.

## **5 Outcome of the ICLEI Resilient Cities 2017 Congress, Bonn, Germany, May 2017 and lessons learnt**

5.1 Being based at Ahmadu Bello University's national Centre for Spatial Information Science, the Network has secured a long-term future, with Vice Chancellor support, with training and new courses in urban management. The Network's Effective Cities Archive of relevant experience and resources is also based at the Centre.

5.2 Being represented locally in each city by a 'network of networks' it has secured participation at the broadest level - in addition to their respective state government, local government, and traditional chiefs involvement, it also has the private sector and civil society active in pursuit of their long-term resilient city goals.

## **6 Conclusion**

The interactive session at ICLEI Resilient Cities 2017 brought insights to the long-term benefits of networks such as the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network, and offered encouragement for its expansion across Nigeria, as well as demonstrating its potential as a model for other countries to adopt.

The Congress sought to have updates on the progress of the Network in future years which the Network will endeavour to provide.

**References:**

Online document:

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**Bio:**

**Michael Mutter** has been a long term DFID Senior Adviser in Urban Development, and also with UN-Habitat developing the global multi-donor Slum Upgrading Facility. Most recently (2012-2016) Michael has been leader of the Effective Cities Programme under the DFID funded Nigeria Infrastructure Advisory Facility implemented by Adam Smith International. Assisting in the formation of the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network was the culmination of this work. Whilst in Nigeria, Michael inaugurated the Board of Trustees for the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network, based at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria and remains its Chairman.

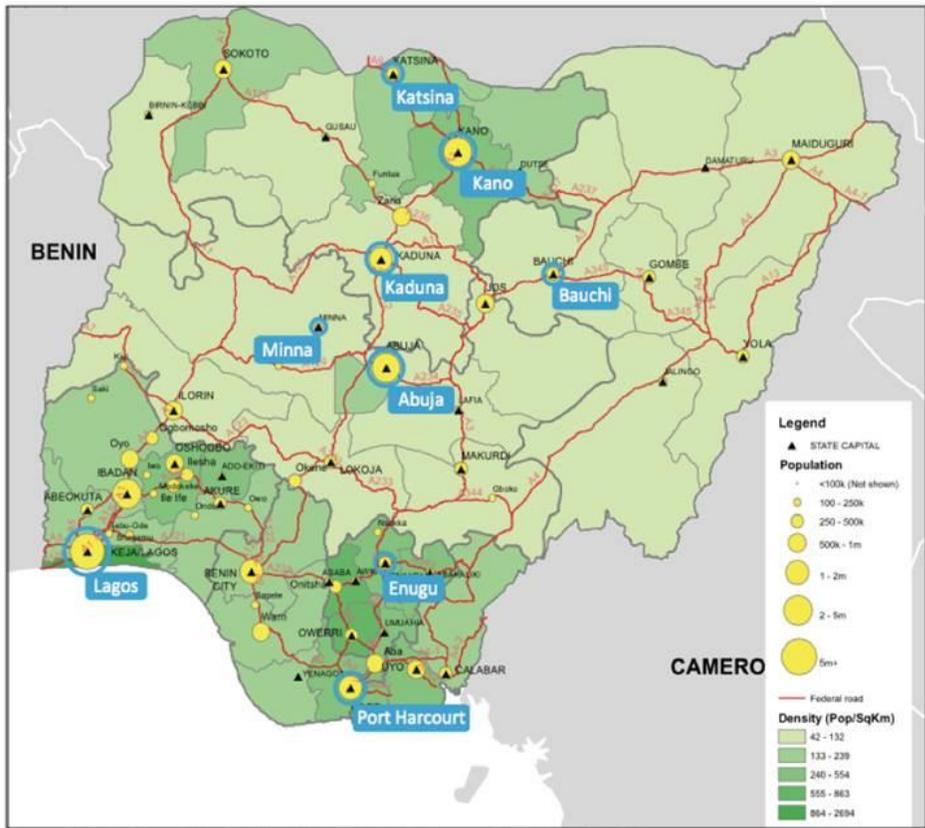
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Attachments:



The Nigeria Resilient Cities Network in 2017 – NRCN - now represents 9 cities covering the full 6 geo-political zones of the country, and the Federal Capital City of ABUJA and host City of Zaria

Basemap by Max Lock Centre, University of Westminster, 2011. Showing the current 9 NRCN Focus-Cities, 2017. Map, logo, and diagrams courtesy of Simon Gusah, Secretary, Nigeria Resilient Cities Network – NRCN, Zaria

Figure 1: Map of the Nigeria Resilient Cities Network