

REPORT ON THE COMMEMORATION OF NIGERIA INDEPENDENCE DAY AND WORLD HABITAT DAY ORGANISED BY REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE (RCE) MINNA HELD AT RCE MINNA RESOURCE CENTER ON THE 1ST OF OCTOBER, 2017.

Theme: Youth and Leadership Development: The Panacea to Housing Challenges



Photo Credit: RCE Minna

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria celebrates its independence on the 1st of October annually, in order to honour the day RCE Minna decided to engage the youth on leadership and development in the face of housing challenge confronting Nigeria, especially as this year's independence celebration took place on the eve of World Habitat Day,. RCE Minna decided to combine the two occasions linking the independence celebration with the commemoration of the World Habitat that comes up every first Monday of October annually. The World Habitat Day- UN Habitat is annual event established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985 and first celebrated in 1986. The idea has since spread across other nations and it is widely celebrated around the globe. Each year, the UN Habitat Day takes on a new theme. This year, the theme was ***Housing Policies: Affordable Homes***. The idea behind the theme is to allow for reflections on the present state of housing condition, our cities and the human right to basic shelter. It is also to remind the world of its responsibility towards promoting better cities.

The event is usually held on the first Monday of October annually. RCE Minna however decided to celebrate it a day earlier, combining it with Nigerian Independence Day Celebration. The aim was to provide a platform for relevant stakeholders in the housing sector (government, private developers, citizen groups, youth and developmental organizations) to find solutions to the

ever growing problems surrounding the provision of adequate housing to citizens of Nigeria on its independence celebration.

The session had an impressive representation of stakeholders and discussions were fashioned around ***Youth and Leadership Development; A panacea to Housing Challenges***, which served as the theme for the combined celebration.

THE SESSION

The celebration, which attracted over 25 people, commenced with an opening remark by the Coordinator of RCE Minna and President of African RCEs, Dr Abdul Husaini. In his remarks, he highlighted the need for all of us to critically go over the five key priorities of the Global Action Programme (GAP) which are:

1. Advancing policy,
2. transforming learning and training environment
3. building capacities of educators and trainers
4. Empowering and mobilizing youth
5. Accelerating sustainable solutions at local levels.



Photo Credit: RCE Minna

On the celebration of World Habitat Day 2017, the coordinator of RCE Minna emphasised the huge housing deficit in the country. He told the gathering that, as at 2014, Nigeria requires about 1.5 Million houses per annum to cover its housing deficit. This is a huge investment that the entire Nigerian banking system cannot fund (at 5 million Naira per house, Nigeria requires about N7.5 Trillion to build 1.5 million houses). He argued that it has become obvious that affordable houses are, in most cases, not decent while decent houses are not affordable to the

ordinary Nigerians. It is therefore imperative for government to look inward on how to provide decent and affordable houses to the public, including our youth, especially as housing delivery can serve as a way of providing employment to the people. Government, therefore, need to look at the housing sector as an area that can assist in reducing our unemployment because each housing project is capable of providing 5 direct jobs and 5 indirect jobs to Nigerians.



Photo Credit: RCE Minna

There were presentations on ***Nigeria: Youth, Challenges and Solutions*** by ***Isah Ibn Muhammad***, member of RCE Minna Youth Network, ***An Overview of World Habitat Day 2017*** by ***Ibrahim Akibu Ja'afaru***, Youth Coordinator RCE Minna and ***presentation of report of Experience on Bridge to the World Youth Summer Camp held in South Korea*** by ***RCE Tongyeong*** by ***Ummulkhairi Hussaini***, Member of RCE Minna Youth Network. These presentations set the stage for the round table discussions.



Photo Credit: RCE Minna

MAJOR OUTCOMES OF THE SESSION

In the final analysis, the meeting identified lack of good mortgage system in Nigeria as the major factor militating against house ownership in the country. The meeting unanimously agreed that the youth are not '**too young to own their houses**', what is needed is the enabling environment and good government policy.

The Session generated other relevant pointers surrounding housing affordability and youth's role in the provision of housing. The following points were noted;

- I. ***Efficient and Effective Policies:*** the need for policies that would encourage better mortgage packages, ease of access to land, review laws that would promote proactive measures to combat housing problems and reduce the development of slums and sprawls within the city. This would enable a well-planned management strategy for the development of infrastructures, tax collection and promote cities that would allow for comfortability and convenience.
- II. ***Collaboration between Private and Public sectors;*** There also exists an importance in embracing partnership between the public and private housing sectors.
- III. ***Societal Perceptions:*** A massive sensitization to debunk societal perceptions about the ability of young citizens to own houses and the perception of youth as irresponsible and with little significance in the clamor for housing ownership should be carried out. also important is the sensitization of youth to take up responsibilities in promoting community development and taking up leadership positions.
- IV. ***Provision of enabling services in rural areas;*** to curb rural- urban migration that increases population in the urban areas and pressure on the infrastructures in urban areas, it is important that government provides some amenities that would hold rural dwellers in their localities instead of moving to urban areas. That would reduce the haphazard growth of urban spaces and provide space for proper housing and development.
- V. ***Deliberate effort to include youth in governance;*** the government should take ample advantage of the ideas and innovations of its youthful population and incorporate them in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. .

LAUNCHING OF RCE MINNA LOGO

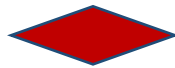
In order to have a locally recognised presence, the RCE Minna launched its new logo.



The logo signifies **culture**, **tradition**, **environment** and **Equity**.

The features represent:

a. Culture and Tradition



b. Environment



c. Equity



d. Map of Niger state



d. An Arc showing sign of protection
for our environment, culture and Equity



CONCLUSION

The celebration unanimously agreed that solving Nigeria's housing shortage requires the working together of the government, private sector and the citizens. On the other hand, to achieve the desired Peace and progress in Nigeria, the youth must be carried along in all activities, as they constitute a very significant proportion of the population with energy and idea to move the country in the part of sustainable development.

THE BANNER



THE REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE (RCE) MINNA
Welcome you to a Round Table Discussion



Theme:

**YOUTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:
THE PANACEA TO HOUSING CHALLENGES**

Venue: RCE Minna Resource Centre



1st October, 2017



4:00pm