Monday 25th April 2022

Case Study – Urbanisation in Lagos

Lagos

Lagos is the largest city in Nigeria. With a disputed population of either 21 million (according to the national government) or 17.5 million, it is considered a megacity. The annual rate of natural increase in Nigeria is 25% every 5 years.

Urban Growth in Lagos

Social Opportunities

* Life Expectancy – 54.5 years in Lagos, vs 53.4 in the rest of Nigeria. Lagos has more doctors and hospitals than the nearby rural areas combined.
* Education – The adult literacy rate of Lagos is 92%, compared to an average of 57%, and as low as 14% in some states.
* Infrastructure – Lagos has clean water, electricity, and good entertainment centres.

Economic Opportunities

* In 2019, Nigerian start-ups raised $600m in funding, 50% of all start-up investment in Africa.
* 30% of the Nigerian population work in agriculture.
* In 2018, the GDP per capita in Nigeria was $5000, twice the GDP per capita of Nigeria.
* However, housing is 77% more expensive, and food is 26% more expensive in African cities compared to rural areas.
* Lagos is Nigeria’s biggest city for banking and investment.

Challenges of Urban Growth

Environmental Issues

* There are over 1 million cars, which contributes to acid rain. Traffic is poor, and public transport is unreliable.
* Air Pollution in Lagos is almost 4x the safe level, which means that it can be hazardous to the population. Smog is also a problem in the city.
* The Olusosun landfill site is the largest landfill site in Africa. 10,000 tons of waste is buried each day.

Managing urban growth and slums

* In 2016, the World Bank found that 2/3 of people living in Nigeria live in slums.
* Many people moved to the slums to earn a living by fishing. However, the waters are polluted, and people struggle to make a living.
* Many of the children living in the slums do not go to school.

Crime and unemployment

* Unemployed men living in slums create vigilante groups called “area boys” to provide security.
* Fishermen struggle to catch enough to earn a living.
* Many people scavenge for rubbish in the city to earn a living.
* The murder rate in Nigeria is 1.2 per 100,000 people.

Clean Water and Sanitation

* People drink the same water the fishermen fish from, and people go to the toilet in. This causes the spread of waterborne diseases such as cholera.
* The World Bank has given Lagos funding to try and improve the sanitation in the slums.
* The water in Lagos’ lagoon is too polluted to be used as drinking water.
* Only 67-81% of people have daily access to clean drinking water in Lagos.