

Flooding and Housing: Case Study Adeniji-Adele Estate



Adeniji-Adele Estate is a low-income housing development which comprises 120 residential blocks of two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartments in four 'Phases'. The strategic location of the Estate between Ikoyi, Victoria Island and Lagos Mainland provides direct physical access to upscale social and economic infrastructure within the heartland of the city. Furthermore, the proximity of the Estate to Oyebanji Transport Hub and the Third Mainland Bridge allows for direct road access to different parts of the city, both on the Island and the Mainland, and horizontal access through to the heart of the South-West region of Nigeria. As at the time the Estate was established in 1983, it was considered an attractive residential community and access was competitive. However, factors such as the proximity of the site to Lagos Lagoon, low-lying terrain and external physical development infractions have seen the Estate decimated by floods over the years. The Lagos State Government has developed a number of drainage and flood control-related plans, however the 2015 Lagos Drainage Master Plan is the first to address the Adeniji-Adele area with any level of detail.

The Lagos Drainage Master Plan 2015 adequately took cognizance of necessary factors such as area topography, tidal variations and climate change, among other variables, to ensure that the city of Lagos - including Lagos Island and Adeniji-Adele - is flood-resilient. Despite the existence of the plan, the flooding challenge faced by the neighbourhood is so persistent that large parts of the Estate remain perpetually submerged. The main challenges faced by the Estate are:

- Illegal development on Jankara/Adeniji-Adele primary channel setbacks, including the construction of perimeter fences
- Gross inadequacy in the maintenance of the drainage infrastructure network in Adeniji-Adele Estate and the surrounding settlement. (Parts of the Jankara/Adeniji-Adele primary channel as well as secondary and tertiary drainage networks are clogged with refuse).
- A newly reclaimed 'Unnamed Island' near Osborne has tilted the flow pattern of the Lagos Lagoon and is causing a back flow of water into Adeniji-Adele Estate.
- The reclamation works on Ilubinrin Housing Estate across the Ring Road have a negative impact on the discharge of storm water from Jankara/Adeniji-Adele primary channel by elongating the discharge length into the lagoon (This is a major factor in slow discharge and back flow of water from the lagoon into Adeniji-Adele Estate).

These challenges have led to impacts such as:

- Extensive flooding on the Estate leading to property damage, loss of income, and loss of life.
- Structural damage leaving parts of the Estate uninhabitable
- Depletion of housing stock and diminished property value
- Severe environmental degradation and associated health concerns

Short Term Recommendations

- Lagos State Government needs to provide substantial support and resources towards removing flood water and silt from the Estate before any redevelopment can take place.
- Clearly defined 'water absorption zones' are required within the Estate. Submerged buildings earmarked for demolition should be converted into 'water absorption zones'.
- Lagos State Government needs to expedite the redevelopment process of the Estate. Care must be taken to ensure that the new construction avoids the pitfalls of the old Estate as highlighted.

Long Term Recommendations

- The development of the newly discovered 'Unnamed Island' near Osborne needs to be reviewed, with its impact carefully taken into consideration. It may be necessary to recalibrate the construction model in order to balance the water flow pattern.
- There is a need to further expand the Jankara/Adeniji-Adele Channel (SYSTEM 139), particularly the stretch adjacent to the Ilubirin Housing Estate, in order to accommodate greater water flow allowance from Adeniji-Adele and its environs.

Policy Recommendations

- Residents ought to be provided access to a copy of the Estate Development Plan; not just for information, but also to enable residents monitor any on-site variations.
- The impact of land reclamation and island development on water flow are key areas to be treated in Environmental Impact Assessments conducted by developers. Authorities must seek to ensure that the impact on neighbouring communities has been taken into consideration and that adequate mitigation, financial and legal responsibility strategies are defined.
- State-wide resettlement strategies are necessary within Lagos State in order to meet the challenges of relocation, rehabilitation, redevelopment and regeneration, which will shape the city of Lagos in the near future.
- The majority of the waste clogging the drainage channels comprises plastic (polyethylene terephthalate – PET) bottles and nylon from sachets. An explicit recycling policy which deliberately supports small scale recycling, industrial set-ups around locations with a high volume of PET bottles (residential and other types of settlements) needs to be put in place.