



Fair solutions (guest article by Boluwatife Ogunjumelo)

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The Struggle for Land Rights in Lagos, Nigeria: A Citizen's Story



Hello, my name is Ogunjumelo Boluwatife, a current member of Brot für die Welt Jugend and I was born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria. Today, I would like to share with you the challenges my city faces with land use and rights, focusing on a recent event that affected many lives.

The Demolition of Tarkwa Bay

In January 2020, the government demolished homes and businesses at Tarkwa Bay, a beloved beach community in Lagos. They said it was to stop illegal activities, but for the residents, it meant losing their homes and livelihoods with little warning. Imagine waking up to bulldozers ready to tear down your house – this is the harsh reality for many Lagosians.

Why Land Rights Matter

In Lagos and many parts of Nigeria, land is controlled by the government. While this can help manage the city's rapid growth, it often leads to conflicts and hardships, especially for those in poorer areas. People need secure land rights to build stable lives, communities, and futures. When these rights are ignored, families are displaced, and their sense of security is shattered.

The Human Impact

The demolitions at Tarkwa Bay displaced thousands, leaving them without shelter or work. Children lost their schools, and entire communities were torn apart. These actions highlight the urgent need for fair and inclusive land policies.



Finding Solutions

To ensure everyone has equal access to land, we need:

- 1. Inclusive Decision-Making:** The government should involve community members in planning land use to understand their needs.
- 2. Affordable Housing:** Investing in housing that people can afford helps reduce reliance on informal settlements.
- 3. Clear Legal Protections:** Updating laws to protect residents' rights can prevent unjust evictions.

How You Can Understand and Help

As students in Germany, you can understand our struggles by learning about the importance of land rights and how they impact people's lives. Advocate for fair land use policies and support initiatives that promote housing rights and urban inclusivity.

Conclusion

Lagos is a city full of potential and challenges. By addressing land rights fairly, we can build a better future for all its residents. I hope sharing this story helps you see why equal access to land and fair treatment are vital for creating thriving communities everywhere.



Assignments

- In Germany, too, there is less and less affordable living space due to property speculation. Discuss this and develop ideas on how housing could be organised in the future.
- Look at the demands of 'Deutsche Wohnen Enteignen' and write 3 ideas about what you can do to make housing easier for people.