



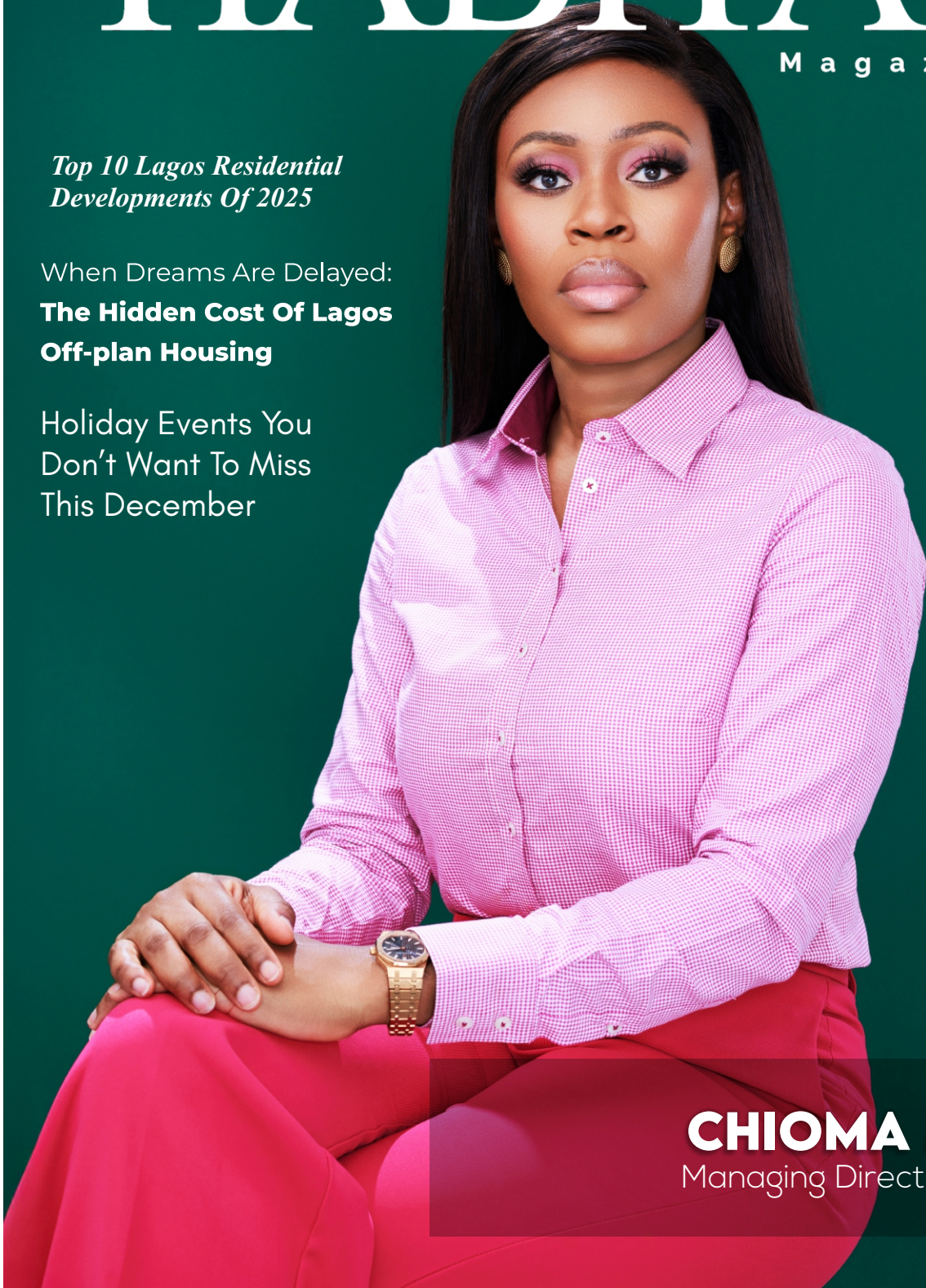
HABITAT

Magazine

*Top 10 Lagos Residential
Developments Of 2025*

When Dreams Are Delayed:
**The Hidden Cost Of Lagos
Off-plan Housing**

Holiday Events You
Don't Want To Miss
This December



CHIOMA ESIKE
Managing Director HEREL

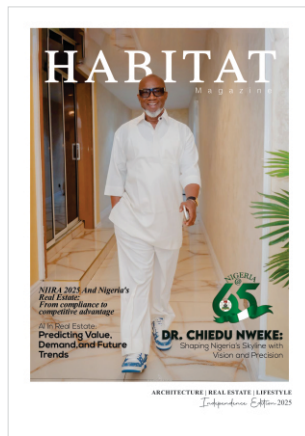
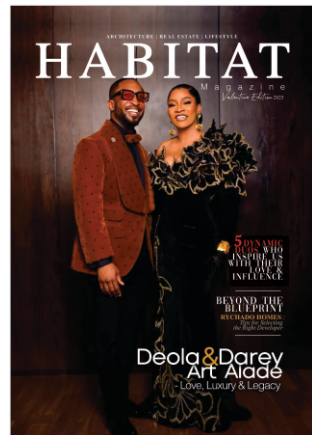
ARCHITECTURE | REAL ESTATE | LIFESTYLE

Holiday Edition 2025

HABITAT MAGAZINE WISHES YOU A

MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



THANK YOU FOR AN INCREDIBLE 2025

To our amazing readers,

Thank you for your unwavering support, your curiosity, and your engagement throughout 2025. Every read, share, comment, and conversation has helped us grow and continue our mission to inform, inspire, and elevate the real estate and lifestyle discourse in Nigeria and beyond.

We are deeply grateful for your trust and your readership. Here's to an even more exciting year ahead and to building stronger communities, better cities, and smarter conversations together.

With appreciation,
The Habitat Magazine Team



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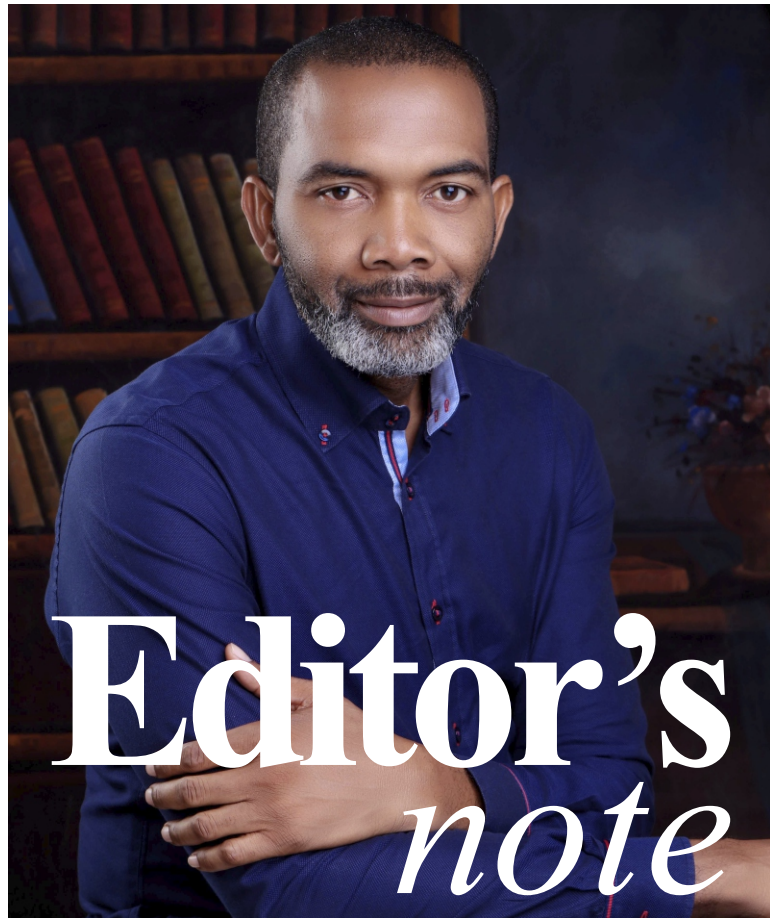
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THE HOLIDAY PRESTIGE EDITION

Welcome to our Holiday Edition, our final and most anticipated issue of the year. December is that cherished moment when the world slows down, allowing us to breathe, reset, and reconnect. For some, it's the perfect time to step away from work and reflect on the year ahead. For others, it's the season to return home and indulge in a well-deserved Detty December with loved ones. Whatever this season represents for you, we've thoughtfully curated an edition that elevates your experience.

Gracing our front cover is Chioma Esike, Managing Director of HereI, whose presence sets the tone for an issue that seamlessly blends real estate, lifestyle, architecture, and the refined spirit of the holidays.

In this edition, we unveil the Habitat Top Ten

Residential Developing lopments for 2025, a meticulously selected guide for discerning investors seeking credible opportunities before the year concludes. You will also find our exclusive Detty December guide, highlighting the most vibrant experiences across Lagos, Abuja, and Calabar, as well as an in-depth feature on the Top 10 Residential Developments in Lagos for 2025.

As we wrap up an exceptional year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our readers, partners, brands, and businesses for your trust, loyalty, and continued engagement. Your support has shaped our journey, and we look forward to an even more inspiring and impactful 2026.

From our partners and the entire Habitat Magazine team, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Peter Aleogena

Editor-in-Chief, Habitat Magazine

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A Brief Overview of **HEREL:** *A Brand Born from Purpose*

HEREL is a premium real estate development and hospitality company dedicated to redefining experiences in physical spaces. From its early beginnings, HEREL set out to challenge the status quo, asking bold questions about how communities grow and how people truly want to live.

At HEREL, we combine design excellence, superior build quality, timely delivery, and exceptional customer service to create environments that reflect timeless elegance and elevate everyday living. Our vision is simple yet deeply powerful: To inspire a new era of elevated living, where every development and hospitality experience reflects timeless elegance and unmatched excellence.

And our mission is the engine behind our promise:
To craft extraordinary real estate and hospitality experiences that embody luxury, warmth, and exceptional service, enriching lives, building vibrant communities, and setting new industry benchmarks. A bold mission like this requires structure and HEREL's foundation is guided by a value system known as RIDEE:

1. Respect — building relationships grounded in trust and dignity.
2. Inclusion — valuing diversity and fostering belonging.
3. Dynamism — embracing change and adapting quickly.
4. Execution — delivering with precision, purpose, and accountability.
5. Entrepreneurship — thinking like owners and pursuing innovative growth.

These values shape everything we create —the design language, the partnerships, the internal culture, and the customer experience.

What Sets HEREL Apart

In a market often driven by speed and replication, HEREL brings thoughtfulness to development. Its designs reflect a blend of clean elegance, hospitality influences, and cultural authenticity.

The brand prioritizes purposeful details such as flow, form, texture, and light, ensuring that every room feels intuitive, warm, and memorable. Beyond product delivery, HEREL is committed to crafting communities: environments that spark connection, creativity, and reflection. Recent projects in Lekki, Ikate, and Ikoyi illustrate this commitment. These homes and hospitality spaces are expressive yet calming, grounded by nature, and harmonized by fine craftsmanship. More than structures, they are experiences shaped by how people live today and envision tomorrow.

“We’re not just designing buildings,” Chioma notes. “We’re designing how people feel inside them.”

Highlights of recent projects, milestones, or innovations that reflect Herel's growth and brand direction:

Over the past year, HEREL has strengthened its position as a leading force in Nigeria's real estate and lifestyle sector, delivering exceptional developments and expanding its portfolio with purpose and precision.

Among its cornerstone achievements are Aqua Point, Prestige at Hampton, AP House, and the continued growth of HEREL Play, all of which reflect the company's unwavering commitment to design excellence, functionality, and elevated living. Each project continues to showcase HEREL's signature approach to real estate: spaces defined by thoughtful craftsmanship, luxury, and a deep understanding of modern lifestyle patterns.



Aqua Point, Ikoyi

A five bedroom detached home located in Patrick Harbor Estate, Mojisola Onikoyi off Banana Island Road. Features include a swimming pool, cinema, family room, study, foyer, kitchen, five bedrooms, and a roof terrace, offering exceptional waterfront living and strong appreciation potential in an ultra-prime neighborhood.

Prestige at Hampton, Ikate Lekki

A five-bedroom premium villa in a prime Ikate enclave. Amenities include a swimming pool, cinema, gym, private elevator, central power, and 24/7 surveillance, ideal for luxury living or short-term rental income in Lekki's fast-growing residential market.

AP House, Marina

A commercial development in Marina, Lagos Island, further highlights HEREL's versatility. Strategically located in one of Lagos's busiest business districts, AP House provides essential infrastructure for enterprise and innovation, with functional design elements that support productivity and community engagement.

At the heart of HEREL's hospitality and placemaking efforts is HEREL Play, now recognized as one of the biggest and most dynamic recreational destinations in Ikoyi, Lagos. It is fitted with a swimming pool, football pitch, restaurant and lounge. The project has successfully expanded into a lifestyle ecosystem that brings families, professionals, and culture enthusiasts together for dining, recreation, entertainment, and wellness. This milestone underscores HEREL's growing influence beyond real estate development into community building and cultural programming.

HEREL's bold business strategy is validated by standout financial performance. In 2024, the company reported an extraordinary 702 percent profit growth, with profit before tax rising to ₦3.04 billion, driven by a ₦5.62 billion fair value gain and improved operational efficiency. Gross revenue increased to ₦17.38 billion, and net profit after tax surged to ₦2.35 billion, compared to ₦182 million recorded in 2023. This level of growth reflects disciplined delivery, strategic positioning, and optimized cost structures.

Looking forward, HEREL projects over 500 percent profit growth as the company advances its pipeline of major developments. The outlook is further strengthened by pricing optimization, efficient execution, and strategic reinvestment in high-value opportunities.

HEREL is also entering new international frontiers. Early-stage market development and partnerships are underway in South Africa, Ghana, and the United Kingdom, signaling the company's ambition to expand its footprint beyond Nigeria and compete within global real estate and hospitality ecosystems. These moves reflect HEREL's confidence in its model and its ability to deliver exceptional, culturally relevant experiences across markets.

This period of growth has been guided by a commitment to innovation, service excellence, and customer-centric delivery. From residential developments designed to feel like sanctuaries to recreational hubs that foster connection, HEREL continues to bring its vision of elevated living to life.

With a strong development pipeline, robust operational framework, and intentional expansion plans, HEREL is well positioned to accelerate its trajectory, deepen its impact, and shape the future of real estate and lifestyle experiences in Africa and beyond.

Insight into Chioma's role as Managing Director — her leadership style, challenges faced, and defining moments.

Chioma's leadership is defined by diplomacy, discipline, and strategy. Her approach is calm yet firm, analytical yet intuitive. She listens deeply, studies broadly, and decides decisively. Those who work with her describe her as a leader who invites collaboration while creating clarity, ensuring that everyone understands both the goal and the path required to reach it.

Before becoming Managing Director, Chioma served as Executive Director of Operations, a role that shaped her structured perspective and sharpened her ability to translate ideas into practical execution. During this period, she learned what it means to build systems from the ground up, manage complexities across functions, and deliver



consistent results without compromising on quality.

Her background in operations built the foundation for her current leadership philosophy. She believes that every great vision must be supported by smart structure and disciplined execution. This balance defines her approach at HEREL.

Her leadership style is rooted in three principles:

Diplomacy:

Chioma leads with emotional intelligence. She is skilled at navigating diverse personalities and perspectives, maintaining composure under pressure, and turning tension into productive dialogue. Her diplomatic nature enables her to build trust quickly, whether engaging with partners, internal teams, or community stakeholders.

Discipline:

She is driven by a strong sense of accountability and order. Chioma prioritizes systems and processes that encourage efficiency, transparency, and excellence. Her reputation for follow-through ensures that projects move with purpose and timelines are honored.

Strategic Clarity:

Chioma sees the big picture and helps others see

it too. She is adept at mapping priorities, anticipating challenges, and aligning teams toward shared goals. Her strategy-driven mindset allows HEREL to scale responsibly while maintaining its design and service standards.

Her professional journey has included a number of defining moments. One of the earliest was transitioning from operations to a broader leadership role



She learned to embrace ambiguity, delegate more intentionally, and think beyond the day-to-day toward long-term growth. Another defining moment was steering HEREL through a period of expansion, ensuring that quality remained uncompromised as the company took on more ambitious projects.

Challenges have shaped her resilience. She has navigated the realities of executing complex developments within evolving regulatory and market landscapes, while keeping HEREL's customer experience and design philosophy at the center of delivery. These challenges taught her the importance of adaptability and reinforced her belief that great leadership requires both courage and humility.

She often notes that the biggest test of leadership is not in moments of ease, but in seasons of uncertainty. For her, these experiences affirmed the value of steady decision-making, proactive communication, and genuine empathy. While safeguarding HEREL's values of respect, inclusion,

dynamism, execution, and entrepreneurship. She encourages her team to think boldly, learn continuously, and act with ownership.

At her core, Chioma leads from purpose. She understands that HEREL's work is not just about physical structures, but about transforming how individuals and communities live and feel. This belief guides every decision she makes and continues to define her legacy within the company.

Discussion of HEREL's design philosophy, customer experience, or impact on Nigeria's real estate market.

HEREL's design philosophy is anchored in its core mission: Redefining Living Experiences. Every project is guided by a commitment to redefine how people live, interact, and find meaning in their spaces. This philosophy blends timeless aesthetics with functional sophistication, ensuring each development is not only visually compelling but purposefully built for comfort, longevity, and emotional resonance. HEREL approaches design with intention, drawing

from global standards while remaining grounded in local realities. From concept to execution, the focus is on architecture that breathes: clean, modern lines; abundant natural light; smart spatial flow; and thoughtful details that enhance daily ease. Whether developing waterfront homes or premium urban residences, HEREL prioritizes serenity, privacy, and connection to nature while integrating modern amenities that support today's lifestyles.

The customer journey lies at the heart of HEREL's identity. Beyond delivering homes, HEREL crafts holistic experiences designed around the individual. From guided sales interactions to transparent processes and dedicated aftercare, the brand ensures clients feel supported long after handover.

This hospitality-driven mindset, uncommon in the real-estate sector, reinforces trust and builds lasting relationships.

HEREL's influence on Nigeria's real-estate landscape is growing rapidly. By pairing design excellence with exceptional service, the company is setting new benchmarks in quality, efficiency, and innovation. Its developments demonstrate that premium living can be both aspirational and lifestyle-driven, shifting market expectations and redefining value propositions across the industry.

Through strategic partnerships, investment-led growth, and sustainable development principles, HEREL is directly contributing to urban transformation, job creation, and investor confidence.

In championing better-built environments and human-centered design, HEREL is not merely constructing properties; it is cultivating communities and contributing to a new narrative of living in Nigeria.

Its work continually proves that redefining living experiences is not just a motto but a standard embodied in every space it creates.

A human-interest angle — Chioma's personal inspiration, daily routine, or reflections that shaped her journey.

Beyond her title and accomplishments, Chioma is guided by a quiet strength shaped

by faith, introspection, and an enduring curiosity about the world. Her personal philosophy is anchored in the belief that leadership begins within, long before it is expressed outwardly.

Her inspiration comes from observing life with intentionality. She is moved by architecture, by the rhythm of cities, by culture, by travel, and by the subtle human moments that reveal how people live and belong. These experiences continually sharpen her eye for design and deepen her resolve to create spaces that uplift the human spirit.

Her mornings begin early and are deliberately slow. Silence is her first companion, followed by prayer and journaling. This grounding ritual keeps her centered and connected to purpose, helping her respond to the demands of leadership with clarity rather than urgency. She believes that inner balance is essential to leading with intention.

Throughout her day, Chioma cultivates presence. She pays attention to detail, listens actively, and encourages thoughtful conversation. Even in high-pressure environments, she remains calm, guiding decisions with reflection rather than reaction. Those who observe her describe her as a leader who makes others feel seen, heard, and valued.

Chioma often says that life is a blend of purpose and grace. Her reflections reveal a leader shaped by resilience, humility, and faith. Despite the demands of leadership, she remains deeply family-oriented, carving out meaningful moments with loved ones as a reminder of what truly matters.

These personal anchors keep her steady, guiding her through challenging transitions, propelling her through defining milestones, and ultimately shaping her into the intentional leader she is today.

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Magazine



Design & Interiors

How To Choose The Best Flooring Materials For Your Space

By Charis Raji

Floors do more than hold up a room. They set the tone for everything that happens within it. Even if it's a bedroom or a busy office, the type of flooring you choose affects not just the aesthetics, but also comfort, acoustics, and even how light moves across the space. In architecture and interior design, floors act as a visual and psychological flow between functionality and emotion, which grounds the structure while elevating the experience.

Nigeria and across Africa, we are blessed in the sense of climate, culture, and lifestyle, so choosing the right flooring can make all the difference. A floor that feels cool underfoot in Lagos might be unsuitable for a colder region like Jos, and materials that thrive in dry areas may not last long in humid coastal cities. The right flooring material aligns with your environment, your style, and how you use your space every day.

Common Flooring Materials Used in Africa and Nigeria

Africa's design scene is rich with materials — both traditional and modern — offering endless possibilities for every kind of space. Here are some of the most common types:

1. Ceramic and Porcelain Tiles: Widely used for their durability and versatility, tiles remain a go-to option for residential and commercial buildings. They're water-resistant and easy to clean, making them ideal for kitchens, bathrooms, and living areas.
2. Marble and Granite: A symbol of elegance and permanence. Though on the expensive side, natural stone floors bring a sense of luxury and timelessness, often used in hotels,

upscale homes, and lobbies.

3. Vinyl Flooring: Vinyl has gained popularity for being cost-effective and easy to maintain. It comes in a variety of patterns, including wood and stone finishes, suitable for homes and offices alike.

4. Terrazzo: Once considered old-fashioned, terrazzo has made a strong comeback in contemporary African design. Its speckled finish offers character and durability — perfect for high-traffic spaces.

5. Polished Concrete: Minimal, industrial, and increasingly trendy, polished concrete works well in modern homes, offices, and art spaces. It's especially popular in tropical regions due to its cool surface.

6. Wood and Laminate: Though less common in humid areas, wooden floors bring warmth and natural beauty to interiors. Laminate versions offer a similar aesthetic with greater resilience.

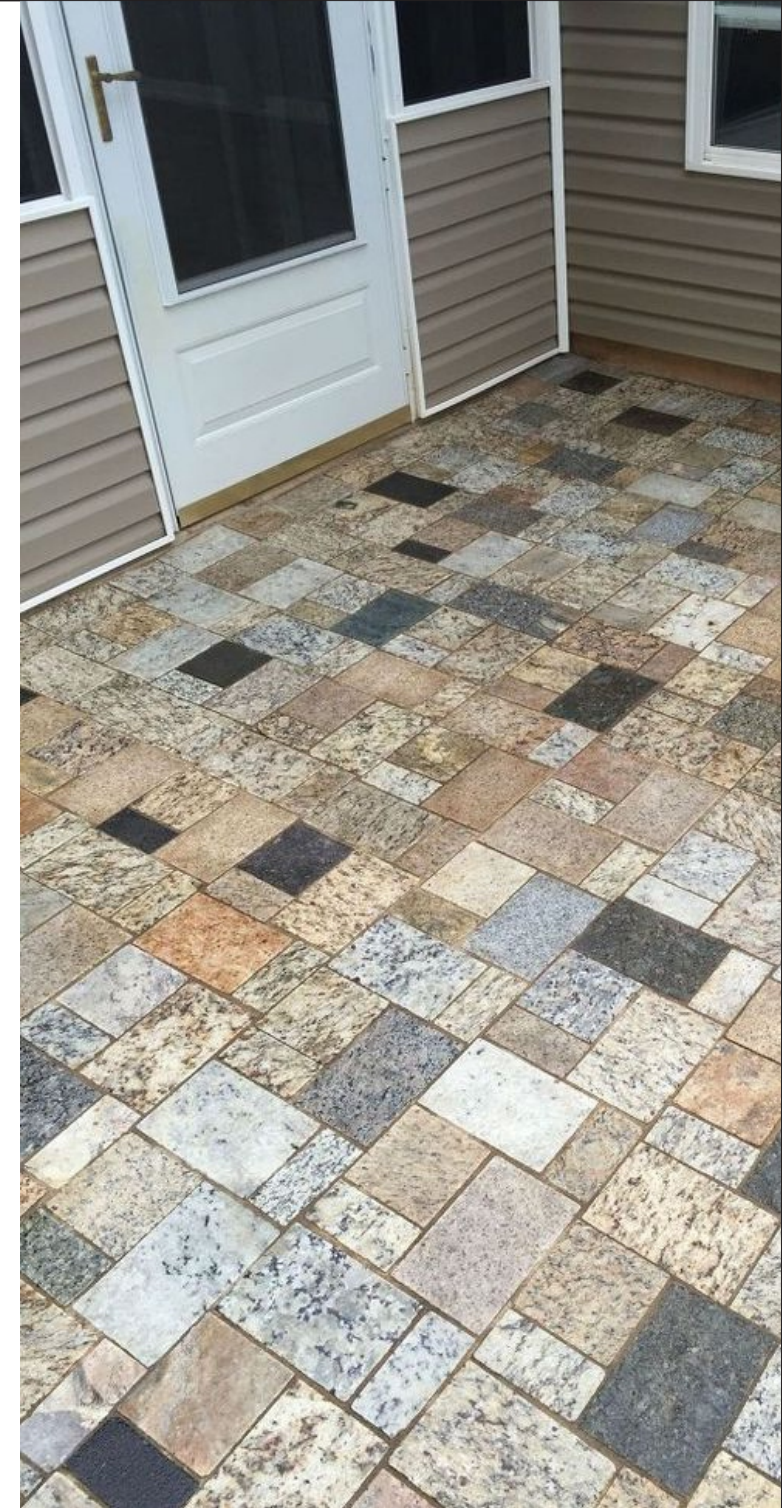
7. Laterite and Earth Floors: In rural and eco-conscious settings, laterite or stabilized earth floors are valued for their sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and local identity.

Elements and Qualities to Look Out for When Choosing Flooring Materials

When selecting a flooring type, beauty alone shouldn't drive your choice. Consider the following key factors:

- a. Durability: Can this floor withstand foot traffic, moisture, or heavy furniture?
- b. Maintenance: Is the floor easy to clean and repair over time?
- c. Comfort: Does this floor offer more warmth and softness underfoot?
- d. Aesthetics: Does the colour, texture, and pattern match your design style and desired atmosphere?





- e. Cost: Did you factor in both the upfront installation and long-term maintenance expenses?
- f. Climate Compatibility: Do these flooring materials perform well in your local weather — tiles and concrete work better in hot regions, while wood suits cooler, drier climates.
- g. Sustainability: Eco-friendly options like bamboo, recycled tiles, or locally sourced stone help reduce environmental impact.

How to Choose the Best Flooring Materials for Your Space

Choosing the best flooring comes down to balancing your needs, lifestyle, and taste. Here's a quick guide:

1. Match the Material to the Room's Function:

For high-traffic areas like living rooms or hallways, go for durable options like tiles or polished concrete. Bedrooms benefit from warmer, softer materials like wood or vinyl. Kitchens and bathrooms need water-resistant choices such as ceramic or porcelain tiles.

2. Consider Your Environment:

If you live in a humid coastal city, avoid wood floors that may swell or warp. In contrast, dry inland areas can handle wood or laminate better.

3. Think Long-Term:

Make sure you invest in materials that age well. Terrazzo and natural stone, for example, can last decades with minimal upkeep.

4. Budget Wisely:

Remember that installation costs and maintenance should be factored in from the start. Sometimes, mid-range materials offer the best balance between price and performance.

5. Add Personality:

Don't be afraid to experiment with textures or mix materials — such as combining concrete and wood to zone open-plan spaces.

The right floor doesn't just support your space, it also defines it. Whether you're building from scratch or renovating, think beyond trends. Choose flooring that feels true to your space, your routine, and what you like.

Inside Luxury Living



NAUTICA RISE

A New Dawn for Coastal Luxury in Lagos

In the ever-evolving skyline of Lagos, a bold and ambitious vision is steadily coming into focus. Nautica Rise, a waterfront development by Cruxstone Development and Investment Limited, is poised to redefine what it means to live by the Atlantic in Nigeria's commercial capital.

A Prime Waterfront Address

Situated on the Lekki Peninsula (Tourism Scheme 1, Eti-Osa LGA) in the prestigious Lekki Atlantic corridor, Nautica Rise enjoys a strategic location minutes from Lagos's business hubs, commercial centres, beaches and leisure destinations. The development offers residents a rare blend: tranquil oceanfront living, no-compromise connectivity to the city, and proximity to the social pulse of a growing luxury neighbourhood.

Residences Designed for Every Lifestyle

Nautica Rise accommodates a spectrum of buyers and tastes, from singles and couples to families and investors. The tower features:

- 1. 1-bedroom lofts and apartments** (≈ 55–75 sqm), ideal for young professionals or singles
- 2. 2-Bedroom apartments + BQ** (130 sqm) offering family-friendly space and privacy
- 3. 3-bedroom apartments + BQ**, (195 sqm) offering family-friendly space and privacy
- 4. 4- and 5-bedroom penthouses + BQs** (up to 475 sqm), designed for luxury seekers and those who want panoramic sea views from high above Lagos

Premium fittings, smart-home features, floor-to-ceiling windows, private balconies with ocean or city views, and roomy open-plan layouts make each residence both stylish and comfortable.

Resort-Style Amenities: Home and Holiday, All in One

Nautica Rise is a lifestyle destination. The development combines residential living with high-end resort amenities:

1. Rooftop infinity-edge pool and observatory deck with sweeping Atlantic views
2. Spa, sauna, fully equipped gym, and wellness centre for health and relaxation
3. Residents' cinema, business café, retail spaces — blending convenience, leisure and entertainment under one roof.
4. 24/7 concierge and security, multi-level parking, uninterrupted power and reliable infrastructure, reflecting thoughtful delivery in the Lagos context.

In effect, living at Nautica Rise delivers that rare Apartment-Meets-Resort ethos, allowing residents to “get away” without leaving the city.

The Bigger Picture: Nautica Rise & Beach Resort

Beyond the apartments, Nautica Rise is part of a broader vision. The developers are also behind Nautica Beach Resort, an in-city experiential lifestyle and leisure destination slated to transform the Lekki coast with

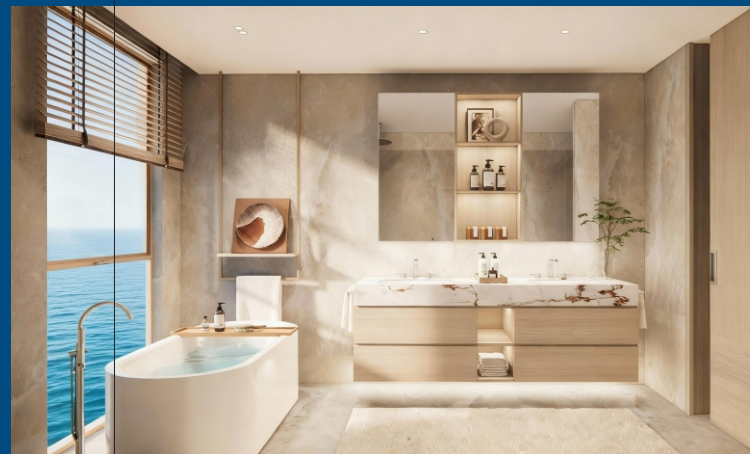
beach clubs, a water park, private chalets, a retail-entertainment village, sports facilities and more.

This synergy between private residences and resort-style leisure is notable: Nautica Rise buyers are promised priority access to the Beach Resort, blending residential exclusivity with lifestyle and recreation in one ecosystem.

Investment Promise and Market Timing

For investors, Nautica Rise represents one of the strongest upside opportunities in Lagos' evolving coastal corridor. Its position along the newly constructed Lagos–Calabar Coastal Road places it at the epicentre of a zone primed for accelerated land and property value growth. As this corridor transforms into a major tourism, hospitality and premium residential hub, properties like Nautica Rise stand to benefit from significantly higher capital appreciation over the coming years.

Beyond capital gains, the project also offers impressive income-generation potential. With its direct beachfront access, resort-style amenities and strong appeal to both expatriates and high-net-worth renters, Nautica Rise is well-positioned



to deliver strong rental yields, whether investors opt for long-stay leases or tap into Lagos' booming short-let and serviced-apartment market.

With strong demand for luxury real estate in Lagos, and a scarcity of high-end waterfront residences under development, Nautica Rise represents not just a home, but a strategic asset for long-term capital appreciation and rental yield potential.

Why Nautica Rise Matters

In a city where urban sprawl, traffic and infrastructure gaps often challenge the idea of “convenient living,” Nautica Rise stands out as a meaningful alternative:

1. It offers a **balanced lifestyle** — merging the calm of waterfront living with the amenities of an urban resort and the convenience of city access.
2. It responds to **evolving luxury standards** — modern buyers in Lagos increasingly seek comfort, exclusivity, and lifestyle rather than just space.
3. It helps **reshape the narrative of Lagos real estate** — moving from high-density blocks to curated, thoughtfully designed communities that respect the city's geography and ambition.

Looking Ahead

Set for completion 2029, Nautica Rise is Lagos' invitation to reimagine coastal living. As Cruxstone invites prospective buyers and investors to “own a piece of the Atlantic horizon,” what emerges is not just a building but a lifestyle.

For readers of *Habitat Magazine*, Nautica Rise signals a shift: an era where Lagos' skyline meets serene ocean blue, where city living embraces leisure, and where the future of urban luxury grows by the sea.



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THE NEW LUXURY INVESTMENT

Lifestyle Real Estate and the Rise of Experiential Value

By Ameh Destiny

In the world of luxury, the meaning of ownership is being rewritten. For decades, high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) equated luxury with exclusivity — the square footage of a mansion, the postcode of a penthouse, or the signature of a renowned architect. Today, that paradigm is shifting. The new affluent class is not just buying property; they are buying experience.

This transition, now defining a new segment called “lifestyle real estate,” is reshaping how investors perceive value in the luxury market. From branded residences to curated communities, the conversation is moving from what a property is to how it makes you feel.

The Experiential Economy and Real Estate's New Gold

Globally, the luxury property market has shown remarkable resilience amid macroeconomic uncertainty. According to Knight Frank's 2024 Wealth Report, ultra-prime residential sales (\$10 million and above) grew by 11% year-on-year, driven largely by investors seeking stability and lifestyle convergence.

But beneath those numbers lies a deeper motivation — the pursuit of emotional and experiential value.

As luxury strategist Jean-Claude Biver once observed, “*True luxury is not about price; it's about time, emotion, and experience.*”

In real estate, this manifests as homes designed not just for living but for being. Wellness architecture, biophilic design, and integrated hospitality services are now central to property concepts. From Lagos to Dubai to Miami, the

luxury home is being reimagined as a curated life — complete with concierge services, art curation, community events, and brand partnerships.

Lifestyle as the New Asset Class

The rise of branded residences is perhaps the clearest expression of this shift. Marriott International reported that its branded residential portfolio grew by over 40% between 2020 and 2024, with over 150 projects in the pipeline. Similarly, Ritz-Carlton Residences and Four Seasons Private Residences are setting record price premiums — often 20–35% above comparable non-branded properties.

Why? Because buyers are purchasing not just a property, but a promise. A promise of consistency, experience, and identity.

In Lagos, Eko Atlantic's Marina District, Banana Island developments, and projects like The Oceanna have begun to mirror this global trajectory. These are not just buildings — they are ecosystems. Investors and homeowners alike are seeking spaces that reflect who they are, or aspire to be.

In short, lifestyle is becoming an asset class of its own.

The Rise of “Return on Experience” (ROX)

Traditionally, investors measured success through Return on Investment (ROI) — rental yield, capital appreciation, and liquidity. But in the luxury segment, a parallel metric is emerging: Return on Experience (ROX).

ROX quantifies the emotional and social return an asset delivers. For instance, an investor might buy a waterfront villa not merely for rental yield, but for the ability to host corporate retreats, social gatherings, or family celebrations that enhance prestige and

The
Investor's Corner



personal satisfaction.

According to PwC's Future of Consumer Markets report, 59% of luxury consumers now rank experience above possession when evaluating value. For investors, this translates into higher occupancy rates, stronger brand loyalty, and more stable long-term capital growth — especially when properties are positioned as lifestyle hubs rather than static assets.

Data Meets Desire: What the Numbers Show

Real estate analytics firm Savills notes that global luxury residential values increased by 3.1% in 2024, driven by lifestyle migration — affluent buyers seeking wellness, privacy, and connectivity. In emerging luxury markets such as Lagos, Cape Town, and Nairobi, demand for branded and lifestyle-driven spaces has doubled since 2020.

Nigeria's high-end market, though niche, has evolved from ostentation to curation. Properties within Ikoyi and Victoria Island are now integrating wellness centers, private art galleries, and smart technology suites that offer convenience and sustainability — all while delivering a sense of emotional exclusivity.

This mirrors global investor sentiment. As BlackRock CEO Larry Fink noted in his 2024 letter to shareholders, *“Sustainability and experience are no longer optional; they are core to value creation.”*

In essence, luxury buyers are redefining what

yield means. Emotional ROI is merging with financial ROI.

The Investor's Shift: From Square Meters to Human Moments

It's not just about space anymore — it's about significance.

Consider Dubai's Palm Jumeirah or Miami's Faena District. These are more than real estate developments; they are curated lifestyles, each telling a story. Buyers are attracted to a narrative — art, culture, gastronomy, wellness, and the promise of connection.

Investors who recognize this shift early are diversifying not just their portfolios, but their emotional capital. In a post-pandemic world, where hybrid living and remote work redefine home utility, luxury real estate that offers a “live-work-experience” balance becomes inherently more valuable.



Even in Lagos, forward-looking developers are recognizing that modern buyers — especially younger, globally exposed elites — no longer just want gated opulence. They want spaces that offer purpose, participation, and pride.

The Future of Luxury: Beyond Ownership

As the boundaries between hospitality, wellness, and real estate blur, the future of luxury investment will hinge on one thing: curation.

Curation of experience.

Curation of identity.

Curation of value that transcends the tangible.

Investors are no longer just building portfolios; they're building personal brands through what they own and where they belong. The property becomes a statement — of taste, connection, and consciousness.

As Henry Ford once said, *“Wealth is not in having great possessions, but in having few wants.”*

Modern luxury buyers are translating that ethos into a simpler, yet richer, form of ownership: living with purpose, and investing in experience.

Conclusion: The Smart Investor's Edge

The next decade in luxury real estate will reward those who understand that experience is the ultimate differentiator.

For developers, this means designing for emotion as much as architecture.

For investors, it means evaluating assets not just on price per square meter, but on life per square meter.

And for markets like Nigeria — where cultural sophistication meets youthful ambition — the potential is immense. The new wave of lifestyle real estate offers not just beautiful homes, but meaningful lives.

In an era where luxury is personal, those who invest in experience will ultimately own the future.





Real Estate Investment and Tax Compliance in Nigeria

By Lumanze Chiamaka

In Nigeria, the real estate sector has become a cornerstone of economic development, attracting both local and foreign investors. However, navigating the complexities of tax compliance is crucial for anyone looking to invest in this thriving market. This article explores the relationship between real estate investment and tax compliance in Nigeria, highlighting the challenges, benefits, and best practices for investors.

Understanding the Tax Landscape

The Nigerian tax system comprises various taxes that affect real estate transactions, including:

- 1. Value Added Tax (VAT):** Applied to sales of goods and services, including real estate transactions.
- 2. Property Tax:** Levied by local governments on properties based on their assessed value.
- 3. Capital Gains Tax (CGT):** Imposed on the profit made from selling property.
- 4. Withholding Tax:** A percentage deducted from rental income and paid to the government.

With the recent tax reforms, including the Finance Act, investors must stay informed about changes that could impact their investment strategies.

Importance of Tax Compliance

Tax compliance is not just a legal obligation; it can significantly affect the profitability of real estate investments. Here are some reasons why compliance is essential

- 1. Avoiding Penalties and Fines:** Non-compliance with tax regulations can lead to substantial penalties, fines, and even legal action. Investors must ensure they meet tax obligations to avoid these consequences.
- 2. Accessing Financing:** Financial institutions often require proof of tax compliance before approving loans for real estate investments. Being compliant can enhance an investor's credibility and facilitate access to funding.
- 3. Enhancing Investment Value:** Properties that are tax-compliant tend to have higher market values. Buyers are more likely to invest in properties with clear tax records, reducing the risk of future legal disputes.

Challenges of Tax Compliance in Real Estate

Despite its importance, many real estate investors face challenges in tax compliance:

- 1. Complex Tax Regulations:** The Nigerian tax system can be complicated, with varying regulations at federal, state, and local levels. This complexity can lead to confusion and unintentional non-compliance.
- 2. Inadequate Record-Keeping:** Many investors struggle with maintaining accurate financial records, which are essential for tax reporting. Poor record-keeping can result in incorrect tax filings and potential audits.
- 3. Lack of Awareness:** Some investors may not be fully aware of their tax obligations or the benefits of compliance. This lack of knowledge can lead to oversight and missed opportunities.

Best Practices for Tax Compliance

To navigate the complexities of tax compliance effectively, real estate investors in Nigeria can adopt the following best practices:

- 1. Engage Tax Professionals:** Working with tax consultants or accountants who specialize in real estate can help investors understand their obligations and navigate the tax landscape more efficiently.

- 2. Maintain Accurate Records:** Investors should implement robust record-keeping practices to track income, expenses, and taxes paid. This will facilitate accurate tax filings and support compliance efforts.
- 3. Stay Informed:** Continuously monitor changes in tax laws and regulations. Regularly review updates from the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and local tax authorities to ensure compliance.
- 4. Utilize Tax Incentives:** Research available tax incentives and reliefs that apply to real estate investments. Taking advantage of these can reduce tax liabilities and enhance overall investment returns.

Conclusion

Tax compliance is a critical aspect of real estate investment in Nigeria. While the complexities of the tax system can pose challenges, understanding and adhering to tax obligations can lead to significant benefits. By adopting best practices and seeking professional guidance, investors can navigate the tax landscape successfully, ensuring their investments thrive in Nigeria's dynamic real estate market. As the sector continues to grow, staying compliant will not only safeguard investments but also contribute to the broader economic development of the nation.



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Market Pulse



Cutstruct

UNLOCKING AFRICA'S HOUSING MARKET: Why Development Stalls – And The Structural Shift Needed To Scale

By John Damer

Across Africa's fast-growing urban centers, the demand for quality housing is expanding at a record pace. Africa is the world's fastest-urbanizing continent, with cities expanding at an

average annual rate of —[3.5%](#) *outpacing regions like East Asia (3%) and Latin America (1.5%).*

Millions are entering cities each year, driving a structural need for new communities,

modern estates, and sustainable residential developments.

Yet, despite this overwhelming demand, the landscape is filled with stalled projects, abandoned structures, and development plans that never break ground. It is a contradiction that defines the current state of African housing: we need more homes than ever, yet we are delivering fewer than required.

Over the years, I've spoken with developers, regulators, financiers, and institutional partners across multiple markets. Regardless of geography, the conversation always circles back to the same core issues. And to move forward, we must first confront these issues honestly.

Developers Are Locked Out of Capital — Even When the Projects Make Sense

Today, accessing financing is the single greatest barrier to housing development in Africa. It is not uncommon to meet developers who have:

- 1 Completed feasibility studies
 - 2 Secured land with clear titles
 - 3 Designed commercially viable projects with real demand
- ...yet still cannot secure the capital required to begin.

Why?

Traditional lenders are not structured for development risk

Most banks view real estate through the lens of risk rather than opportunity. Their credit systems are optimized for short-term lending, not multi-year development cycles that require patience, specialized underwriting, and technical monitoring.

Capital is available — but not accessible

Institutional funds, pension pools, and private investors often *want* exposure to real estate. But without proper structuring, risk mitigation, and transparency, these funds hesitate to enter a space they perceive as unpredictable. So capital exists — it just

doesn't reach the developer.

The cost of capital is misaligned with housing economics

Even when financing is approved, interest rates and repayment structures are often incompatible with development realities. A housing project cannot absorb borrowing terms designed for high-turnover commercial ventures.

The result: **viable projects freeze**, even when the market is demanding those homes. *Institutional capital is abundant and actively seeking yield, but housing becomes investable only when the development environment is transparent, standardized, and predictable. When developers have clear governance frameworks, reliable cost tracking, and verifiable project monitoring, the risk profile changes dramatically. At that point, long-term capital is not just willing — it is eager — to enter the market at scale. Africa's housing shortage is not a capital problem; it is a coordination problem. Fix the structure, and you unlock one of the continent's most powerful economic engines."*

— **Nathaneal Solomon, Managing Director, Citihomes (DLM Capital Group)**

Strong Government Policies Exist — But Execution Gaps Neutralize Their Impact

Many governments across the continent have introduced thoughtful housing policies.

These include:

- 1 Incentives for affordable housing
- 2 Land reforms
- 3 Infrastructure commitments
- 4 Public-private partnership frameworks

In theory, these policies should unlock large-scale development. In practice, the opposite often happens.

Approvals and permits take far too long

A process that should take 90 days can often drag on for 12–18 months. By the time approvals are granted, market dynamics may have shifted, materials may have doubled in

cost, and financing commitments may have expired.

Infrastructure support is unpredictable

Developers frequently plan projects with the expectation of connecting to promised roads, water lines, drainage systems, or power infrastructure. But delays or policy reversals leave them stranded — and lenders unwilling to proceed.

Policies are created, but systems are not built

A policy is only as powerful as the system behind it — digital registries, monitoring platforms, financing frameworks, and enforcement structures. Without these, policies remain headlines rather than catalysts.

The Industry Has the Right Building Blocks — But They Operate in Silos

This is the most misunderstood truth about Africa's housing challenge:

We are not suffering from a lack of solutions. We are suffering from disconnected solutions.

Developers have pipelines — but no capital partners

Thousands of mid-sized and emerging developers have well-researched, market-ready projects, yet lack the financial backing required to kick off.

Banks have capital — but no clear structures to de-risk lending

Without monitoring tools, transparent costing, or standardized development documentation, lenders remain cautious.

Governments have frameworks — but no unified national housing platform

Different ministries, agencies, and regulatory bodies operate with little integration.

Developers navigate a maze, not a system.

Suppliers have materials — but no visibility or coordination

Material price fluctuations, supply chain

inefficiencies, and fragmented procurement inflate project costs and timelines.

Each stakeholder holds a critical piece of the puzzle. But the puzzle has never been assembled.

The Structural Shift Needed: A Coordinated Engine for Housing Delivery

To unlock Africa's housing potential, we must replace fragmented systems with a **unified structure — one that connects financing, development, policy, and supply chain in a transparent and de-risked ecosystem.**

This new structure must:

- 1 Provide lenders with real-time visibility into projects
 - 2 Offer developers predictable access to financing
 - 3 Give governments tools to monitor and support delivery
 - 4 Streamline procurement so that cost and quality are consistent
 - 5 Reduce risk through standardized documentation, monitoring, and governance
 - 6 Enable institutional investors to confidently deploy capital into housing
- This is not theory — it is the direction the global housing ecosystem is moving toward. Emerging markets from Asia to Latin America have adopted such structures with significant success. Africa can leapfrog by designing systems that reflect our unique realities.

Why We Must Act Now

Every year we delay, the housing deficit widens.

Every stalled project represents lost jobs, unrealized revenue, and families left without adequate shelter.

But the flipside is powerful:

Once the right structural engine is created, Africa could unlock one of the largest and most investable housing markets in the world.

With its young population, rapid urbanization, and rising demand, the fundamentals are already here. What's missing is the structure that allows the ecosystem to work.



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Tech & PropTech



Building the Future HOW 3D IS REDEFINING REAL ESTATE AND DESIGN

By Charis Raji

Before 3D technology became mainstream, real estate largely relied on blueprints, 2D sketches, and physical models to communicate ideas. Buyers and clients had to visualize properties from flat drawings or rely on the agent's description and imagination. This limited understanding often led to miscommunication, unrealistic expectations, and delayed decisions.

Developers and architects used manual drafting, which was time-consuming, expensive, and left room for human error. Marketing was equally traditional, through brochures, printed floor plans, and physical site visits, which meant buyers couldn't fully experience a property until it was built.

The entry of 3D into real estate quickly changed how the industry communicated value. Before, selling a property depended on floor plans, sample finishes, and physical site visits. But now, a single render could do what an entire marketing team once struggled to achieve.

Property developers began using 3D to pre-sell off-plan projects, secure funding, and build trust with investors. For architects, it became a way to collaborate visually with clients, reducing revisions and misunderstandings. For buyers, it offered the first real sense of place before breaking ground.

Over time, 3D visualization has become more than a tool — it has become the visual language of real estate, bridging the technical and the emotional.

Across Nigeria and Africa, 3D adoption is reshaping how real estate is marketed, visualized, and even constructed. In Nigeria, for instance, 3D architectural visualization is now a key selling point for developers in cities like Lagos and Abuja. Firms like Chronos Studeos, Insightful3D, Cleec Designs and Spacefinish use 3D renderings and VR walkthroughs to pitch designs and attract investors. On the construction side, 3D printing is slowly entering the conversation around affordable housing, with



African startups inspired by global examples like ICON in the U.S. and COBOD in Europe, which have printed entire communities in record time.

A Few Examples
Global companies like Matterport and SketchUp have made virtual tours and 3D modelling more accessible to non-designers.

In Nigeria, visualization agencies now create interactive 3D tours for developers like Landwey and Urban Shelter, changing how

buyers interact with off-plan properties.

3D is doing for real estate what digital photography did for advertising — it's making the invisible visible. It's transforming the way we design, build, and sell, creating a more transparent, efficient, and buyer-friendly market.

For Africa, and Nigeria in particular, the technology's promise lies not just in aesthetics, but in accessibility — making homes faster to build, easier to understand, and ultimately, more inclusive.

HABITAT

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Sustainable Living

ECOBARTER: Transforming Waste into Wealth in Nigeria

By Charis Raji

In a nation grappling with over 32 million tonnes of waste annually, including 2.5 million metric tonnes of plastic, Ecobarter has emerged as a pioneering force in sustainable waste management.

Founded by geoscientist-turned-social entrepreneur Rita Idehai in 2018, this Nigerian social entrepreneur has created an integrated technology platform that enables households to treat waste as a form of currency, simultaneously addressing environmental degradation, urban flooding, and poverty.

The Genesis: From Geoscience to Social Impact

Rita Idehai's journey into waste management began not in environmental science, but in the mineral-rich villages of Northern Nigeria

. As a geoscientist conducting exploration expeditions between 2016 and 2018, she witnessed a stark paradox: communities sitting atop valuable natural resources yet trapped in multidimensional poverty.

This experience, combined with her upbringing in a household that valued materials others discarded, planted the seeds for what would become Ecobarter. Her childhood memories of informal waste pickers who would exchange household recyclables for new items revealed an existing informal economy that could be formalized, dignified, and scaled through technology. In 2018, with no capital and no technical skills—armed only with passion—Idehai launched Ecobarter to fundamentally transform how Nigerians consume and manage waste.



The Problem Landscape

Nigeria's waste crisis manifests in multiple devastating ways:

- Environmental Degradation:** Improper waste disposal contributes to Nigeria being the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases globally in the waste management sector. Plastic waste accumulates in waterways, agricultural land, and urban spaces, creating long-term ecological damage.
- Urban Flooding:** Climate-induced heavy rainfall combines with drainage systems clogged by waste to create catastrophic urban flooding. The 2022 floods that affected multiple Nigerian states exemplified this crisis, with waste-blocked drainages unable to channel water effectively.
- Public Health Crisis:** Informal waste disposal through dumping in rivers or burning creates water pollution, disease outbreaks, and respiratory problems. Many Nigerian households lack access to formal waste management systems, instead relying on informal and destructive channels.
- Economic Exclusion:** Waste pickers, often among society's most marginalized, work without dignity, fair compensation, or recognition for their crucial environmental service

The Ecobarter Solution: A Three-Pillar Approach

1. Technology-Enabled Collection System

Ecobarter operates through an omnichannel platform combining digital and physical infrastructure:

- Mobile Application:** Launched formally in November 2022 after three years of operating through WhatsApp and manual processes, the app allows users to request doorstep pickups from anywhere in Abuja, Lagos, Ogun, Kano, Kaduna, and Ibadan.
- Community Hubs:** Physical collection centers serve as drop-off points where households can bring recyclable waste directly.
- Last-Mile Collectors:** The platform onboards informal waste pickers as dignified "last-mile collectors," integrating them into a formal system with fair compensation and

recognition.

d. **Accepted Materials:** The system collects plastic bottles, cartons, aluminum cans, electronics, metals, nylon bags, pure water sachets, old books, newspapers, and other recyclables.

2. Incentivization Through Points System

Ecobarter's revolutionary approach treats waste as currency:

Point Allocation: Users earn points based on the weight and type of waste collected:

- 1 point per kilogram of plastics, paper, and nylon.
 - 2 points per kilogram of cartons
 - 3 points per kilogram of metals
- Point Value:** Each point equals ₦20 (approximately \$0.05), making waste collection a viable income supplement.

Redemption Options: Points can be:

- Withdrawn directly to bank accounts
- Used to purchase products and services in the Ecobarter marketplace
- Converted to pay for electricity units, airtime, and data
- Donated to partner charitable organizations
- Used to enter raffle draws

Real Impact: Individuals and organizations earn between ₦5,000 and ₦2,000,000 annually through recycling with Ecobarter.

3. Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs)

In a groundbreaking achievement, Ecobarter developed Nigeria's first indigenously-built Reverse Vending Machine after 20 months of development involving three tech teams. This innovation addresses a critical gap: while RVMs are standard in Europe, their high acquisition costs and the absence of unified deposit return schemes made them nearly impossible in Africa.

RVM Capabilities:

- Collects, counts, weighs, crushes, and rewards empty plastic bottles and beverage cans.
- Provides text and voice prompts in English, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa.
- Issues instant QR codes that direct users to



the mobile app for point redemption.

- Operates as "ATMs for waste" in high-traffic areas.

Current Deployment: RVMs have been installed in locations like Central Park in Abuja, making recycling accessible and convenient for urban residents.

Recognition: Rita Idehai won UNIDO's Global Cleantech Innovation Programme (GCIP) at both national and global levels for this innovation.

Ecobarter specifically targets vulnerable populations:

- Internally Displaced Women:** In 2018, Ecobarter pioneered a scheme training displaced women to weave single-use plastic bags into fabrics, extending plastic life by 10 years as they become bags, shoes, and mats.
 - Informal Waste Pickers:** By onboarding street-level waste collectors into a formal system, Ecobarter dignifies labour that society often overlooks, providing structure, fair compensation, and respect.
 - Production Partners:** The company works with clusters of local community women and youth as "production partners," converting hard-to-recycle plastics into new lifestyle products.
- Environmental and Climate Impact**
Ecobarter's contribution to climate adaptation is substantial:
- **Carbon Emissions:** In 2023 alone, Ecobarter saved 1 million kilograms of

carbon emissions equivalent—equal to saving 500,000 litres of fuel or removing 150 private vehicles from roads for one year.

- **Plastic Recovery:** The organization directly recovered 15 million plastic bottles in 2023, a 119% increase from 2022 recovery volumes. These bottles were diverted from streets, waterways, and drainages in Abuja, Lagos, and Ogun states.

- **Flood Mitigation:** Through the "Clean up with Ecobarter" campaign, 13 communities cleaned their drainage systems within one month, directly reducing urban flooding risk by preventing waste accumulation that blocks water flow.

- **Circular Economy:** By transforming collected waste into new products—including fabrics, bags, shoes, and mats—Ecobarter closes the loop, demonstrating viable circular economy principles.

Challenges and Barriers

Despite remarkable success, Ecobarter faces significant obstacles:

1. Public Awareness

Low awareness about the environmental and public health impacts of poor waste management remains a major challenge. Ecobarter invests heavily in education campaigns, but behavioral change requires sustained effort and resources.

2. Infrastructure Gaps

Nigeria lacks existing infrastructure for

efficient waste collection. Ecobarter must invest in building collection centers, installing hubs, and creating collection routes—capital-intensive endeavors requiring substantial funding.

3. Digital Divide

The RVM system requires users to have smartphones and literacy in English, Yoruba, Igbo, or Hausa. Many potential users lack smartphones or literacy, limiting accessibility. Ecobarter is innovating toward more inclusive instant reward systems.

4. Technical Challenges

RVM downtimes can erode user trust. While Ecobarter remotely monitors machines and responds quickly to issues, maintaining seamless operation across multiple locations presents ongoing challenges.

5. Processing Speed

Current RVMs allow users to recycle only one bottle at a time, making the process slower than desired for users with large volumes of recyclables.

6. Informal Sector Complexity

The existing informal waste sector operates through complex hierarchies and cluster systems. Direct management attempts have proven disastrous, requiring Ecobarter to work within existing structures rather than replacing them

7. Policy Enforcement Gaps

While Nigeria has policies like the National Policy on the Environment and the Nigeria Circular Economy Policy (approved by the Federal Executive Council in July 2021),

enforcement remains weak. Companies recycle primarily due to global pressures rather than local regulatory enforcement.

The Business Model

Ecobarter operates as a social enterprise with multiple revenue streams:

- i. Waste Sales: Collected materials are sorted and sold to companies using recyclables as raw materials
- ii. Product Manufacturing: Their WREP brand, in partnership with local women artisans, transforms hard-to-recycle plastics into fabrics and lifestyle products (bags,



shoes, clothing, mats) which are put up for sale.

iii. Corporate Partnerships: Organizations partner with Ecobarter for waste management services, CSR initiatives, and sustainability reporting.

iv. Impact Reporting: Ecobarter provides impact reports enabling partners to communicate their environmental contributions and leverage recycling for business growth.

Future Vision and Expansion

Rita Idehai envisions a waste-free world where:

- i. Mobile applications and automated collections become standard.
- ii. Heavy investments create factories that convert waste to energy.
- iii. Every urban household in Nigeria connects to sustainable waste management platforms.
- iv. Waste transformation into valuable resources becomes the norm.

However, she expresses concern that without intentional support for local innovation, these advancements may become foreign-owned, extracting value from Nigerian resources without building local capacity.

Immediate Goals:

- Expand RVM deployment across more high-traffic locations
- Develop more inclusive systems for non-digital users
- Increase processing speed of collection systems
- Scale operations to additional Nigerian cities
- Strengthen partnerships with manufacturers and government agencies

Lessons for Social Entrepreneurs

Ecobarter's journey offers the following valuable insights:

- a. Start with Passion: Rita Idehai launched without capital or technical skills, proving that conviction and commitment can overcome initial resource constraints.
- b. Leverage Existing Systems: Rather than disrupting informal networks, Ecobarter integrated and elevated them.
- c. Technology as Enabler: Mobile and web

platforms made operations traceable and scalable, crucial for impact measurement and investor confidence.

d. Impact First: Maintaining focus on social and environmental impact—not just profit—attracted recognition, partnerships, and funding.

e. Iterate and Adapt: From WhatsApp-based operations to formal mobile apps to indigenously-built RVMs, continuous innovation drove growth.

f. Community Engagement: Direct engagement through campaigns, education, and visible community benefits built trust and participation.

Ecobarter represents more than a waste management company; it embodies a vision of inclusive, sustainable development that simultaneously addresses environmental crisis, poverty alleviation, and climate adaptation. By treating waste as currency, Rita Idehai and her team have created a circular economy that dignifies labour, empowers marginalized communities, and proves that African innovations can solve African problems.

As Nigeria continues to urbanize and environmental challenges intensify, Ecobarter's model offers a replicable blueprint for transforming waste from a crisis into an opportunity. The organization's success in recovering 15 million plastic bottles, saving 1 million kilograms of carbon emissions, and improving livelihoods for hundreds of collectors demonstrates that technology, community engagement, and innovative business models can create lasting social and environmental impact.

The question now is not whether Ecobarter's approach works—the evidence clearly shows it does—but rather how quickly Nigeria and other African nations can scale such solutions to match the magnitude of the waste crisis.

With continued support, innovation, and policy commitment, Ecobarter's vision of a waste-free world moves closer to reality, one recycled bottle at a time.



SUSTAINABLE LIVING

By Patrick Ogunleye

Sustainable living is the endpoint or goal of all the strategies and pursuit of all there is about sustainability. The driving force of all considerations of sustainability, green building practices, eco-friendly design and renewable energy is to arrive at the threshold of sustainable living. Sustainability in the built environment involves creating structures that are environmentally responsible, resource-efficient, durable, maintenance friendly and healthy for occupants.

These practices focus on efficiency, conservation of energy, and the use of low-impact materials throughout a building's entire life cycle. Sustainable living looks beyond the building itself and delves into the lifestyle of the occupants. Minimizing environmental impact and enhancing the occupants' health and well-being are the key objectives of sustainable living. The strategies employed to achieve this can be categorised into Passive strategies and Active strategies.

Passive strategies are driven through green building practices, eco-friendly design, and renewable energy. Key strategies include minimizing construction waste, optimizing free flow of air through right building orientation, incorporating renewable energy sources like solar panels, using sustainable and recycled materials, optimizing energy efficiency through insulation and smart design, conserving water, and ensuring good indoor air quality with non-toxic materials and ventilation.

These strategies more or less are incorporated at the design and construction stages of the building. We can refer basically to them as the 'hardware' components of the ecosystem. Active strategies, on the other hand, refer to the lifestyle of the building occupants and it involves making conscious choices in daily life related to energy consumption, resource use, transportation, diet, and consumption habits to reduce one's overall environmental impact. We can refer to them as the 'software' components of the ecosystem.

Passive strategies:

Choice of land and building design

- This is the first consideration in achieving sustainable living. The building must suit the land use and the design must achieve green certification.

Use of Renewable Energy

- Renewable energy derived from natural resources, is less harmful to the environment than fossil fuels and serves as an alternative to traditional energy sources. Renewable energy in buildings refers to the integration of sustainable energy sources, such as solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass, into the full building life cycle of design, construction, operation, and maintenance to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and traditional energy sources, promoting environmental sustainability and mitigating climate change.

Sustainable Building Materials

- Use of sustainable building materials such as bamboo, green concrete, reclaimed wood, and recycled steel make a difference in the built environment because they are low-impact building materials with minimal carbon footprints.

Water Conservation Techniques

- Use of low-flow water fixtures and sustainable plumbing solutions ensure responsible water usage and reduce waste.

Smart Building Technology

- IoT in sustainable buildings allows real-time monitoring of energy, water, and air quality.
- AI-driven energy management systems optimize efficiency and reduce waste.

Sustainable Urban Development

- Integrating green infrastructure solutions like green roofs, urban forests, and permeable pavements enhances biodiversity.
- Reducing the urban heat island effect by increasing green spaces lowers temperatures and improves air quality.

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) in Construction

- This is the procedure for evaluating the environmental impact of materials from production to disposal. The data obtained

from this becomes the foundation for better building designs and construction in the future.

Active strategies include:

- **Reduction of Energy Consumption:** By turning off lights in unoccupied spaces, unplugging electronics not in use, and using natural light whenever possible, A great deal of energy can be conserved.
- **The use Energy-Efficient Appliances:** By utilizing only appliances with high energy efficient ratings, the cost of operating appliances will be considerably reduced.
- **Adoption of Renewable Energy:** Renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind energy, and geothermal systems not only reduce dependence on fossil fuels but also provide healthy alternative to energy usage.
- **Conservation of water:** Being intentional about reducing water usage is the key here: Take shorter showers, fix leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures, and collection of rain water for other household activities like gardening.
- **Use of Public Transportation, Biking, or Walking:** These alternative means of mobility significantly reduce carbon emissions and make the environment healthier. These alternatives should be adopted as against driving alone in a car.
- **Eating organic foods:** Opt for locally grown, seasonal foods to reduce the distance food travels to you. Reducing meat and dairy consumption, particularly red meat, can significantly lower your environmental footprint and improve your personal health and well-being.
- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:** Cut down on waste by following the waste hierarchy. Prioritize reduction (buying less), then reuse items multiple times before recycling them. Compost organic waste to reduce landfill impact. Opt for reusable items like water bottles, coffee cups, and shopping bags. Repair broken items instead of replacing them. Avoid single-use plastics
In addition to the above, educate others and advocate for change and the adoption of

these sustainable practices by your immediate sphere of influence because by implementing these practices, individuals can contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle that benefits both current and future generations.

In summary, achieving sustainable living practices involves making these conscious choices in our daily lives that minimize our environmental impact, primarily focusing on **reducing consumption, conserving resources, and supporting ethical choices.** This can be accomplished through the necessary changes in our homes, transportation, diet, and consumption habits.

Benefits of Sustainable and Green Building Practices

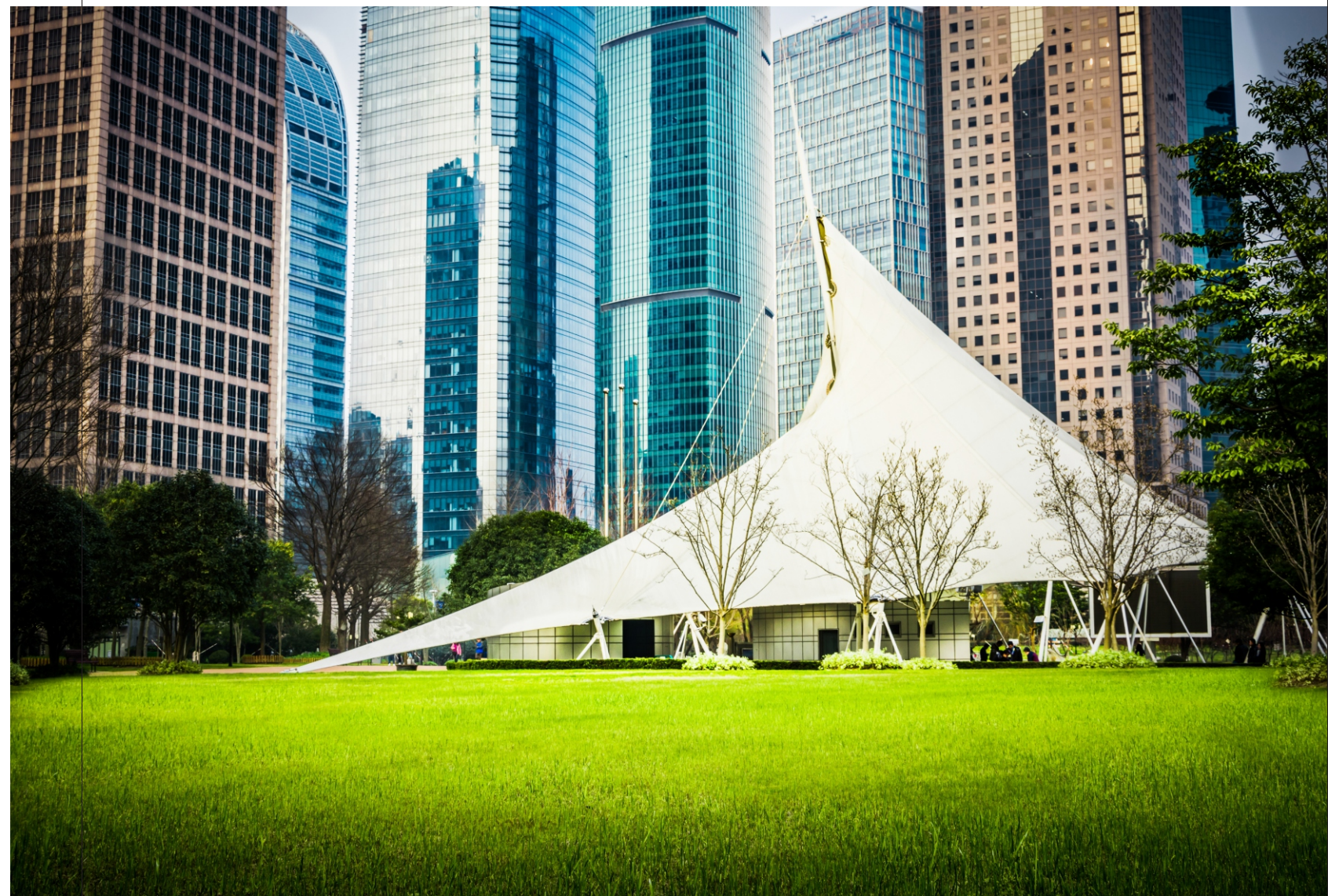
- **Health and Well-being of Occupants**
 - o Biophilic design principles improve air quality, lighting, and acoustics, leading to enhanced tenant satisfaction and productivity.
 - o Sustainable HVAC systems provide better air circulation and temperature regulation, creating a healthier indoor environment.
- **Energy Efficiency and Cost Savings**
 - o Implementing energy-efficient buildings lowers utility bills and reduces dependency on non-renewable energy sources.
 - o Features such as solar-powered architecture, LED lighting, and smart energy management systems optimize power consumption.

Environmental Impact Reduction

- o Using low-emission building materials and adopting zero-waste construction techniques help curb pollution and landfill waste.
- o Carbon-neutral buildings contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Enhanced Property Value and Marketability

- o Properties with LEED certification and other sustainability credentials have higher resale values and attract eco-conscious buyers and investors.





THE OLIVE RESIDENCE

Introducing **The Olive Residences**, a landmark residential development redefining luxury living in Ikoyi. Nestled within the tranquil, secure, and highly coveted Mojisola Onikoyi Estate, just off Banana Island Road. This exclusive residence places you moments from Lagos' most private neighborhood and its vibrant commercial arteries.

Designed as a modern 7-floor masterpiece, The Olive Residences seamlessly blends sophistication with comfort. Residents are welcomed through a concierge-driven lobby, complemented by two elevators and access-controlled entry. The lifestyle amenities are thoughtfully curated: a private outdoor pool for serene relaxation, a high-altitude gym on the 6th floor offering panoramic Ikoyi views, and an elegant resident's lounge perfect for hosting intimate gatherings.

Inside the apartments, luxury unfolds through tall ceilings, warm accent lighting, expansive living spaces, and private terraces.

Every kitchen is fitted with premium Bosch/Ariston appliances and custom cabinetry, while bedrooms offer ample natural light and bespoke wardrobes. Bathrooms feature sleek, space-optimized sanitary ware from Hansgrohe and similar high-end brands.

Available in impeccably designed **2-bedroom + BQ** and **3-bedroom + BQ** configurations, The Olive Residences delivers a living experience that elevates elegance, privacy, and everyday comfort.

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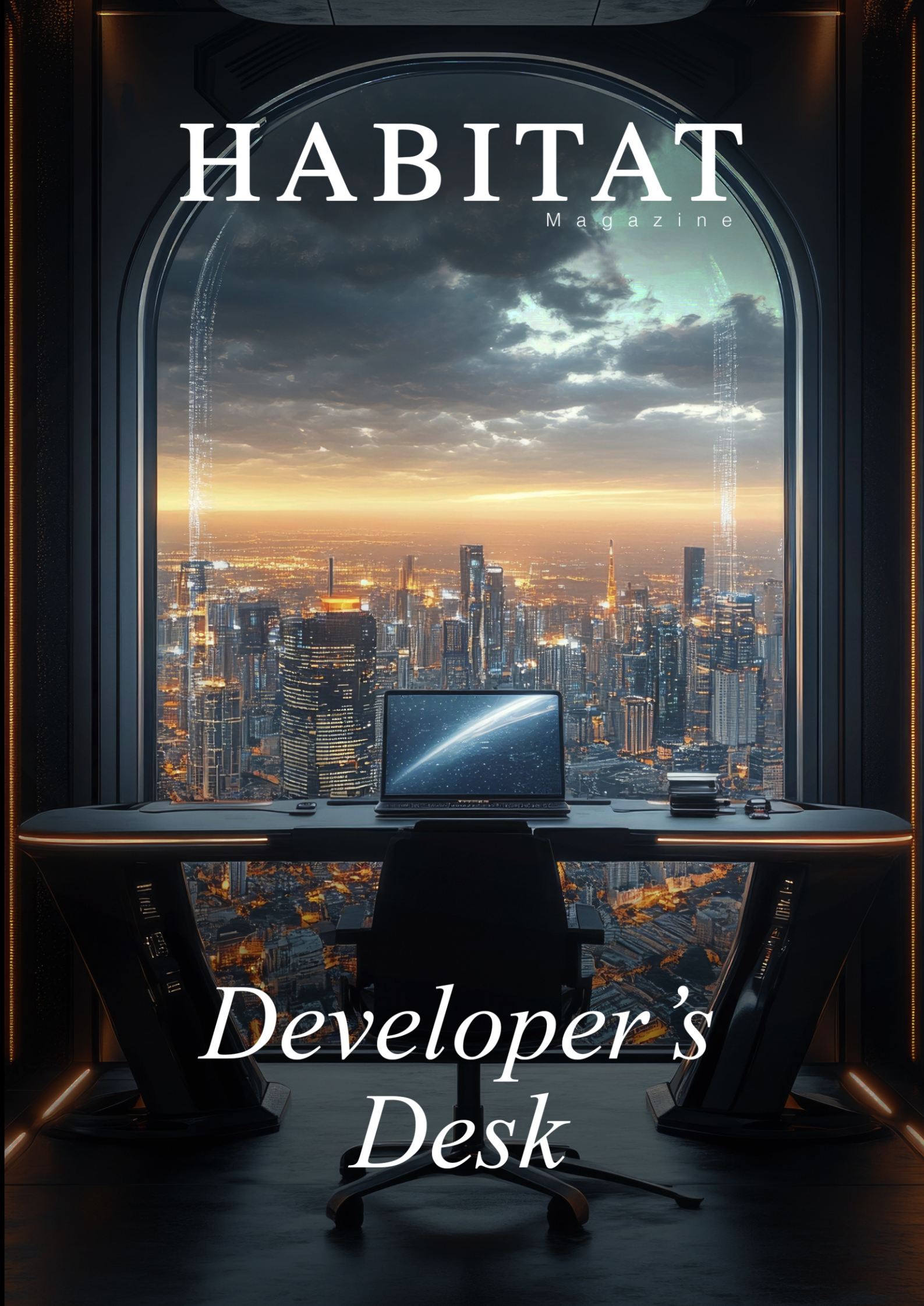
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HABITAT

Magazine



Developer's Desk

When Dreams Are Delayed: THE HIDDEN COST OF LAGOS OFF-PLAN HOUSING

By Peter Aleogena

Tens of billions of naira are tied up in incomplete homes. What happens when off-plan dreams stall and who really pays the price?

The Promise of Off-Plan Housing

For many Lagos residents, buying an off-plan property is a dream. Promised modern apartments in Lekki, Ajah, and Ikoyi symbolize status, security, and a path to wealth creation. In theory, pre-paying for a property before it's built allows buyers to access premium locations at lower prices, a win-win for investors and developers.

But for thousands of Lagosians, that dream has turned into years of uncertainty. Families who paid millions sometimes tens of millions, still find themselves waiting for keys, frustrated by shifting deadlines and vague assurances from developers.

Promises Unkept: Billions in Limbo

The numbers tell the story. High-profile projects like Landmark Africa's Waterview Apartments, LandWey's Milton Estate, and Sujimoto's Leonardo, along with many estates listed in the Lagos State 176-illegal-estate blacklist, have tens to hundreds of billions of naira in buyer deposits currently trapped.

1. Landmark Africa's Waterview

Apartments: Multiple years behind schedule, with buyers petitioning the developer and the press over delayed delivery.

2. Sujimoto's Leonardo: Allegations of payment disputes and lawsuits have left millions of dollars of investor funds in limbo.

3. LandWey's Milton Estate: Several units remain incomplete, with phased delivery dates now extending into late 2025.

Even under optimistic assumptions, between

~~₦100–₦150 billion~~ of buyer funds in luxury and mid-market off-plan estates remain tied up. Under worst-case scenarios, potential exposure may reach ~~₦300 billion~~.

The Investor's Burden

The impact on investors is multi-layered. **Financially**, they cannot access their capital, eroding the time value of money. Projected rental income is delayed, shrinking expected returns. Inflation has driven up construction costs, prompting some developers to request additional payments. For developments priced in dollars, exchange rate volatility adds further uncertainty.

Emotionally, many investors experience stress, frustration, and fear. These homes often represent retirement plans, family stability, or long-term financial security. Delays erode trust, push investors into legal battles, and disrupt life goals.

The Ripple Effect on Society

Delays don't just hurt investors. They impact the wider Lagos economy and society:

1. Housing Deficit Worsens: Nigeria's 28-million-unit deficit grows as expected supply stalls, intensifying overcrowding and slum expansion.

2. Job Losses: Idle construction sites leave artisans, contractors, and suppliers unpaid. Thousands of jobs are affected.

3. Infrastructure Failures: Roads, drainage, and public amenities in stalled estates remain incomplete, creating hazards and urban planning setbacks.

4. Rising Land and Rent Prices: Reduced supply drives up housing costs for everyone.

5. Erosion of Trust: Repeated delays fuel fraudulent practices and weaken public confidence in developers and regulators. Off-plan delays affect everyone — buyers, workers, communities, and the broader economy.

Why Projects Stall

The causes are both systemic and developer-specific:

- 1. Land and Title Issues:** Some developers sell units without clear or verified title.
- 2. Poor Project Management or Diversion of Funds:** Misallocation, mismanagement, or diversion of buyer funds stalls progress.
- 3. Economic Pressures:** Inflation, devaluation, and soaring material costs slow delivery timelines.
- 4. Regulatory Lapses:** Weak enforcement allows distressed projects to continue selling units unchecked.
- 5. Overreliance on Off-Taker Funds:** Many developers depend solely on buyers' payments rather than securing adequate project financing, causing work to stop whenever cashflow slows.

Even reputable developers such as Sujimoto, Landmark Africa, and LandWey have cited macroeconomic shocks and supply chain disruptions as reasons for delays. Smaller developers, often operating informally, face these issues alongside regulatory non-compliance — amplifying risk.

How Buyers Can Protect Themselves

While systemic reforms take time, buyers can adopt protective measures:

- 1. Verify Land Documents:** Confirm title, approvals, and development permits before paying.
- 2. Use Escrow Accounts:** Ensure funds are ring-fenced and accessible only for construction.
- 3. Demand Transparent Contracts:** Include penalties for delay and clearly defined milestones.
- 4. Request Regular Updates and Site Inspections:** Transparency reduces risk.
- 5. Choose Developers with Independent Funding:** Avoid projects operated solely on off-taker funds.

The Lagos off-plan market still holds potential for homeownership and wealth creation but only when there is transparency, accountability, and responsible development.

Habitat Magazine Unpacked

We will unpack the real reasons behind off-plan project delays and how to prevent your funds from becoming trapped in our **maiden edition of the Habitat Magazine Round Table Event**, scheduled for March.

To participate, sponsor, or advertise, contact us at info@habitatmagazineng.com or call +234 803 321 2022.

Visit our website

www.habitatmagazineng.com and join the conversation.

We have created a dedicated **Habitat Unpacked** page where you can share your experiences, propose solutions, or submit your story by email at info@habitatmagazineng.com.

Habitat Magazine will continue to monitor Lagos real estate developments and provide expert guidance for the modern homeowner and investor.

Follow Habitat Magazine online platforms for more lifestyle and property features, from market insights to practical advice on safe investing in Lagos real estate.





THE WELL, THE WOMAN, AND THE WISDOM WE ALL NEED:

A Blueprint for Women's Wealth, Leadership & Real Estate Acceleration

By CHIC'S DOING REAL ESTATE

There is a moment in every woman's journey when life brings her to a "well" a point of decision, reflection, and reinvention. In the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John 4, this encounter wasn't defined by spectacle or miracle. It was defined by a conversation, yet it transformed a woman, a community, and the trajectory of an entire narrative.

For today's woman, especially African women operating in an increasingly competitive global economy, this story reflects a powerful framework for personal evolution, leadership emergence, and generational wealth acceleration.

Why This Story Matters in a Real Estate & Wealth Context.

Across Africa, women remain one of the most underrepresented groups in property ownership.

According to the World Bank, women in Sub-Saharan Africa make up nearly 60% of the continent's agricultural labour force, yet only 13% own land. In Nigeria, less than 20% of titled property is owned by women, despite women contributing significantly to household income and national productivity.

The result?

- Limited financial security.
- Slower wealth accumulation.
- Restricted negotiating power.
- Weaker long-term economic influence.

Yet, the data also shows opportunity: Africa has the world's fastest-growing female entrepreneur base, and women reinvest nearly 90% of their income into families and communities. Unlocking women's property ownership is not just a personal victory: it is an economic strategy for nations.

The Power of the Encounter: A Model for Women Today

Just like the Samaritan woman, modern women stand at their own wells, navigating careers, entrepreneurship, family, expectations, and societal pressures. And just like her, many are one strategic conversation away from a new beginning.

The encounter reveals a few timeless

principles:

1. Transformation Begins with Truth and Courage

Jesus confronted her truth before unveiling her future. In the same way, African women must confront internal limitations:

- "Real estate is too expensive."
- "I need more money first."
- "I'm not ready."
- "What if I fail?"
- "Property investment is for the wealthy or connected."

These beliefs silently sabotage progress. Real transformation begins when women replace fear with clarity, insecurity with identity, and limiting beliefs with bold declarations of possibility:

"I deserve to own property."

"I am building generational wealth."

"I am prepared for abundance."

"I step confidently into opportunities."

When the internal shifts, the external begins to align.

2. Destiny Encounters Are Rarely Convenient But Always Strategic

Greatness often hides in unexpected places:

- a conversation you didn't plan,
- a collaboration you didn't expect,
- an opportunity you almost overlooked.

In real estate, timing and alignment matter.

Many of the most profitable opportunities come through networks, partnerships, and communities not solitary effort.

The chapter reminds us:

"Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

This is more than scripture. It is a modern investment principle:

Acceleration happens through collaboration.

Women do not need to wait until they have "all the money."

They need:

- Shared investment vehicles,
- structured cooperatives,
- co-ownership models,
- knowledge-driven communities,
- systems that multiply effort and reduce barriers.

This is what Chic's Doing Real Estate champions across Africa and beyond:

women co-investing, women co-owning, women co-creating wealth.

3. Identity Precedes Influence and Wealth Follows Stability

The “living water” Jesus offered the woman was internal a restored sense of identity, clarity, and purpose.

In real estate, wealth creation requires the same:

- a. *stable mindset*
- b. *consistent savings*
- c. *disciplined planning*
- d. *exposure to information*
- e. *supportive community*
- f. *strategic partnerships*

Financial growth is often the result of internal alignment before external action.

Identity drives intelligence.

Clarity fuels courage.

Confidence produces decisions.

Women who believe in themselves buy differently, negotiate differently, invest differently, and build differently.

4. From Bucket to Influence: Women Are Designed for Leadership.

The woman came to the well with a bucket but she left as a voice, a leader, an influence. This is the future of African women in real estate:

Women who start with small steps : a savings plan, a co-investment, a land share rising into:

Property owners,
real estate investors,
industry leaders,
community builders,
influencers shaping economic narratives.

This is how generational cycles are broken.
This is how economic ceilings are shattered.
This is how women step into harvests prepared before they arrived.

5. A Call to Action for Women Across Africa and the World

As we close the year and step into a new one, here is the wisdom every woman needs:

- a. ***Believe boldly.***
- b. ***Declare powerfully.***
- c. ***Collaborate intentionally.***
- d. ***Invest consistently.***
- e. ***Let go of fear.***
- f. ***Shatter every ceiling -cultural, economic, or psychological.***
- g. ***Take intelligent, confident, immediate action.***

Your well is not the end.

It is the beginning of reinvention.

Your voice matters.

Your decisions matter.

Your wealth journey matters.

And like the Samaritan woman, you may walk in with a need but you will walk out with influence, clarity, and the capacity to shift communities.

This December, step forward with courage.

Embrace your strategic encounters.

Say yes to partnerships.

Say yes to ownership.

Say yes to your next level.

Because every woman, every African woman deserves a seat at the wealth table.

The world is ready for your rise.

---MOJISOLA AFOLAYAN

Founder, Chic's Doing Real Estate.

HABITAT

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*Neighborhood
Spotlight*





1. Louisville Phase 1 – Eko Atlantic City

Developer: TotalEnergies Staff Housing Cooperative Multipurpose Society Ltd (TEHC)

Financier: FCMB

EPC Contractor: ITB Nigeria

Units: 157 Apartments (2-bed, 3-bed, 4-bed maisonettes, 5-bed penthouses)

Louisville Phase 1 emerges as Lagos' most solidly positioned residential development for 2025. With **\$40 million FCMB financing secured in July 2025**, advanced piling already completed, and a reputable EPC contractor in ITB Nigeria, the project demonstrates exceptional financial credibility and engineering reliability.

Its two **IFC EDGE sustainability certifications** place it ahead of most competitors in environmental performance, while its location within Eko Atlantic's growing skyline provides unmatched long-term value. A 36-month construction programme further cements its low delivery risk and top ranking.

TOP 10 LAGOS RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF 2025

Habitat Magazine's Definitive Annual Ranking

Every year, Habitat Magazine conducts one of the industry's most anticipated evaluations, our annual ranking of Lagos' Top 10 Residential Developments. The 2025 edition captures a city in motion: more sophisticated investors, better-financed projects, stronger engineering oversight, and a rising emphasis on sustainability and livable urban communities.

To ensure credibility, our editorial board applied a rigorous methodology across eleven core criteria:

1. **Construction Status & Timing** – Verified active construction in 2025.
2. **Scale & Unit Mix** – Quantity, diversity and complexity of units.
3. **Design & Architectural Quality** – Aesthetic standard, architects, and recognitions.
4. **Sustainability & Building Performance** – Certifications and green credentials.

5. Developer Strength & Funding –

- Financial capacity and reliability.
6. **Market Impact & Affordability** – Price tiers, demand depth, and segment relevance.
 7. **Amenities & Community Features** – Social, recreational, and lifestyle infrastructure.
 8. **Location & Connectivity** – Proximity to commercial, transport, and service clusters.
 9. **Innovation & Technology** – Smart features, construction methods, and material innovation.
 10. **Risk & Deliverability** – Consistency, legal clarity, and construction stability.
 11. **Social & Economic Impact** – Job creation, affordability components, and community benefit.

After months of research, field verification, and cross-platform confirmation, we present the **Top 10 Lagos Residential Developments of 2025, ranked from highest to lowest.**



2. Quantum Luxury Towers – Victoria Island

Developer: Quantum Group

Status: Under Construction (~17 floors as of Oct 2025)

Units: 50-unit premium tower

Quantum Luxury Towers follows closely behind with one of the most transparent construction progress records in Lagos. Located on Water Corporation Drive—a corridor defining Victoria Island's modern luxury identity—the development has consistently demonstrated verifiable monthly milestones.

With an elegant high-rise profile, strong engineering momentum, and robust documentation across industry platforms, Quantum represents a rare combination of ambition and reliability within the private luxury segment.



3. Lagos New Town – Ibeju-Lekki Corridor

Developer: Mixta Africa / Mixta Nigeria

Status: Multi-phase construction ongoing

Lagos New Town stands as one of the largest and most institutionally backed master-planned communities in the country. Its multi-year phasing strategy—spanning residential clusters, retail nodes, educational facilities, and major road systems—has shown steady progress throughout 2025.

With Mixta Africa's proven track record and strong capitalisation, Lagos New Town delivers a model for long-term suburban expansion that is both sustainable and economically catalytic.



4. Mangrove Estate – Ogudu, Ikeja

Developer: Lagos State Development & Property Corporation (LSDPC)

Units: 137 (terraces, maisonettes, 1-bed penthouses)

Mangrove Estate earns its ranking through stability, affordability, and verified progress. As an LSDPC-backed project, funding risk is significantly reduced, ensuring dependable delivery. With 137 units designed to serve a broad middle-income demographic, the estate strengthens the state's efforts to provide secure, well-planned housing close to central Lagos.

Its balanced scale and responsible planning make it a standout mid-market development for 2025.



5. Lekki Avana Phase II – Ibeju-Lekki

Developer: Zylus Homes / Zylus Group

Units: 3-bed & 4-bed bungalows

Status: Active site preparation; launched Sept 2025

Lekki Avana Phase II is strengthened by Zylus Homes' strong sales network and its strategic position in a rapidly growing corridor. With bungalow typologies that suit a wide family market and active 2025 construction, the project strikes an appealing balance: accessible pricing, manageable scale, and predictable delivery.

While less architecturally ambitious, it excels in market demand and investor confidence.



6. Autograph – Banana Island, Ikoyi

Developer: Private Developer / CoopLag

Features: 11 floors, concierge, gym, pool

The Autograph brings contemporary amenities and vertical elegance to one of Nigeria's most exclusive locations: Banana Island. With its 11-floor design, luxury amenity suite, and sustained 2025 activity across real estate marketplaces, the project showcases credible progress.

Its ranking reflects a strong blend of desirability, location, and visible construction momentum.



7. L5 Banana – Banana Island, Ikoyi

Developer: Grenadines Homes / Palton Morgan Holdings

Typology: Luxury Apartments & Penthouses

Features: Smart-home automation, lagoon-view terraces, jetty access, pool, gym, EV charging

L5 Banana is one of the most refined emerging developments in Banana Island, delivering a blend of luxury, technology, and waterfront living. The development's architectural direction embraces clean modern lines, expansive glazing, and elegant lagoon-facing balconies.

Its amenity offering is including **smart-home systems, electric-vehicle charging, a jetty, gym, and pool** which meets the demands of a sophisticated clientele. Backed by an established premium developer, the project balances exclusivity with innovation, earning a strong mid-ranking position.



8. Missi Residences – Banana Island, Ikoyi

Developer: MISA/BISA Ltd.

Units: 8 boutique luxury residences

Missi Residences earns its place as one of Lagos' most intimate luxury developments of 2025. With only eight units planned, the project appeals to a highly specific ultra-luxury clientele. Its architectural intentions signal high design quality, though its ranking is moderated by the need for continuous construction verification.

Boutique scale enhances exclusivity—but reduces its overall score on impact and innovation metrics.



9. The Hive (Eko Atlantic Tower) – Eko Atlantic City

Developer: Private Developer

Features: Proposed smart-home systems, concierge, premium tower amenities

The Hive brings bold technological ambitions and a prime Eko Atlantic address. Its prospects are promising, but its score is affected by the lack of independently verified construction progress at the time of assessment.

Until physical activity is more transparent, it remains an exciting but speculative contender.



10. Amaranth Residences – Ikeja GRA

Developer: Richards Court Ltd.

Units: 10 executive residences

Status: Under Construction (Jan 2025 → Expected completion: Dec 2025)

Amaranth Residences closes the list with a compact, well-targeted offering in Ikeja GRA. With only ten executive units and a central, high-demand location, its delivery risk is minimal. However, its scale, innovation level, and wider urban impact place it at the bottom of the 2025 ranking.

A strong boutique development—but limited in comparative influence.



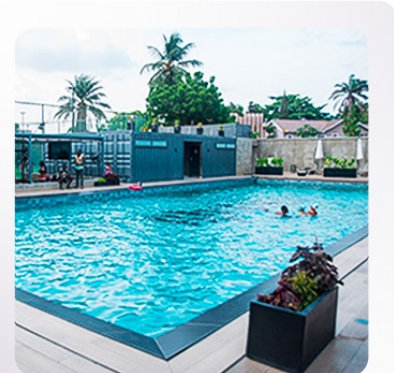
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CANTONMENTS:

A Deep Dive Into One of Ghana's Suburbs

By Charis Raji



Ghana has a rich number of suburbs that are growing at a rapid pace. A number of these places include Ejisu, East Legon Hills, Oyafira, Cantonments, and Appolonia City, to mention just a few; but we'd be shedding more light on Cantonments - an affluent suburb in the Ghanaian city of Accra. Just like the name implies, Cantonments was firstly intended to become a military quarters under the then British Colonial government. The Cantonment area or settlement is a diversified and vibrant neighbourhood that wastes no time in showcasing its rich history.

Cantonments is home to a number of embassies including the Mexican, Russian, Hungarian, Algerian, Chinese, Japanese and Lebanese embassies; as well as the high commissions of the European Union, Sierra Leone and Australia.

Because of the initial plan for Cantonments, a lot of the housing spaces were characterised by spacious, freestanding houses i.e. villas and bungalows that had large compounds, high canopy trees and gardens.

As a result of the colonial influences, old buildings display wooden detailing, verandas and high ceilings. Besides colonial influences, most of the buildings springing up have a blend of modern and upscale characteristics with features like the use of modern (building) materials i.e. timber, bigger windows, mid-rise of multi-storey apartments with up-to-date amenities.

Some of Cantonments properties are gated, which affirms the suburb is secure, private and maintains the air of exclusivity. Some homes also incorporate greenery and sustainability features like the use of sustainable materials, energy efficient gadgets like LED lighting and smart home systems, solar panels and water conservation features.

Much of this transformation has been guided by Accra's new generation of architects and design firms who are reimagining luxury living through a contemporary Ghanaian lens. Firms such as Sutherland & Sutherland Architects and Mobius Architecture have contributed

to redefining urban residences in Cantonments — blending tropical modernism with sustainability. Their designs often favour natural ventilation, shaded terraces, and open-plan living that reflect both modern needs and Ghana's climate realities.

In the Cantonments area, you'd find that there is a lot of diversity as a result of the blend of expatriates, diplomats and elites in that area. Languages you'd frequently hear include French, Arabic, Ghanaian Pidgin English, Twi, Ga, Ewe, Hausa, and Fante.

The real estate space in Cantonments is also growing at an astronomical rate. Accra's apartment market this year offers a strong investment potential with prime areas with price range(s) of \$1000 - \$2000 per square meter, and these growths are seen in neighbourhoods like Cantonments, East Legon and Airport Residential Area; with Cantonments bringing in a 7-8% in rental yield.

Cantonments have ultra-luxury projects which meet the needs of international executives and high-net-worth individuals. Among the latest projects reshaping the suburb's skyline is ARLO Cantonments, a development led by Ghana's real estate developer, Devtraco Plus, which is setting up impressive portfolios of real estate in the region and country. Under ARLO Cantonments' belt are studios, one- to three-bedroom apartments and penthouses for residences.

Because of ARLO Cantonments' prime location - Cantonment, residents enjoy access to the Kokota International Airport, the business districts and a plethora of recreational, cultural and culinary hubs in Accra.

Cantonments is an excellent blend of people, languages, and lifestyles. Here, culture quietly thrives amidst urban sophistication. Cantonments stand as one of Ghana's most telling examples of how cities grow with their people. Cantonments today is a blend of cultures, lifestyles, and architectural eras — where colonial history meets global modernity. In many ways, it stands as one of Ghana's most vivid examples of how cities evolve alongside their people.

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HOLIDAY EVENTS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS DECEMBER

By Charis Raji

December in Nigeria is unlike anywhere else in the world. It's the season when the diaspora returns home, when city streets pulse with an infectious energy, and when the phrase Detty December becomes less of a saying and more of a lifestyle. From Lagos to Calabar, Ibadan to Benin City, the country transforms into one giant celebration of music, culture, food, and everything in between.

Whether you're chasing headline concerts, soaking in cultural festivals, or simply looking for where the vibes will be warmest, we have rounded up the must-attend events happening across Nigeria's major cities this December. Grab your tickets, mark your calendars, and get ready for an unforgettable holiday season.

LAGOS

The commercial capital lives up to its reputation as Nigeria's entertainment hub with a packed December calendar.

1. Flytime Fest

Now in its 20th year, Flytime Fest remains one of Lagos's most anticipated annual events. This year's edition runs from December 21–25 at the Eko Convention Centre, Victoria Island. The lineup features Gunna, Olamide, Davido, Ayra Starr, BNXXN,

Fireboy, and Central Cee, who headlines on December 21.

Asake takes the stage on Christmas Eve for his first Lagos concert in two years, while Davido closes out the festival with a spectacular Christmas Day performance as part of his 5IVE Nigeria tour.

2. Detty December Fest

Organised by Darey and Deola Alade and the team behind LiveSpot and Entertainment Week Lagos, Detty December Fest is a month-long cultural takeover running from December 6–31.

Busta Rhymes, alongside other sensational artists, including Juma Jux, will be present in Lagos and it promises to be a mix of world-class music, spectacular productions, immersive entertainment, and unforgettable parties throughout the month.

3. Motherland Festival

Nigeria's global homecoming festival takes place December 18–20 in Victoria Island. This three-day celebration brings together music, fashion, tech showcases, and a food festival, making it the perfect event for those who want a bit of everything.

4. The Cavemen Live in Concert

Highlife sibling duo Kingsley and Benjamin Okorie, known as The Cavemen, will be bringing their tour to Lagos on December 27 at The Fidelity Ground, Oniru. Tickets range



from Early Bird (₦27,100) to Single Seat on a Table (₦324,100).

5. Palmwine Fest

A live music experience organized by ShowDemCamp, as a platform to celebrate and experience Nigeria's alternative music scene.

In recent shows, they have had incredible line-ups including Ladipoe, DJ Spinall, Tems, and this year's event won't be any different. They'd take place in both Lagos and Abuja, and tickets are available on Partyvest. The fest will take place on December 21, and tickets are available on Partyvest.

6. Kizz Daniel Live

One of Nigeria's most consistent hitmakers, Kizz Daniel, promises to close out the year with a concert featuring crowd favourites like Woju, Cough, and Buga.

7. Eat Drink Festival

Organized by EatDrinkLagos, this culinary celebration takes place December 26–27, perfect for foodies looking to explore Lagos's vibrant food scene during the holidays.

8. Africa Fashion Week Nigeria – Detty December Edition

Fashion meets festivity on December 20–21

at the JRandle Centre for Yoruba Culture & History, showcasing African designers and style.

9.

From December 18th to the 21st of December, the Shakara Fest will be held at Nautica Beach Resort, Eti-Osa, Lekki. Aside from listening to music, there will be food vendors and drink stations. Expect a wide range of music, including Fuji, Rap, Highlife, Amapiano, and Gospel. The event kicks off at 4 pm, and gates will be open as early as 8 am. Some artists that be at the fest include Mavo, Cobhams Asuquo and many more.

10. Iconiq Fest

A 3-day event that takes place at the Landmark Event Center and will see some of Nigeria's most exciting artists, electrifying live performances, and immersive experiences that will make your December unforgettable. Artists like BXN, Chike, and Shallopipi will be performing.

11. The Experience

Since 2006, The Experience has been a free all-night Gospel concert, organized by Pastor Paul Adefarasin, where celebrated Psalmists

and artists from Nigeria and around the world convene in Lagos and are in an atmosphere of worship and reverence.

This year's event won't be any different. It will take place at the Fafawa Balewa Square and start at 5 pm. Artists like Travis Greene, Gaise Baba, Frank Edwards, Naomi Raine, Moses Bliss, Muyiwa Olarewaju, Mike Aremu and many more will be at this year's concert.

IBADAN

The Oyo State capital is pulling out all the stops with Vibing December, a government-backed festival running from December 1, 2025, to January 2, 2026.

1. D Fantasyland

Head to the Recreation Club open field in Sabo from December 24–26 for variety entertainment perfect for the whole family.

2. Ojude UI Celebration

The University of Ibadan open field hosts this celebration on December 20, featuring artiste hangouts and musical concerts.

3. Amala Cuisine Exhibition

Celebrate Ibadan's iconic dish on December 6 at this exhibition organized by the Amala Festival.

4. Amala Festival & Atewolara Festival

Both festivals take place on December 14 at the National Museum in Aleshinloye.

5. Ogbomoso Cradle Carnival

The ancient city of Ogbomoso comes alive from December 18–22, 2025, with the Ogbomoso Cradles Carnival. The carnival celebrates the rich cultural heritage of Ogbomoso while positioning the town as a hub for cultural tourism and youth empowerment.

Some carnival highlights include a talent hunt, the Omidan Ogbomoso Beauty Pageant, arts and crafts exhibition, golf and football tournaments, and a marathon race. The grand finale on December 22 features cultural displays from the five local governments in Ogbomosoland.

6. Oyo Durbar

A showcase of traditional pageantry and will take place on December 27.

7. Faaji Cruise

For something different, enjoy a cruise on the Eleyele River as part of the Vibing December celebrations.

ABUJA

The nation's capital brings its own flavour

with "Groovy December," a 16-day festival running December 15–31.

1. Groovy December Festival

Organized by the Emerging Abuja Program with former Super Eagles coach Samson Siasia as Brand Ambassador, this festival features over 35 events. The Moshood Abiola Stadium hosts most activities, including Afrobeats concerts, a jazz festival, cultural displays, water sports like kayaking, car racing, fashion shows, and various competitions.

2. Palmwine Fest Abuja

A live music experience organized by ShowDemCamp, as a platform to celebrate and experience Nigeria's alternative music scene.

In recent shows, they have had incredible line-ups, including Ladipoe, DJ Spinall, and Tems; this year's event won't be any different. They'd take place in both Lagos and Abuja, and tickets are available on Partyvest. The fest will take place on December 12, and tickets are available on Partyvest.

3. Abuja Detty December

Abuja Detty December 2025 is a 13-day citywide festival scheduled to run from December 21, 2025, to January 2, 2026, aimed at positioning Abuja as Africa's next major December tourism and entertainment destination. The festival promises 12 days filled with culture, connection, celebration, and commerce, bringing together the best of

music, art, food, and more.

Attractions include the Miss ADD Beauty Pageant on December 28, a Celebrity Football Match on December 30, and a spectacular Fireworks and Countdown Concert on December 31. Throughout the festival, the ADD Village will host exhibitions featuring arts, crafts, cuisine, and small businesses.

Miss ADD 2025 will see five finalists compete for a ₦5M cash prize, brand ambassadorships, and international pageant opportunities.

Confirmed partners include Moniepoint, Varuna by Good Beach, Shelter Homes, and Wealth Bridge Asset Managers. Parts of the festival will be livestreamed globally to allow the Nigerian diaspora to experience the event virtually.

CALABAR

Africa's biggest street party returns for another spectacular year.

1. Calabar Carnival

Another beautiful event to attend this year is the Calabar Carnival, which has been happening for the past 20 years. Otherwise known as Africa's Biggest Street Party, this year's theme is Trace of Time, which is set to transcend the bounds of a traditional festival. The carnival is set to hold from the 26th to



the 30th of December, 2025.

Key dates include the Cultural Carnival on December 26, Carnival Kings & Queens on December 26, Junior Carnival on December 27, and the main Carnival Calabar street party on December 28.

BENIN CITY

1. Edo Carnival – Our Culture, Our Pride

From December 21–27, Benin City comes alive with a week of cultural celebration. Highlights include the Grand Opening Ceremony (December 21), Cultural Band Competition and Night Concert (December 22), Trade Fair and Comedy Show (December 23), Pageant Night (December 24), Christmas Family Fiesta (December 25), Grand Band Parade (December 26), and the Awards and Closing Concert (December 27).

2. Cultural Fiesta and Food Festival

On December 23, head to Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium for a grand celebration of Edo culture and cuisine.

ENUGU

The Coal City positions itself as a growing hub for culture-driven tourism.

1. New Yam Music Festival Grand Finale

On December 14 and 15 at the Amadeo Event Centre, the grand finale of this cultural celebration will take place and feature a yam pyramid exhibition, indigenous art markets, masquerade displays, and performances by top Igbo artists blending traditional rhythms with contemporary sounds.

PORT HARCOURT

1. Naija Food Carnival

Naija Food Carnival is Nigeria's biggest and most culturally rich culinary experience — a festival where food meets fun, tradition meets innovation, and people from all walks of life gather to celebrate the essence of Nigerian cuisine.

The carnival serves as an atmosphere to explore the country's culinary traditions as well as promote tourism.

2. Food Fair Rivers

This December, the Food Fair Rivers event is making an attempt to promote Rivers' cuisine and bring people together. It takes place from December 5th to the 6th and starts at 12 pm.

Whether you're staying in one city or city-hopping across the country, December in Nigeria offers something for every kind of traveller — the music lover, the culture enthusiast, the foodie, the spiritual seeker, and everyone in between. From blockbuster concerts in Lagos to heritage carnivals in Calabar, river cruises in Ibadan, and vibrant street festivals in Port Harcourt and Enugu, this is the one month where Nigeria shows off its fullest colours.

As the year winds down and the celebrations light up every corner of the country, one thing is certain: Detty December should be more than an event season — it's a feeling, a homecoming, and a reminder of the power of community, culture, and shared joy. Wherever you choose to be, make it memorable.

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WHEN ACHALUGO MET ODOGWU:

A REVIEW OF OMONI OBOLI'S **LOVE IN EVERY WORD**

By Tomisin Juliet Faoye

Ever since the release of Omoni Oboli's romance flick, *Love in Every Word*, fans all over the country have begun to refer to her YouTube channel as the Hallmark channel of Nigeria. This reference to the American channel known for consistently putting out "feel good" movies, is due to Omoni Oboli's ability to feed the fantasy of her viewers.

Love in Every Word tells the story of Chioma, a workaholic marketing executive, and Obiora, the Odogwu who sweeps her off her feet through grand gestures and intentional acts of love. Chioma is the typical working woman whose mother is desperate to see get married.

But Chioma, having just ended a relationship, is unwilling to meet anyone. Of course, like every great love story, she meets Obiora while trying to avoid meeting the 'suitor' her mother tries to introduce to her, who of course, is Obiora.

The love between Chioma and Obiora progresses very quickly. Barely halfway through the movie, they're already in love and going on dates. This makes one wonder what the remaining one hour of the movie will be used for. Omoni Oboli brings layers into the story; Chioma's unbearable boss, her recovering twelve thousand dollars from her reckless ex-boyfriend, and Chioma's own internal struggle.

While Chioma loves Obiora, he is not quite her spec. His accent, tribe and financial status dissuade her from committing to him. Strangely so, because he is Igbo, just as she is. A deeper dive into the movie exposes some childhood trauma. We discover that Chioma's spec is the direct opposite of all her father was. Her father, who apparently walked, talked, and acted like Obiora, was unfaithful and didn't treat her and her mother right.

Chioma finds it hard to separate Obiora from her father and this stands as a stumbling block to the furtherance of the relationship. But like every beautiful love story, everything aligns and Chioma ends up with her Odogwu.

Love in Every Word is that sweet, savoury delight that Nollywood didn't know it needed. Garnering millions of views on YouTube, the movie made Nigerian women swoon and daydream about their own Odogwu. Excerpts from the movie trended online, causing even those who hadn't seen the movie develop interest in it.

One thing this movie proves is that Omoni Oboli knows her audience. In an industry where everyone is scrambling to make the next big American-standard, Netflix-worthy movie, Omoni Oboli is sticking to what she does best. She is delivering authentic Nigerian love stories that feel close to home; stories that are familiar, relatable, homely, and accessible

Love
IN
Every Word

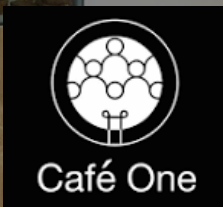
SHOWING ON
**OMONI
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without a Netflix subscription. Olawunmi Adenibuyan (BamBam) and Uzor Arukwe were the face of the movie and delivered stellar performances. The movie was not necessarily star studded, and didn't make use of an overly large cast, yet its delivery was good. We would all agree however, that *Love in Every Word* was not celebrated so much because of its cinematography or aesthetics.

Rather it was celebrated for being a story that connected with the Nigerian audience, or as one Instagram user put it "positively fed their delusions".

The movie is a testament to the fact that those who set the standard always excel above those who follow the standard.





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