

# <sup>1</sup> Flagship Projects and its' Application to Urban Regeneration in <sup>2</sup> the UK and USA: Prospect in the Nigerian Context

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## <sup>7</sup> **Abstract**

<sup>8</sup> Flagship regeneration as a model of urban renewal materialized in search for pragmatic  
<sup>9</sup> solutions to the socioeconomic problems caused by deindustrialisation of some ancient cities in  
<sup>10</sup> the United Kingdom and United States of America late 1960s. The subsequent adoption of  
<sup>11</sup> this concept by other developed countries was due to its capability as panacea to city decay  
<sup>12</sup> and ability to revitalize or rebrand urban centre for investment attractions and possibility of  
<sup>13</sup> reducing the burden of social services provision on the municipal governments. The reviewed  
<sup>14</sup> literatures explain that individual city has basic features or attributes upon which flagship  
<sup>15</sup> projects could be developed and thereby accord such city with unique image and functionality  
<sup>16</sup> within and outside the region. Also, the possible drive for wealth creation and eventual  
<sup>17</sup> poverty alleviation edged flagship regeneration over other contemporary models of urban  
<sup>18</sup> renewal. However, despite the acclaimed age long benefits of flagship projects there have been  
<sup>19</sup> no appreciable efforts by the Nigerian government to embrace or encourage this concept even  
<sup>20</sup> at the abundance of potentialities. The paper therefore, examines the application of flagship  
<sup>21</sup> regeneration in the UK and USA with a view to establishing its prospect in proffering  
<sup>22</sup> solutions to urban degeneration in Nigeria. In this course, the diversity of; cultural  
<sup>23</sup> background, historical heritage, job specialisation, fascinating Mother Nature, etc, are  
<sup>24</sup> perceived to be reference points for tourism flagships development. Conversely, an indepth  
<sup>25</sup> exploration unfolds various peculiar encumbrances that could undermine its smooth  
<sup>26</sup> application. It was however concluded that various tiers of governments should embrace  
<sup>27</sup> flagships development with due attention to the recommendations made for surmounting the  
<sup>28</sup> envisaged bottlenecks and ensuring resourceful implementation.

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<sup>30</sup> *Index terms*— city decline, urban regeneration, flagship projects, nigeria.

## <sup>31</sup> **1 Introduction**

<sup>32</sup> In Nigeria and like any other part of the world, city centres used to be the baseline or reference point where  
<sup>33</sup> people come together and establish settlement. Virtually all types of land use namely; residential, commercial,  
<sup>34</sup> and industrial are found in cluster at the city centre with assumed adequate amenities to service the initial low  
<sup>35</sup> population density. During this dispensation, some social services, economic activities, political affairs, etc., were  
<sup>36</sup> found in array of city functionalities until when the main cities broadly engulfed by the influx from the less city  
<sup>37</sup> areas like; towns, villages, hamlets, etc, in the quest for means of livelihood. As population increases, conflicting  
<sup>38</sup> land use and logjam of human activities become more outbursts and thereby overwhelm city functionality. In other  
<sup>39</sup> words, the population explosion gives rise to urban sprawl making cities to be non-functional and overcrowded  
<sup>40</sup> with more pressure on infrastructures and social services. These eventually trigger retrogressive economic growth,  
<sup>41</sup> downswing of living standards, and barriers to potential developments. Forthrightly, the urbanization problems

### 3 A) CAUSES OF CITY DECLINE

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42 created from yesteryears still persist and precisely apparent through; poor transportation, traffic congestion, 43 epileptic power supply, paralytic businesses, devastated health facilities, obsolete and collapsed water supply 44 systems, slum or shanty settlements (due to lack of affordable housing), poor waste disposal and management, 45 insecurity of live and properties, and finally' upsurge of epidemics.

46 In a similar manner, many of the cities in the developed countries like; United Kingdom, United States of 47 America, Germany, France, Poland, Italy, Spain, Russia, etc., have one time or the other faced with urban 48 decline as a result of the system collapse brought about by overstressed urban infrastructures without instant 49 recipe to tackle the torrential menace caused by the transpired urbanization problems (Douglas, 2016). It takes 50 the concerted efforts of various urban and regional planners, and erudite scholars in urban development to 51 postulate and implement various theories for the regulation of urban growth, all of which served as pathfinders 52 and foundations to the development of modern urban theories like: urban redevelopment, urban regeneration, etc. 53 Urban regeneration was subsequently branched out into different models among which are flagship or prestige 54 projects (Granger, 2010).

55 As the known concept of urban regeneration since 1970s, flagship projects have been unfolding the socio- 56 economic turnaround in the major cities of North America and European countries (Temelová, 2007). From 57 late 1980s till date, flagship projects have gained substantial interest in the field of urban research and practice 58 (Bianchini, Dawson, and Evans. 1992;Loftman and Nevin, 1995;Smyth 1994;Turok 1992). Interestingly, flagship 59 projects have instinct of augmenting city features and inducting the physical renewal of decayed neighbourhoods. 60 Conversely, the search for feasible solutions to the menace of cities decays in Nigeria has from time to time 61 involved application of different urban renewal strategies at various dimensions. Among the strategies adopted 62 are: satellite or new town developments which were targeted at decongesting the overcrowded city centres (this was 63 for instance adopted in Ibadan and Lagos in the 80s and 90s); urban redevelopment programme sponsored by the 64 World Bank in some south-west states of Nigeria in the 1990s and 2000s; model city and mega city developments 65 in Lagos being implementing since 2005 till date, etc. The motives behind the adoption of these strategies are to 66 rebuild, reconstruct, or form a new status or standard that will be holistically revitalize the functionalities and 67 economic bases of cities with a view to facilitating sustainable growth for direct or indirect benefits of individual 68 and society at large. Of all models of urban renewal adopted in Nigeria, flagships regeneration or prestige projects 69 remain probably unpronounced or unexploited (untapped) and untested for solving urban decline.

70 The foreignness of flagship also accounts for scanty literature that locally delve into subject matter, hence 71 the justification for this article. Also, the successful practice of this concept in the advanced countries instigates 72 this paper to investigate; what urban problems is flagship projects meant to work out? what are the strategic 73 procedures that can facilitate its resourceful adoption? and, how can its application regenerate the declined cities 74 in Nigeria? As a result, the essay aims at reviewing the practice of flagship projects in the UK and USA urban 75 regeneration schemes with a view to determining its prospect in solving city degeneration problems in Nigeria. 76 While the objectives for achieving this are; identification of urbanization problems that can be solved owing to the 77 adoption of flagship projects; examination of the evolutionary features or attributes involved in flagship projects 78 as urban regeneration strategy, and, determination of factors that can expedite its application and prospect in 79 Nigeria. Against this backdrop, it was concluded that the idea of flagship projects was found to be one of the 80 significant components that is worthy of inclusion in urban policy formulation and implementation despite the 81 observed shortcoming of myopic response to the multidimensional urban problems.

## 82 2 II. Urban Decay and Flagships Model in Urban Regeneration

### 83 3 a) Causes of City Decline

84 The gradual degeneration of cities components usually serves as an indication or manifestation of urban decline. 85 The identity and functionality of any city could be ripped off when degeneration totally blossom with no instant 86 remedy within reach. In other words, city decays when it is overwhelmed with inability to serve the needs 87 of its residents and eventually come short of the expectations of its governing authority. The collapsing of 88 city features is being generated by structural economic change alongside depopulation, property abandonment, 89 property devaluation, social problems, and urban environmental deprivation (which may be varied many at times). 90 In the history, the swift industrialization witnessed by the UK and USA in the late 19th and early 20th centuries 91 paved way for fundamental reform in social, economic and spatial base of urban centres of these developed 92 countries. However, the changes in economic and employment trends as well as technological improvement 93 brought about range of urbanization problems. The emergence of these problems compounded the drawback 94 suffered by core or inner areas of the cities in view of weak economic base, inability to adapt to new production 95 technologies and infrastructural requirements.

96 In addition to the effects of industrial evolution, the growing propensity of suburbanization also contributed 97 to the exodus of significant functions and occupations from the city centres to the fringes or newly developed 98 sites. This scenario has been considerably contributed to the urban maceration (breaking-up) as in contrast to 99 the immense suburban developments in most Western European countries and in the United States of America. 100 Consequently, the movement of prosperous activities to the suburbs gave room for the emptiness of inner city 101 been characterized by; deficient socio-economic base, poor housing condition, environmental degradation, high

102 unemployment, social vices, low education standard, etc, ??Dieffendorf 1989;Clark 1989;Couch, Fraser, and Percy  
103 2003).

104 The causes of urban change that possibly lead to urban decline may be relatively different in view of process  
105 or sequence of occurrence in the underdeveloped or developing countries like Nigeria. For instance, some of the  
106 urban centres or cities in Nigeria like Lagos, Port Harcourt, Abuja, etc, are just experiencing economic reform  
107 that triggered massive industrialization and globalization in the UK and USA in the19th century. The rapidity  
108 of momentum gathered by the economy of these developed countries as at that era could not be compared to  
109 the present fragile economic basis underlying the growth of urban centres in the developing or underdeveloped  
110 countries. It is obvious that unequal wealth distribution and inadequate reserves and resources engendered  
111 undesirable development reform and consecutive urban decline in Nigeria like in other countries of its class. Brian  
112 (2007) and Wang (2010) observed that urban centres in the process of degeneration are more susceptible to a  
113 couple of factors that are detrimental to sustainable urban development. Among these are; uneven distribution of  
114 wealth, clustering of income generating activities at the key urban centres (mega cities), demographic pressures as  
115 a result of vast growing population and internal migration; high rate of poverty, social vices and unemployment;  
116 overburden of natural resources like land, water, energy; industrial pollution due to uncontrolled industrial  
117 development, urban environmental degradation, and vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters (flood,  
118 erosion, fire outbreaks, epidemics, etc) as a result of uneven urban development.

119 Without mincing words, urban change that usually warrant or cause decline of urban centres varies from  
120 location to location as well from one category of countries to the other. It is inevitable to note that the dynamism  
121 of socio-economic, environmental setup, demographic and political processes have pivotal role to play in rapidity  
122 of inner-city degeneration or otherwise. In essence, as the dynamism of these factors vary for each locality so as  
123 the difference in the characteristics and response to various reform processes that portend urban change.

## 124 **4 b) Elements of Flagship Projects in Urban Regeneration**

125 Concept Succinctly, Couch et.al. op.cit. define urban regeneration as a public policy, the goals of which include  
126 the re-growth of economic activity, the restoration of social function, and the restoration of environmental quality  
127 or ecological balance. Convincingly, urban regeneration possesses capability of serving as an intervention scheme  
128 for mitigating urban decline and rectifying possible economic failures. In other words, urban regeneration or  
129 urban renaissance is a panacea for re birthing the faded functionality and declined performance of the city on  
130 a recognizable scale. It could be considered as an apparatus or strategy for restructuring or revitalizing the  
131 degenerated urban centre through the formation of a new status or establishment of a standardized identity that  
132 pivot on bringing back the lost socio-economic value without necessarily carrying out massive demolitions of the  
133 city centre i.e. urban regeneration implements the management and planning of existing urban areas rather than  
134 the planning and development of new urbanisation. To be précis, urban regeneration is in contrast to urban  
135 redevelopment that always goes along with physical demolitions, development and massive reconstruction of the  
136 city centre with a view to attaining a structural overhauling. Robson (2000) identifies three dissimilar spatial levels  
137 through which regeneration intervention could be implemented viz.; the region, the city and the neighbourhood.  
138 The appropriateness of intervention for each spatial level differs with respect to various change indicators and  
139 decline factors observed as they occurred. Perhaps, economic indicators may take account of; deindustrialization,  
140 manufacturing depression, increasing unemployment, welfare dependency, and infrastructural decay (McCarthy,  
141 2012). Tsimperis (2015) measures the negative effects of deindustrialization and discovered that it is the bedrock  
142 for the application of urban regeneration in Europe and United States of America. The aim of applying this policy  
143 is to facilitate new investments to urban centres in the global economy through a vast economic transformation.  
144 With this development, there will be economic competition among cities which will subsequently graduate to  
145 regional and national levels through constant keeping of industrial production or marketing of cities as custodians  
146 of specific activities such as tourist destinations (Loftman and Nevin, op.cit.; ??mith, 2002; ??Carthy, op.cit.).

147 In furtherance to the assertion of urban degeneration factors, the use and availability of land within the  
148 built environment also play critical role in pursuing socio-economic activities that usually bring about spatial  
149 alterations as one of the impulses of urban change (Robson, 2000). It is evidenced that various acclaimed  
150 activities alongside territorial restructuring are consequential in view of socio-economic upshots and demographic  
151 pressures. It is on this note that some researchers considered these consequences as gentrification process leading  
152 to eventual urban change. In taking due cognizance of the urban change features, Lang (2005) observed that  
153 urban regeneration as a focal target of urban policy, hinged on four cardinal components thus; economic, social,  
154 physical and environmental.

155 However, in contemplation of effectiveness of urban regeneration policy implementation that could stimulate  
156 or invigorate prestige projects, Colantonio and Dixon (2010) In essence, any of the forgoing approaches can serve  
157 as basis or stimulant for the application of flagship projects within the concept of urban regeneration policy.

## 158 **5 III. Origin and Application of Flagship**

159 Projects in the UK and USA a) Advent of Flagship Projects in UK and USA Yesteryears in the United  
160 Kingdom and United States of America, there have been vital modifications in the role played by the urban  
161 governments in view of the public service delivery and the modality of executing these services. Succinctly, from

## 6 B) FLAGSHIP PROJECTS AND URBAN PROBLEM SOLVING IN THE UK AND USA

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162 the industrial epoch till the wake of 1970s, municipal governments were saddled with the provisions of; public  
163 health care, security, education, and employment amongst others (Eisinger, 2000;Cook, 2004). In addition to  
164 these responsibilities, MacLeod (2002) stated that the Western-European welfare system was instituted between  
165 1945 and 1970 to advocate provision of public housing units for the purposeful needs of larger population affected  
166 by the aftermath of Second World War. Conversely, at the dawn of 1970s gradual changes began to unfold  
167 and introduce new dimensions into governance by refraining from redistributive policies (that entails provisions  
168 for all basic needs of citizenry by the government) and embracing more entrepreneurial policies of growth and  
169 development, which equate private sector practices (Harvey, 1989;Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002).

170 This gradual changes in the government policy agenda facilitated immense input on globalization of British and  
171 Western economies through groundbreaking launch of manufacturing and knowledgebased industries. Consequent  
172 on the advent of these diversifications, major cities in the United Kingdom begin to witness paradigm shift from  
173 production status to consumption class (Fainstein and Judd, 1999), the scenario which led to the development of  
174 various sectors like: tourism, recreational industry, commercial and professional services ??Hall,1993). Notably,  
175 the changes are unsubstantiated in the cities that have large industrial base compare to the ones that have  
176 diversified economy ??Hall, 1993;Murie and Musterd, 2004).

177 Harvey (1989) stated that municipal governments pay less attention to social responsibilities in order to pursue  
178 more entrepreneurial policies tailored towards economic development and growth as similar to the motives of  
179 practitioners in the private sector. Such policies are intended to creating enabling environment for further  
180 economic investment rather than wealth redistribution and social welfare. Doucet, (2010) revealed that these  
181 pro-growth policies were in turn work out on social welfares like jobs generations and wealth creations by means  
182 of encouraging competitive investment among various neighbourhoods in the city. There was every tendency that  
183 the contests set up by the policy among neighbourhoods gradually transformed into inter cities competitions and  
184 specializations on jobs, investment, and tourism which was subsequently elaborated and spread beyond regional  
185 or national boundaries with globalization of the today's world economy.

186 The competition has tremendously targeted the consumption factors in the aspect of quality of life, the built  
187 environment, municipal facilities, cultural and social factors with little or no emphasis on orthodox factors  
188 of production (Evans, 2005). In this regard, Tavsanoglu and Healey (1992) observed that the exploitation  
189 of environment to boost consumption factors has been the famous approach of changing the image of a city  
190 upon the renaissance of urban economy and encouragement of inward investment. These two instincts are the  
191 evolutionary features that flagship projects bound to create or modify in the context of urban regeneration  
192 (Yalcintas, 2010). Consequently, the concept of flagships focuses on specific locations rather than being spread  
193 across a wide geographical area. In other words, more focus is on particular zone or district in the city rather  
194 than the entire city (Tavsanoglu and Healey, opt.cit). In the light of private sector involvement in flagships, there  
195 have been strong profit-oriented motive which usually tend toward selecting high-profile city centres in siting  
196 projects. The selection of locations is generally based not on greatest need, but rather greatest potential for  
197 profit.

198 Nevertheless, since the emergence of the first flagship projects in the United States of America and subsequent  
199 ones in the United Kingdom in about two decades after, this approach has been commonly adopted for cities  
200 regeneration to an extent that a perception emerged that "a city without a flagship lacked a regeneration strategy".  
201 O'Toole and Usher (1992) stated that the two famous flagship regeneration projects: Baltimore's Inner Harbour  
202 and Boston's Faneuil Hall have reproduced hundreds of flagship projects. These succeeding projects were used  
203 to create and sell the image of economic revival, entrepreneurialism and competitiveness in an era of increasing  
204 globalisation (Cook, 2004; Swyngedouw et al. op.cit). Thus, flagship projects in its emergence and context  
205 have become one of the major models of urban regeneration and city rebranding which categorically impact on  
206 urban populace. On the contrary, some schools of thought have considered this model of urban regeneration as  
207 a subjective skill which only focuses on economic upgrading of the city without much ado about comprehensive  
208 revitalization of other city functionalities that capable of salvaging the entire residents from urbanization problems  
209 (Harvey 1989;Hubbard 1996;Vicario and Monje 2003).

### 210 6 b) Flagship Projects and Urban Problem Solving in the UK 211 and USA

212 Flagship projects as a model of urban regeneration has various dimensions of resolving city decay depending on  
213 the form of problem(s) at hand and the target or expectation of the facilitators or campaigners. It is important  
214 to state that flagship projects facilitators could be in the category of city boosters, urban elites or politicians  
215 but seldom government agencies. The motive of each category of facilitators which is bound to be differ, will in  
216 turn determine from which perspective flagships take effect in solving urban problems. Although, some schools  
217 of thought on flagships, observed that the improvement of quality of life for low income earners of urban centre is  
218 not the priority for this method of economic development but could possibly solve the problem of impoverishment  
219 along the line. In other view, flagships have capability of repackaging a decayed city to attract local and foreign  
220 investors (Douglas, op.cit.). Consequently, flagships projects are usually being implemented to achieve desired  
221 motives on the following grounds:

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## 222 **7 i. Need for Urban Policy Modification**

223 The quest for paradigm shift in urban policy and ideology necessitate the application of flagship model for city  
224 regeneration in the UK and USA (Lang, 2005). Many provincial or local governments considered the monotony  
225 of redistributive strategies tailored towards economic growth, property-based regeneration and entrepreneurial  
226 method of urban governance as clogs in the wheel of rebranding the decayed cities for substantial functionalities.  
227 In this way, it was acknowledged that flagship projects that hinged on property-led and commerce-driven  
228 regeneration will mitigate urbanization problems such as; unemployment, housing and infrastructural deficits,  
229 insecurity, *inter alia* ??Bianchini, et. al. op.cit; Kearns and Turok, 2000).

230 ii. Substantial Returns on Flagship Projects It has to be noted that the benefits of flagship projects could be  
231 pecuniary or non-pecuniary. In a clear term, to the government it might not be direct financial return but to  
232 individual investors, the pecuniary aspect of the project takes precedence. However, its common benefits to the  
233 entire classes of people in the city cannot be overemphasised in most cases. Consequently, flagship projects is been  
234 adopted as the most pragmatic and speedy method of achieving physical transformation of the dilapidated and  
235 deserted portion of the city and subsequently assigning such city a new role within a specific region or territory  
236 (Boelsums, 2012). For example, flagships can stimulate tourism especially for cities that have instincts for  
237 historical locations and cultural heritages that can attract tourists from other parts of the world. To justify this,  
238 Bianchini, et. al. op.cit. note that the England Film and Television Museum in Bradford, which served as the  
239 first flagship project for this city attracted more than three million tourists within five years of its establishment.  
240 This transformation did not only augment investment and development, which provide jobs for the unemployed  
241 citizens but equally promote admiration and superiority of the city.

## 242 **8 iii. Revamping City Functionality and Image**

243 In the beginning, individual city has its identity and specific role which are found to be the basis of attraction  
244 for the influx of immigrants. The lost of these attributes through overburdened facilities robbed the city of its  
245 image and functionality, hence the need for feasible measures of revamping the dying city. Against this scenario,  
246 the city elites, political gladiators, city administrators, etc, many at times consider adoption of flagship projects  
247 with a view to scaling down the deflated industrial images and rebranding for global market attractions that will  
248 woo private investors, affluent residents, governments, among others, to invest in tourism and cultural heritage,  
249 specialized services, and entertainment promotions because the city can no longer function as the centre of  
250 production but rather of consumption.

## 251 **9 iv. Incomparable Alternative to Flagship Regeneration**

252 Flagship regeneration is been adopted in the UK and USA simply because many provincial governments  
253 considered it as mainly available alternative to attract resources from the private and public sectors all over  
254 the world in order to remain in the scheme of development. It is getting more obvious that most governments are  
255 losing revenues, battling economic depression, and job loss in addition to uncontrollable unemployment problem;  
256 therefore, the only alternative at their disposal is to encourage flagship projects with a view to ameliorating urban  
257 problems by drawing private investors to participate in reimaging and promotion of the city upon the identified  
258 or conceivable potentials (Hubbard, 1996).

259 Similarly, the trending competition for recognition, which extended beyond regional and national boundaries  
260 among the cities of the world, had left the city administrators and elites with no option other than to embrace  
261 flagship regeneration as the only renowned proactive measure that will continually keep their cities "head to  
262 head" with their contemporaries and entrench the desired growth for the benefit all and sundries (Thornley,  
263 2002).

## 264 **10 c) Problems of Flagship Projects**

265 As it is certain that there is no any positive rewarding policy or measure that has no negative effect no matter  
266 how minute, so also is flagship regeneration. Some schools of thought criticise flagships from the perspective  
267 of the indigenous residents while other schools base their argument on the viewpoint of political Year 2019 ( )  
268 economy. Nevertheless, the bottom-line is that flagship regeneration has its shortcomings as follows:

## 269 **11 i. Inconsistent Foresight and Vague Idea of the City**

270 The reimaging and repackaging initiative of flagship projects tailored toward regenerating and promoting the  
271 declined city might not be a true reflection of city characteristics, and eventually turn out to be inconsistent with  
272 the foresight and idea of the city residents. In other words, the promoters of flagships usually fail in assessing,  
273 engaging and embracing the primary interest of the city populace at the conception stage, and as such, they  
274 end up portraying the city with vague ideas in contrary to the authentic quality of the city that would have  
275 yielded enormous benefits if painstakingly corroborated. This is the scenario emphasised by Philo and Kearns  
276 (1993) when measuring the impact of flagship influenced by culture and history. They observed that the frequent  
277 conflicts associated with the manipulation of culture and history is as a result of failure to understudy, understand,  
278 and infuse the local culture and history in which the city populace have been having daily encounters prior the  
279 commencement of flagships.

280 **12 ii. Flagships as Distraction Strategy**

281 Since flagships regeneration cannot proffer all inclusive solution to urban problems and as well its benefits cannot  
282 meet the needs of all classes of city residents, the non benefiting local population therefore perceived and criticised  
283 this policy as a strategy to turn away their minds from deteriorated municipal facilities, insecurity, housing deficits,  
284 etc, which have constituted day-to-day challenges without realistic solution within a specific time horizon. It  
285 is on this note that some authors conceive flagships as projects which always portray city as being prosper or  
286 economically vibrant and capable of receiving capital investments from outside world but veneering abjectness  
287 and unimaginable decline (Harvey, 1989;Philo and Kearns, 1993;and, Eisinger, 2000).

288 **13 iii. Indistinctive Replication**

289 Some recent studies on flagship regeneration observe that most of the projects replicate each other from cities to  
290 cities and regions to regions. It is a frequent occurrence for the promoters to embark on flagship projects base  
291 on borrowed ideas and mindset of profitability without due consideration for domestication of their proposals or  
292 deep concern for localised factors that will ensure win-win situation. Sequel to thoughtlessness of this limitation,  
293 it has been so difficult for the flagship projects developing around the world to have distinct features or dissimilar  
294 identities that will perceptibly draw the attentions of local people and prospective outsiders' interests to investing  
295 their ideas with a view to complementing the existing projects (Searle, 2002).

296 **14 iv. Divergence of Socio-Economic Status**

297 Another criticism against flagship regeneration is its imbalance and schism of socio-economic status among  
298 the various classes of city residents. Apparently, flagships are being masterminded by the city promoters and  
299 indigenous businessmen with their focus on middle income class and prospective external patronisers as opposed  
300 to direct intervention on poverty alleviation and promotion of unbiased social values. It is in the assumption  
301 of flagships promoters that the underlying urban problems such as; socio-economic disparity, unemployment,  
302 poverty, housing and infrastructure deficits, etc, will gradually fissure from the construction stage to the period  
303 when the projects will attain optimum operational levels (Bianchini et al, op.cit.; Hubbard, 1996). Similarly,  
304 priority of flagships is to create wealth with less concern about distributing it. It is assumed that prosperity will  
305 ultimately pass through the elites down to the destitute but only the time lag could not be determined. Therefore,  
306 it is unusual for individual investor to develop flagships regeneration with the priority of wealth redistribution or  
307 with the motive of eradicating diverse social status and economic imbalance (Barber and Hall, 2008).

308 **15 v. Spatial Dichotomy**

309 Although it is an allowed concept to have designated areas when designing public residential layout as such that  
310 there will be line of demarcations between high income blocks, middle income blocks and low-income blocks  
311 but with unpronounced or thin separation in term of available facilities and services. On the contrary, flagships  
312 regeneration is considered to be in the vanguard of discernible segregation between the affluent and the poor  
313 communities within the city (Seo, 2002; Smith, op.cit.). Macleod (2002) considered flagships as tool that discreetly  
314 lay emphasise on site demarcations by encouraging the ideology which put the vulnerable and indigent population  
315 in confinement and hide their neighbourhoods from being publicly noticed or observed as part and parcel of the  
316 city. This makes the buoyancy of economic activities and provision of social services to be lopsided in favour of  
317 the few city elites and probably the middle class i.e. economically viable enclave is inspired and created within  
318 the city. For instance, Eisinger, op.cit., and Seo, op.cit., asserted that Inner Harbour regeneration of Baltimore  
319 was one of the frontline flagship projects that were expected to stimulate and entrench best standard of living  
320 of entire populace of the city. In contrary, the project segregated Baltimore by creating and concentrating the  
321 business development, cultural and tourists centre on one side, while adjacent community occupied mainly by  
322 the poor stays aloof and characterized as urban blight on the other side. This situation can instigate future  
323 displacement or dislodgement of the largely populated destitute from In the light of the foregoing and in as much  
324 that the flagship projects are basically profits oriented rather than instilling all inclusive benefits or solving urban  
325 problems, locational factor will always take preeminence. In essence, the promoters of flagships will continually  
326 consider and prefer city centres where there is ease of accessibility, high profitability, and dignity when siting  
327 their investments regardless the pressing and urgent need for regeneration of the lowly prioritized neighbourhoods  
328 (Vicario and Monje, 2003). This notion of dichotomising the city spatial configuration serves as one of the major  
329 weaknesses of flagship projects, as it creates more urban problems instead of solving them (Cook, 2004).

330 **16 IV. Prospect of Flagship Projects for**

331 Solving City Decline in Nigeria Nigeria as the Africa's most populous country has aptitude to regenerate its  
332 declined cities from the "deep south" to the "far north". The diversity of culture, historical heritage, socio-  
333 economic base, human and natural resources, unique ecosystem, and above all auspicious climate could be  
334 perceived as the providence divinely bestowed upon the country. With these amiable attributes, flagship or  
335 prestige projects could thrive and address the subsisting or envisaged urban drawbacks as well as capable of  
336 controlling the envisioned influx distress, but however subject to expediency of exploratory initiatives and tactical  
337 manipulations of interwoven factors.

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## 338 17 a) Potential Locations for Flagship Projects

339 The propensity of flagship projects to ameliorate the urban problems emanated from city decay in Nigeria, hinge  
340 on the preponderance of the potential locations that can accommodate such developments. It is quite obvious  
341 that most of these locations are yet to be discovered or exploited due to various reasons. It is no longer in the  
342 news that the economy of this country myopically rested on oil exploration, while other viable resources that  
343 could augment and generate intense socio-economic growth were jettisoned. Among the untapped endowments  
344 is the potentiality of developing flagship projects for the regeneration of major cities in twilight stage of decline.

345 Going by the memory lane, flagships developments had not been too alien to planning strategy in Nigeria,  
346 especially in view of city resuscitations and expansions but the pronouncement is being lowly ebbed with little  
347 or no attractions. For instance, Race Course was constructed in late 50s to attract developments in and around  
348 the neighbourhood of new Lagos, the economic nerve of West Africa. Similarly, Cocoa House and Liberty  
349 Stadium were developed in early 60s to reimagine Ibadan city as the political headquarters of Western Region. In  
350 subsequent era, projects like Agbowo Shopping Complex was developed in late 70s with a view to decongesting the  
351 clumpy parts of Ibadan metropolis and servicing the grocery or household needs of premier University which was  
352 established as University College in 1952. This project momentarily fosters increase in neighbourhood property  
353 values and economic turnaround of the city at large. Tafawa Balewa Square (TBS) and National Stadium, Surulere  
354 in Lagos, were developed to serve as sources of economic revitalization and social development. Against all  
355 progressive motives, the aforementioned projects amongst others could not neutralize the menace of urbanization  
356 beyond short period after their developments due to lack of managerial clouts and foresight, inconsistence of  
357 successive political will, and incessant discontinuity of investors' inclination.

358 Succinctly, table ???.1 suggests couple of locations where flagship projects could be considered for wealth  
359 generation and distribution at various geopolitical zones in Nigeria. It also gives the opinion of project approach,  
360 purpose, description, and possible promoter of suggested flagships development.

## 361 18 b) Stimulating Factors for Resourceful Flagships Regeneration

362 For flagship projects to grow and flourish in line of achieving the predetermined goals some fascinating and  
363 enabling factors must be readily available. Among the considerable factors for the prospect of flagships  
364 development in Nigeria are:

### 366 19 i. Historical Antecedents and Cultural Diversities

367 Nigeria as a nation is blessed with over two hundred and fifty (250) tribes and languages that brought about  
368 multiplicity of historical heritage, cultural background, dynamic human resources, natural endowment, socio-  
369 economic scheme, to mention but a few. All these are capable of instigating flagships development where highly  
370 lucrative or beneficial.

### 371 20 ii. Substantial Population and Landmass

372 Population and landmass of a city is another consequential factor for flagship projects to thrive. The result of  
373 2006 census put the Nigerians population at approximately 180 million spread across over 930,000 square meters  
374 of land expanse with dense inhabitants at major cities. This attribute is an advantage in view of local patronage  
375 and accessibility of land for flagships development.

### 376 21 iii. Friendly Government Legislation

377 Since the focus of various levels of government of the world has been gradually shifting from direct provision  
378 of public services to more enterprising governance, diverse steps toward encouraging private investors and elites  
379 to buy into socio-economic developments have been on the increase. Consequently, flexibility of government  
380 legislation in Nigeria has been so gracious to both local and foreign direct investments (FDI) of all categories.  
381 The steps in this direction include various forms of tax relieves like tax cut, tax moratorium, etc, and ease of  
382 development documentations, etc. Therefore, developing flagships project as succours to city decays in Nigeria  
383 could not be hindered or prone to any legal code tussle.

## 384 22 c) Presumable

385 Barriers to Flagship Project Development Following the observed factors which are bound to protrude prosperous  
386 flagships in Nigeria, it important to take due cognisance of inherent or intrinsic elements that could equally  
387 portend difficulties in adopting flagship regeneration for combating socio-economic problems of cities at large.

## 388 23 i. Effect of Economic Downturn on Flagships Development

389 In view of the global and local economic recession there is high risk of insecurity of return on investment in which  
390 flagships development is not exclusive. The fundamental motive for developing flagships by the governments  
391 might not base on economic returns while reverse will be the case for individual flagships promoters. Therefore,

## 28 V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS A) RECOMMENDATIONS

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392 the bad state of Nigeria economy for more than two decades may not portend friendly investment environment  
393 that could guarantee recouping of capital outlay on flagship projects.

### 394 24 ii. Security Challenges

395 The spates of terrorism and kidnapping for ransoms in the world over have instilled untold fears in the minds of  
396 vacationers, and only to be left with the few diehard tourists to embark on journeys probably to the less hostile  
397 tourism locations on the globe. This scenario has negatively impacted on the existing and potential tourists'  
398 centres in the north-east, north-central, southeast, and south-south regions of Nigeria. Therefore, the possibility  
399 of wooing both local and foreign flagships investors in this direction could be highly impossible.

400 iii. Impediment of Fanaticized Religion Tenets Although Nigeria is considered as a secular state but the  
401 influence diverse religion in the context of tolerance, harmony and respect for individual belief leaves little or  
402 no room for concerted flagships development in the line of cultural and historical artefacts. For instance, some  
403 sect opined that visiting antique for leisure amount to promoting paganism or idols that have been abandoned  
404 yesteryears. Likewise, the sanctity of traditional places forbid particular gender or non initiated person to  
405 approach restricted areas which might be the most attractive location of interest to the visiting tourists. This  
406 profanation or ascription of taboo in this wise has been curtailing the modification of potential sites from attaining  
407 international tourism standard in view of flagships regeneration.

### 408 25 iv. Incapability of Planning Professionals and Superficial 409 Research

410 It is important to give credence to the relevance of in-depth research in packaging flagships proposals and planning  
411 designs. Consequently, the contribution of planning professionals will go a long way in making potentially viable  
412 locations amiable to all categories of flagships investors through postulation of ideas that could stir customized  
413 planning policy formulation and implementation that will fascinate the locals to embrace and understand what  
414 concept is proposed flagships development is aiming at. Presently, there is a great doubt about the capability  
415 of the professionals to rise up to this occasion as suggested by their lethargic responses and lack of advocacy for  
416 flagships regeneration in the previously executed urban renewal projects despite the fact that Nigeria has a lot  
417 to showcase in terms of diversity of culture, historical heritage, exceptional bionetwork, amongst others.

### 418 26 v. Indifference on Leisure Time

419 The recent study on the disposition of Africans to travel and tourism confirms that the rate of observing leisure  
420 time or holiday is at ebb. It is not a known fact to the majority of Nigerians that "all work, no play makes Jack a  
421 dull boy". Even workers that are entitled to annual leaves use the period to source for jobs elsewhere and thereby  
422 jettison leisure in view of making additional income. Without mincing words, the indifference on leisure period  
423 is attributed to economic hardship and insensitivity of government to improve the standard of living. Therefore,  
424 this barrier could militate against the acceptance of flagships development by the locals and invariably affect the  
425 attraction of promoters as well as foreign patronage because of the possible hostility.

### 426 27 vi. Inconsistent Governance and Lack of Political Will

427 The ball of flagship projects is usually set rolling by the provincial governments who have insight on encouraging  
428 private investors' participations in eradicating city decays. Many governments at times sign Memorandum of  
429 Understanding (MoU) with both local and foreign developers to define the scope of projects upon the basic terms  
430 and conditions. The most complicated of all Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements is Built Operate  
431 and Transfer (BOT) due to the unrealistic timeframe for investor to recoup the investment (McCarthy, 2012).  
432 Therefore, any flagship project decided on such pact is prone to untimely overturning at the instances of political  
433 interference and inconsistence of ideology or polarisable interest of the successive heads of government. This  
434 particular barrier is synonymous to Nigeria and may not allow flagship projects to blossom in achieving the  
435 fundamental objectives.

### 436 28 V. Conclusion and Recommendations a) Recommendations

437 Sequel to the possible barriers that are predisposed to undermining the prospect of flagships regeneration  
438 in Nigeria as stated in the foregoing, the following suggestions will serve as panacea for promoting enabling  
439 atmosphere that capable of captivating flagships promoters.

440 Foremost, there is need for governments at all levels to fashion out feasible means of resuscitating economy  
441 through domestic production and exportation of goods and services that are bound to boost the GDP and  
442 per capita income. Once there is proactive headway in recovering the recessed economy, various classes of city  
443 residents will repose more confidence on government policies, and by so doing whatever action taken towards  
444 urban regeneration will not be perceived as another tactic by the political gladiators to enrich their purses.  
445 Moreover, improvement of individual earnings and gradual momentum of living standard will equally ameliorate  
446 the barriers of economic downturn and indifference on leisure time against flagships development. Even by  
447 ensuring this condition, the promoters or investors will be convinced of secured investment returns.

448 Similarly, the security of lives and properties cannot be wished away in societal development. There is no  
449 individual that will put his or her life on the line for the sake of embarking on tourism or paying visit to historical  
450 places amidst of hostilities and insurgence. Therefore, it is highly imperative for the government to put a decisive  
451 end to precarious activities such as; kidnapping, robbery, militia, violence, rituals, etc, especially in and around  
452 flagships receptive locations for the sake of buoying up the patronage of foreigners and citizens from different  
453 zones within the country.

454 As stated earlier, the tenets fanaticism and miscellaneous religion fantasy in Nigeria could deter the  
455 development of flagships in the line of cultural heritage. This barrier is often linked to primitivism, engrossment  
456 and lack of awareness about making fortunes from antiquities without rupturing religion tenets. Consequently,  
457 there is urgent need for the governments, elites, local flagship promoters, academicians, etc, to intensify efforts by  
458 sensitising and craving the indulgence of uninformed populace about the socioeconomic role of flagship projects  
459 in addressing the age long urbanization problems. This is with a view to soliciting for effective participation  
460 and unalloyed acceptance by all and sundry. There is much attach to concrete research for any intending  
461 flagship project, therefore, for the sake of forestalling confliction with local interests and redundancy of flagships  
462 regeneration, it is imperative to critically carryout a comprehensive study to unveil and implant the fundamental  
463 characteristics of the decayed city at the stage of policy formulation, planning, and implementation with a view  
464 to attaining state of development that will be beneficial to city indigenes and the prospective outsiders. Also,  
465 in principle, the importance of capacity building towards pursing a course of action will enhance productivity  
466 and good quality of service delivery. Hence, in order to ensure holistic approach to flagships regeneration policy  
467 planning, formulation and implementation, the planners and allied professionals must be trained and retrained on  
468 refresher courses. In a collaborative effort, the higher institutions of learning that specialised in built environment  
469 courses should develop curriculum that will give room for intellectual development and knowledge impartation  
470 capable of beaming light to the relevance of embracing flagships regeneration as a worthy alternative to other  
471 concepts of urban renewal.

472 Last of all, there is need to ostracise unfashionable system of governance and cuddle sense of advancement on  
473 every value-added project development embark on by the preceding administration(s) regardless of incumbent  
474 political manifestoes. Governance should not be zeroed in on showcasing of political ego but rather on continuity  
475 of purpose to lead a republic in the path of liberating the masses from all hopelessness. If this condition could be  
476 maintained in Nigeria, the apprehension of private investors engaging in PPP projects over the habitual shortfalls  
477 of political succession will be allayed. Consequently, this will be an advocating hub or a safe haven in ensuring  
478 the prospect of flagships regeneration and catalysed investors' attraction.

## 479 **29 b) Conclusion**

480 The benefits of flagships as stimulus of urban revitalization to developed countries are enormous especially from  
481 its cradle in the UK and USA. It has been established in this write-up that flagship projects symbolically rebrand  
482 decayed cities and assign new roles that will draw attentions and create recognition which can solve urbanisation  
483 problems and enhance sustainable socio-economic values. The gradual redirection of government resources from  
484 stack provision of public services which used to gulp the vital portion of budgets to more enterprising ventures had  
485 further made flagships regeneration to be the best alternative amongst other urban renewal models. Similarly,  
486 it is considered that different cities have exclusive attributes to attract inward investments but the onus is on  
487 government to conveniently unlock those potentials and motivate individual practitioners or investors toward  
488 financing and building flagship projects rather than solely responsible for socio-economic development of twilight  
489 cities.

490 The reviewed literatures laid emphasis on basic characteristics required of a city to experience possible  
491 transformation by means of reimaging and marketing of which arts and cultural background, historical heritage,  
492 unique services or entrepreneurship, etc, were identified. These elements are suggested to set up competition  
493 amongst cities of similar features within or outside their immediate regions. Consequence on this hint, Nigeria as  
494 a nation was x-rayed to determine the prospect of flagships model for tackling city degenerations and curtailing  
495 urban problems. In a close observation, it was ascertained that this model of urban regeneration could be adopted  
496 and thrive base on available factors as unravelled in the foregoing section. In spite of the classified favourable  
497 condition, some peculiar issues were envisaged to clog up the practicability of this model but however considered  
498 to be surmountable vis-à-vis the forthright recommendations made.

499 Although, flagships regeneration has its weakness bothering on myopic response to the multidimensional  
500 problems confronting urban centres in the developed countries, nevertheless it has capability <sup>1</sup>

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S/No	Potential Flagships/Project	Location	Project Development De- script- tion	Process/ Suggested	Project get/Purpose	Target: city/urban	Prospective Pro- moter/Investor of Man-	Global Journal
i.	Osun Osogbo Festival, Osun State	ii. Olojo Festival, Ile -Ife, Osun	Cul- tural/	Develop- ment	historical	historical sites and suburban	Internation- al	age- ment
1. State	iii. Arugungu Fishing Festival, Kebbi State	iv. Eyo Traditional Festival, Lagos State	v. Inriji Yam Festival (Igbo Cultural Festival), Eastern States of Nigeria	historical heritag- facil- ity	interventions mixed pro- cesses	Purpose: with	organisa- tions (e.g. UNESCO), city elites/politicians, private investors, govern- ments, etc.	and organisa- tions (e.g. Busi- ness, Re- search)
					i. To restore his- torical buildings;			
					Cultural/herit- age	To renovate the outdoor		
					industrial	spaces;		
					driven approach	iii. To rehabilitate socio- economic structure; and,		

Figure 1: Table 1 :

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501 of usurping this possible dilemma taking into account the antique formation of Nigerian cities and sociocultural  
502 diversities upon which prospective flagships investors can achieve their objectives without growing gray hair about  
503 uncertainty of wealth creation and complexity of adding value to the socio-economic status *inter alia*.

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## 29 B) CONCLUSION

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