Freetown City Council Housing Policy and Strategy

Preparatory Components and Studies of the Freetown Development Plan: Support to Freetown City Council and to the Urban Planning Authorities

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The draft Freetown City Council (FCC) Housing Policy and Strategy has been prepared by FCC as a part of the Urban Planning Project 2011–14, implemented by FCC and the MLCPE, and financed by the European Union.

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1 Freetown City Council Housing Policy and Strategy

Introduction

The Urban Planning Project has projected the population growth in Freetown to be between 700,000 and 900,000 persons in the period from 2012–2028, with the need for between 117,000 and 150,000 new dwellings. In addition to this number of required dwellings, Freetown currently has an estimated deficit of around 130,000 dwellings, making the overall demand for new dwellings to be constructed between 247,000 and 280,000 during the next 15 years. This gives an average of between 16,500 and 18,600 new dwellings needed per year.

Such an enormous demand in the housing sector can only be overcome by a long-term housing strategy which continuously supports and promotes renovation and new construction of dwellings by all means available. Some of these dwellings can be built in existing neighbourhoods in combination with urban renovation projects; others will have to be constructed on new sites. The strategy must be broad, allowing different approaches and involving the communities and as many stakeholders as possible, including NGOs, house owners, and private sector developers.

At the same time, the density of family homes per hectare in Freetown will have to be increased due to the limited access to virgin land in the city. In 2012, the population density in Freetown was 13,300 persons per km². The density in 2028 could be as high as 25,900 persons per km².

Content of the document

This document presents the FCC (Freetown City Council) Housing Policy and Strategy which addresses national housing policy. The document presents the legal framework for housing provision and addresses some concrete data on the current housing types and situations in the city.

The document elaborates on the projected need for more housing units and the land required for new residential areas. The document also comments on the present population densities in different Freetown areas and points to the need to distribute the population more evenly.

Population growth will also demand land for more local service facilities, such as schools and health clinics. It will also require improved employment opportunities in the service and production sectors. The FCC Housing Policy proposes guidelines for the future use of land in Freetown to ensure space for all activities, including sport and recreation.

The strategies related to urban renovation and slum upgrading are addressed. Finally, the document presents the ideas behind the Wellington Sub-centre and Housing Scheme pilot project as a theoretical example of how urban renovation could take place, using land more efficiently to provide new denser housing estates, markets, offices, and educational facilities.
2 Housing Policy and Programme

Institutional strengthening

FCC will establish a Municipal Housing Department (MHD) to consult the Municipal Housing Policy and Strategy with the population and facilitate neighbourhood renovation projects, slum upgrading, and construction of new dwellings. The FCC Municipal Housing Department will be staffed by qualified professionals and work closely together with the FCC Development Planning Department.

FCC will ensure that the FCC Municipal Housing Policy and Strategy is further consolidated. FCC will also advocate for the establishment of a national housing institution. The institution would/will provide legal and financial support for the housing sector, and individual loans for the improvement and construction of dwellings. Special attention and strategies would be given to ensure affordable housing for the population.

The FCC Municipal Housing Policy and Strategy will emphasize FCC as a policymaker, promoter, and facilitator of urban renewal and housing provision. This will leave the implementation of urban renovation plans and housing projects to national institutions, house owners, developers, community initiatives, and NGOs, promoting public-private partnerships (PPPs) where possible. FCC will take into account international experiences and co-operation regarding housing and urban development.

As a land-use planning and building authority, FCC will, however, support all urban renovation and housing projects with the needed urban renovation policies, plans, guidelines, and building permits. FCC will also reinforce urban development control, ensuring that settlement only takes place on adequate and permitted land, following the guidelines for land use, urban planning, environmental protection laws, and building regulations.

As the current national housing policies need to be implemented and urban planning laws and building regulations urgently require revision, FCC, in co-operation with other local governments, will approach the responsible public authorities, making efforts to promote progress and support the revision of urban planning laws and a new urban planning bill to strengthen urban development planning and development control.

Taking into consideration that the decentralization process is ongoing, and that FCC still needs to build resources for urban planning and development control, FCC will promote improvements in the housing sector, co-operating with the relevant public authorities. If necessary (and possible), FCC will also outsource planning activities to the private sector, or establish PPPs for urban renovation projects.

FCC will adopt the following strategies for the improvement of the housing situation:

- Establish a long-term, strategic, urban renovation and slum-upgrading plan. The preparation of the plan must involve the Freetown population at all levels, aiming for the active participation at all implementation phases of owners, tenants, NGOs and developers, as well as the inclusion of private sector housing initiatives and government-supported affordable housing schemes.
• FCC will, through an urban renovation strategy, achieve higher-density housing in residential and urban areas by using and improving the existing infrastructure where possible. FCC will promote the construction of new access roads and planned housing schemes in the areas with sprawled, low-density non-permitted settlements on the hillsides of Malama, New England, and those from Kissy to Allen Town.

• Co-ordinating with the MLCPE, FCC will support urban renovation with guidelines and technical assistance, including good functional designs and supportive development control. In this context, FCC, in co-operation with the MLCPE and the private sector, will be responsible for the preparation of the urban renovation plans. FCC will itself support the revision and modernization of existing building regulations.

• FCC will ensure that the long-term urban renovation plan takes into account the proposed 12 development zones in Freetown. An urban renovation plan will be prepared for each zone, in co-operation with communities, to consider priorities, phases, and time schedules for renovation of the different parts of the planning area.

• FCC will ensure that available land in the planning areas, including government-owned areas, will be seriously considered as potential for the urban renovation plan. FCC will negotiate with the relevant authorities over the use of this land for urban renovation. Each planning area might form an urban renovation committee, to mobilize local resources and co-operate in projects with national and international NGOs.

• FCC will support the promotion of a private sector loan scheme to purchase land as well as construct and rehabilitate private houses. Furthermore, a special private sector loan component should be promoted to assist, in particular, middle- and low-income Freetown citizens regarding improvement and rehabilitation of their houses.

• FCC will encourage NGOs to establish micro-loan arrangements to rehabilitate residential areas in need.

Map 1: The Freetown planning areas, Freetown Structure Plan
• FCC will advocate for and support a national urban development policy that creates new settlements, job opportunities, and housing schemes outside Freetown in the Freetown Metropolitan Area.

• FCC will, in co-operation with other local governments, advocate for and support national urban renovation policy and funding. Together these will strengthen the planning and functionality of the urban areas, as well as ensure drinking-water provision, good sanitation, green space, and social infrastructure in denser housing areas.

• FCC will consider how FCC-owned plots and properties might be included in urban renovation projects, with the purpose of improving housing conditions, densities, and sanitation in the properties.

• FCC will consider and solve eventual land tenure disputes related to the occupancy of FCC properties.

• Slum settlements established in disaster-prone areas exposed to risk of flooding or landslides will, when funds are available, be resettled and offered dwellings within the municipality, following the principles in the FCC Resettlement Manual.

• FCC will strengthen building and development control. Any construction in flooding and landslide-prone areas is prohibited. Families already settled in these areas will be warned about the risks and given notice of planned resettlement. After the 1st of January 2015, construction of new houses or extension of existing dwellings in risk-prone areas exposed to flooding or landslides will immediately be demolished.

• Houses and residential settlements established after the 1st of January 2015 in areas prohibited by the provisions of the National Environmental Protection Act, such as along the coast, in creeks, rivers, and close to water bodies, will be demolished.

• FCC will, in co-operation with other local government institutions, prepare affordable site and service schemes in the Freetown Metropolitan Area for voluntary resettlement from slum areas in Freetown.

• FCC will promote affordable rental housing schemes inside Freetown.

• FCC will, in co-operation with the relevant authorities, promote vocational training for building rehabilitation and improved sanitation in its wards.

• FCC will, in co-operation with the relevant authorities, promote vocational training for improved building techniques and use of building materials among Freetown’s young people.
3 National Housing Policy and the Legal Framework for Housing

In 2006 the Government decided to revise previous national housing policies. From 2006 the main goal of Government is no longer to actively participate in the delivery of housing, but to assume the role as facilitator for housing provision by communities, private sector developers, and house owners. The Government will concentrate on formulating the legal and regulatory framework, setting up housing finance systems, and providing social infrastructural services.

There are several public institutions directly and indirectly involved in housing:

The Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure (MWHI) is responsible for issuance of building permits.

The Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment (MLCPE) carries out the functions of land surveying, land registration, control of illegal sale of land, leasing of government land, and strategic local plans.

The National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) invests in housing and has already financed the construction of the Sea View Estate at Goderich.

Other institutions involved in housing development include the Sierra Leone Housing Corporation (SALHOC), which was set up in 1982 to use its financial resources to provide housing for high- (10%), medium- (30%), and low-income (60%) households.

Legal framework

According to the Local Government Act 2004, FCC, in its neighbourhoods, is supposed to support or ensure:

- productive activities and social development;
- basic infrastructure and services;
- improved management of human settlements and the environment;
- preparation and implementation of development plans;
- co-ordination and implementation of development projects promoted or carried out by public institutions

The Freetown Improvement Act and Rules (FIAR), Cap 66 of 1960, provides the technical basis for control of housing development. However the FIAR needs revision. FCC will support the appropriate revision of the FIAR and advise how to improve in general the enforcement of laws and regulations for development control.
4 Data on Housing Types, Housing Conditions, and Densities

According to the census of 2004, the majority of houses in Freetown are single-storey dwellings (82.3%), with only 3.4% more than 2 storeys. As seen in Map 2, the density of housing varies throughout Freetown. In the western part and New England, the density is mainly low (shaded yellow) with fewer medium-density areas (shaded orange).

Low-density residential settlements are also found on the hillside slopes at Hill Cut Road, Spur View, Loop Road, and Spur Road. Residential settlements previously considered low-density residential areas, such as Juba Hills, Kissy Dockyard, and the former villages, can now be classified as medium-density residential areas.

High-density areas (shaded brown) are found in the central part of Freetown between St John and Upgun. However, the density of these residential settlements, especially in the east, has intensified. From Upgun to Allen Town, Freetown has low-density areas on the hillsides, medium-density areas closer to the Bai Bureh Road, and high-density housing in Kissy Men’s Mess, Kissy Grass Land–Congo Water, and Wellington–Pamuronko.

Occupancy levels

The 2004 census showed that occupancy levels are high and overcrowding is serious. In 2004, 66.6% of Freetown households lived in only one or two rooms, 43.6% of households lived with 5–7 family members in one room, and in 20% of households, 10 persons or more were sleeping in one room.

Although the statistics used are from the 2004 census, there is no reason to believe that the situation as a whole has improved. The population of Freetown has increased by almost 30% since 2004. This puts additional pressure on water, health, and sanitation infrastructure and further increases the need for provision of more homes.

Physical housing conditions

Furthermore, according to the 2004 census, the majority of households live in poor-quality buildings. Approximately 24% of housing units have their walls and roofs constructed of zinc, so-called ‘pan body houses’. The pan body dwellings get cold during the rainy season and hot during the dry season. They do not provide safety against the ingress of insects and snakes. In addition, 13.2% of the house walls are built of mud blocks, which disintegrate easily unless sufficiently covered by roofing and constantly maintained.
Housing Density
(Source: EU Urban Planning Project Landuse Survey 2013 and Building Database)

- Residential density low: <15 buildings / ha
- Residential density medium: 15 - 30 buildings / ha
- Residential density high: >30 buildings / ha

Housing Renewal Area
(Source: EU Urban Planning Project Landuse Survey 2013)

- Category 1: Rehabilitation not required
- Category 2: Rehabilitation required after 15 years
- Category 3: Rehabilitation required within 15 years
- Category 4: Area with need to resettlement or urgent upgrading

Municipality Boundary
Western Area National Park
Proposed Buffer Zone for National Park
Altitude contour in meter, interval 50m (processed from Shuttle Radar Topography Mission data 2000)

Road Network
Source: SLIS, adjusted by project
- Primary road
- Secondary road
- Tertiary road
- Local road
Toilet facilities and drinking-water supply

The sanitation situation is unsatisfactory: 60% of houses in 2004 were served by pit latrine, and only 6.6% had indoor or outdoor flushing toilets. The pit latrine is the most commonly used toilet facility in areas where population densities are too high. Pit latrines are not regularly emptied and are shared by users with different criteria for use and different hygienic standards. The heavy dependence on rivers/streams used as sanitation facilities or outlets for waste water – as well as sources of domestically used water – contributes seriously to the occurrence of water-borne diseases such as cholera and diarrhoea.

Water supply

Finally, the lack of access to clean and secure drinking water is a serious problem to be solved. In 2004, 23% of households (amounting to almost 30,000) depended on unsafe sources of drinking water.
5 Housing Needs

Freetown faces the challenge of meeting the huge backlog of current housing needs, as well as being confronted with a future demand for housing between 2013 and 2028.

There are no exact data on the current housing needs, that is, the number of dwelling units that are required to:

- relieve overcrowding (of more than two persons per room);
- replace non-durable building materials;
- replace unsatisfactory constructions built with inappropriate building materials;
- replace inadequate sources of water, such as unprotected and mechanical wells;
- renovate unsatisfactory toilet facilities such as pit, bucket, and beach toilets;
- improve the current state of repair to dwelling units (due for rehabilitation/reconstruction).

The Freetown Structure Plan has, using a norm of an average six persons per housing unit, calculated the housing need in Freetown 2012 to be a theoretical 166,000 housing units, based on a population of 998,000 inhabitants.

The Urban Planning Project has identified 85,500 buildings in Freetown of which 80,000 could be inhabited. However, only 32,000\(^1\) of these building are good sound houses, making the actual dwelling demand in 2012 equal to \((166,000 – 32,000) = 134,000\) dwellings.

The projected population growth in Freetown from 2013–28 might, according to the Urban Planning Project, be as high as 920,000 persons. Using the standard of a maximum of two persons per room (UN standard) and six persons per household, another 153,000 three-room dwellings will be needed to cover the future demand.

The present and future housing needs will therefore amount to \((134,000 + 152,000) = 286,000\) dwellings, to be constructed during the next 15-year period, making a total of 19,000 new dwellings per year.

This enormous demand for dwellings can, as mentioned earlier, only be overcome by a long-term housing provision strategy which must continuously support and promote renovation and new construction of houses by all means possible. The strategy must be broad, allowing different approaches and involving private owners, local communities, and as many other stakeholders as possible, including the private sector and developers.

The important role of FCC in this process will be the one of a facilitator, ensuring urban development and renovation plans, building guidelines, and building permits in co-ordination with other responsible public institutions. Furthermore, FCC will be engaged in facilitating land for urban

\(^1\) Sociologists working with slum neighbourhoods have estimated that up to 60% of Freetown housing units are to be considered as slum and due for renovation. Of 80,000 inhabited buildings in Freetown, according the UPP’s mapping of buildings, 40% are good buildings. We have subtracted these good buildings from the theoretical demand of 166,000 dwellings, providing an estimation of a present need of 134,000 houses.
renovation and promoting PPP projects. This will allow the implementation of urban renovation and housing projects on conveniently located land, in co-operation with both the public and private sectors.

**Need for increased densities in the urban areas**

At the same time, there will be a general need for greater density in the city related to building density and the FAR – the floor area rate (the floor area in buildings in relation to the area of the plot).

The Freetown Structure Plan suggests that housing strategy in future must also emphasize denser residential areas to ensure land for the expected 23,400 inhabitants per km² by 2028. The UN has a lower estimation of 22,900 inhabitants per km². However, the difference is not important for the strategy and the actual population growth will be monitored during the period. What matters is the implementation of the strategy to cope with the growth challenges in relation to the present population and population distribution in the city.
Table 1: Need for land for urban development in the Freetown planning areas

The present table illustrates, as a model, the different average demands for land in the Freetown planning areas, using an average norm for land demand per inhabitant, calculated as land available per projected number of inhabitants in 2028. Tassoh Island is excluded from the calculation, as the location of, and access to the island makes Tassoh Island an atypical area of the municipality. Some parts of the city will, in 2028, have higher land demands than others due to a high population. The housing strategy emphasizes residential developments in the lesser populated parts of the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANNING AREAS</th>
<th>Population 2012</th>
<th>Population 2028</th>
<th>Population growth 2012-28</th>
<th>Existing demand for land ha</th>
<th>Future demand for land ha</th>
<th>Demand in all for land ha</th>
<th>Existing available land in ha</th>
<th>Future average availability ha</th>
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<tr>
<td>House hold size</td>
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</table>
The housing strategy includes more even distribution of development

The housing strategy will include better distribution of the population within the FCC area, with intensified urban development to be promoted in areas such as Aberdeen/Murray Town, Lumley/Malama, Wilberforce, New England, and Allen Town. This will solve the future expected deficit in the King Tom/Brookfield, City Centre, Fourah Bay/ Cline Town, Kissy Men’s Mess, Kissy Grassfield, and Congo Water Areas. As a development guideline for the preparation of the Local Plans, Freetown must have an average population density of 258 persons per hectare of land to respond to the expected population growth.

Need for more dwellings per building

According to the last census, 82.3% of Freetown households lived in single or multiple one-storey houses in 2004. However, in various parts of the city, the population has been witness to increased building of multiple-storey dwellings. In the future, more such buildings with flats will be needed to accommodate the population.

Considering the total FCC area, the estimated population in 2028 with a norm of an average of six persons per house, this would mean the average density would be 43 houses per hectare. However, residential neighbourhoods have to be even denser, as land is also needed for commercial, industrial, and educational activities. The Freetown Structure Plan therefore suggests that average land use in urban areas, as a general guideline, is divided as follows: housing 43%; education 19%; sport, recreation and playgrounds 22%; administration, commercial areas, and markets 12%; and industry and workshops 4%.

![Figure 1: Freetown Structure Plan’s proposed split of land for different land uses in Freetown](image)

Using 43% of urban space for residential areas will make it possible to plan and build future residential areas with an average density of 100 housing units per hectare. This can be done in different ways, such as building a minimum of two housing units (12 persons per plot) on plots of 160 m², three housing units (18 persons per plot) on plots of 240 m², four housing units (24 persons) on plots of 320 m² (this is a traditional town lot in the Freetown Central Business District, CBD), six families (36 persons) on plots of 480m², and 8 families (42 persons) on plots of 640 m².
The need for higher housing densities calls for the development of new improved housing design, using multi-storey buildings and including functional and safe staircases, good natural ventilation and sound, safe, and economic construction methods. In general, the building height should be limited to only five floors, to avoid dependency on energy-consuming lifts.

The table on page 16 shows the need for land to develop in the planning areas, using the described norms. The norms must be seen as general guidelines, as existing land use must be taken into consideration when plans are being prepared. The Freetown Structure Plan proposes the planning of additional green areas, close to residential areas, which can provide the necessary land for playgrounds, community activities, parks and football fields, among others. Together, the residential and green areas are proposed to occupy 64% of the land, while the rest, as mentioned, will be reserved for education facilities (19%), commerce and administration (12%), and industry (4%). It is proposed that the ground floor in residential areas might host shops and workshops, as long as these activities do not create negative impacts on the surroundings (for example, with odours, noise, dust, oil spills, etc.).

These higher densities in housing areas might provide advantages, such as improved service provision and reduction of the cost per family for provision of roads, water, sewerage systems, and electric power supply. If a hectare of land is occupied by only 40 families, those 40 families have to pay the cost of the roads, water, and power supply systems. If one hectare is instead used for two- or three-floor housing blocks, with 80 families or more, the cost will be shared among more families. The cost of the housing schemes, the house or the rent, will therefore be reduced and more affordable.
Table 2: Demand for land in Freetown Sub-Centre areas 2013-28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANNING AREA</th>
<th>Area ha</th>
<th>Population 2012</th>
<th>Population 2028</th>
<th>Ha of land needed for houses</th>
<th>Ha of land needed for education</th>
<th>Ha of land needed for sport &amp; recreation</th>
<th>Ha of land needed for health &amp; institutions</th>
<th>Ha of land needed for commerce &amp; markets</th>
<th>Ha of land needed for industry &amp; workshops</th>
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<td>Division of land uses</td>
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<td>% of total area</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
<td>% of total area</td>
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6 Urban Renovation

As previously discussed, it is estimated that 60% of Freetown families live in neighbourhoods which have to be renovated and upgraded to meet modern urban health and sanitation standards.

Today, the majority of Freetown residential buildings are privately owned and the private house owners undertake the construction and rehabilitation of their properties at all economic levels. Investors and private developers are engaged in construction of compounds and multi-storey buildings with flats for renting. NASSIT is undertaking the development of new housing estates.

However, hardly any projects attempt renovation of the vast urban neighbourhoods with limited drinking-water supply and poor sanitation. In addition, neither the Government nor FCC are involved in major urban renovation projects.

The legal framework and regulations for construction and building renovation need modernization. Enforcement of existing regulations is also weak and no urban renovation plans exist. FCC, the MLCPE, and the MWHI are the responsible institutions for urban planning, building renovation guidelines, and development control. The Urban Planning Project, implemented by FCC and the MLCPE, has surveyed present land use in Freetown and has evaluated existing residential areas in relation to densities and the need for renovation.

Map 1 shows the situation in all parts of the city. Map 3 and Map 4 have zoomed in on areas with a need for urgent urban renovation and resettlement in the city centre and the east of the city.

Map 3 shows land use in the City Centre and the Fourah Bay–Cline Town areas, with the residential areas shaded yellow (low density), orange (medium density), and brown (high density). The areas have been assessed into four categories concerning the need for urban upgrading: areas with no hatching are recommended to be left for general renovation based on the owners’ initiative and resources; areas with cross hatching (category 4) have a need for urgent resettlement or urgent upgrading interventions – areas such as Kroo Bay, Susan’s Bay, and Cline Bay settlements. Areas with 45° hatching (category 3) show areas with a need for urban rehabilitation and improvement, to be started as soon as plans and resources are available over the next 15 years. These areas include settlements around Tower Hill, south-west of St. John, the north-east and north-west sides of Mountain Aureol, and the blocks between Kissy Road and Fourah Bay Road, among others. Areas with vertical hatching (category 2) show those areas with need for intervention after 15 years, or whenever will be possible.
The local planning in different planning areas of Freetown will give more exact information of the areas in need. FCC will initiate a long-term urban renovation plan, making decisions on priorities, areas for intervention, and phasing of interventions. Co-operation partners will be identified, further required data and information will be collected, and the intervention type will be decided upon in consultation with the involved community members and implementation partners.

Map 4 shows areas for urban renewal in Freetown from the Kissy Men’s Mess to Wellington.
7  Slum Areas

In addition to the general need for urban renovation, special attention must be given to housing areas with severe problems which need immediate improvements to avoid health hazards. Settlements with the following characteristics have been classified as slums by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme:

- inadequate access to drinking water;
- inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure;
- poor structural quality of housing;
- high density of population and housing;
- overcrowding within poor quality houses;
- insecure residential status.
Map 5: Slum areas
The above map indicates priority areas for slum interventions. Recent studies have identified over 20 specific slum settlements found in various locations, including:

- Foreshore and coastal areas of Dokoti, Banana Water, Kroo Bay, Susan’s Bay, Moa Wharf, and Old Wharf;
- Slopes of stream valleys: Granville Brook, Red Pump, Grey Bush etc.;
- Hillside slopes extending from Black Hall Road to George Brook;
- Inland slums found in patches in the various residential communities, such as Kroo Town, Magazine Cut/Fire Burn, King George Farm, George Brook, Cline Town, Ginger Hall.

In recent years, slum settlements have also mushroomed at the foreshore stretching from Lumley to Dokoti and on the slopes of stream valleys such as Gwent Height. Sites unsuitable for housing development are found mainly at:

- The foreshore extending from Lumley in the west to Moa Wharf in the east;
- The slopes of stream valleys such as Grey Bush, Red Pump, and Granville Brook;
- Steep gradients of hillside slopes;
- The mangrove swamps extending from Cockle Bay to Golf Course and Potor at Levuma Beach.

Attempts at improving the slum settlements have been concentrated only in Kroo Bay and Susan’s Bay, by national and international organizations. The improvement efforts have been mainly in the educational, health-care, and water-supply sectors.
8 Resettlement from Risk-prone Areas

Around 5,000 families in Freetown live in dwellings in risk areas prone to flooding or landslides and must be resettled. It is the FCC policy that these households are resettled as soon as resettlement sites have been identified and economic resources are available. FCC will give families the option of being resettled to sites within or outside the city. After resettlement, the risk-prone areas will be protected from any encroachment, in order to avoid families again settling on land which is unsuited for housing.

The Urban Planning Project has prepared a manual for the resettlement of families, taking into account international experiences, guidelines, and requirements. In the case of unavoidable resettlements, minimizing negative effects on the population to be resettled and making the project acceptable to the donor organizations is crucial. This is necessary for the implementation of safeguards required by donors before funds will be released.

The manual also includes experiences from failed resettlement in Freetown’s recent history, which includes among others: the Bormeh resettlement project at Grafton (which has been a dump site since 1996), the Adventist Development And Relief Agency, ADRA resettlement programme (particularly targeting tenants who had lost their flats as a result of the rebel invasion in Freetown, also from Bormeh and Grafton in 1996) and the resettlement organized for IDPs in Freetown also to Grafton. These locations were abandoned by most of the resettled persons, who returned to Freetown to squat again, either renting or selling their compensation houses in Grafton to others. The resettlement efforts failed and better solutions need to be found.

A major challenge associated with urban resettlement involves the restoration of wage-based or enterprise-based livelihoods that are often tied to location (such as proximity to jobs, customers, and markets). Resettlement sites should be selected to maintain connectivity and proximity to the sources of employment and income, and to maintain neighbourhood networks. FCC understands that resettlement sites shall be within the Freetown administrative area or in the Regent–Crafton valley.

Resettlement is involuntary when it occurs without the informed consent of the displaced persons, or if they give their consent without having the power to refuse resettlement. A typical example of such displacement is a government agency’s expropriation of land for a capital development project by eminent domain. People occupying or otherwise dependent on that land for their livelihoods may be offered fair compensation for their losses. However, they have little recourse to oppose the government’s expropriation, regardless of their desire to continue occupying or using the affected land.

The World Bank issued guidelines on resettlement to its staff as long ago as 1990 in its Operational Directive 4.30, which has been adopted by major donors such as the International Finance Corporation, IFC, the Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, DFID and JICA (World Bank, 1990). This states that “the objective of the Bank’s resettlement policy is to ensure that the population displaced by a project receives benefits from it”. The guidelines require that proposed resettlements have to go through an assessment process to address the relevant risks and impacts, and propose measures to minimize, mitigate, and offset adverse impacts following common agreed standards. These standards are reflected in the proposed FCC resettlement manual.
Many local and national governments worldwide have followed this approach in their urban development strategies. In Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, for example, resettlement of slum dwellers has for decades only taken place when it cannot be avoided; in all other cases slums are subject to on-site upgrading. Typical examples of unavoidable resettlement are households living on slopes vulnerable to landslide/landslide, or on riverbanks subject to flooding. However, even in these cases, part of the settlement, if not in the risk zone, might be left intact.
9  Example: The Wellington Sub-centre and Housing Scheme

As mentioned, FCC wants Freetown to be developed with a higher population density per hectare, to be able to solve the present and future demands for housing.

The Freetown Structure Plan has identified 11 sub-centres to be developed on well-located sites close to the main public transport network. The purpose is that these shall host the necessary future service functions for the city’s inhabitants: these include neighbourhood municipal administration, education facilities, health-care centres, commercial centres, markets, and offices. Where convenient and possible, the centres could also include high-density housing estates.

Freetown has little available virgin land for development, but has many areas prime for urban renovation. The Urban Planning Project, implemented by FCC and the MLCPE, has prepared an example for a local renovation and development plan as a guide to establishing such a service and housing area in a sub-centre (which to a certain degree could also serve for resettlement of communities from disaster-prone areas). It has chosen the industrial area in Wellington for this exercise.

The area covers 27 hectares, and is in a good location in the centre of the local area, close to public transport on the Bay Bureh Road. The area has been planned for different purposes such as housing (13.8 ha); education facilities (2.7 ha); a market (2.4 ha); and recreation, parks, and playgrounds (4.1 ha). Refer to the plan map below.
The housing area has been prepared for different types and sizes of housing blocks, of medium- and high-density dwellings, with the intention of creating housing opportunities for all in a mixed environment for development. On selected well-distributed locations on the ground floor in the housing block is reserved for shops and clinics.

Also workshops, which do not create environmental problems such as dust, noise, danger, smells, etc., might be integrated into the ground floor of the housing blocks. Training facilities and other service functions are located in specially designed buildings.

It is suggested that the centres be developed as public-private partnership projects. Here, interested landowners, NASSIT, developers, business people and other interested stakeholders, together with FCC and other concerned public institutions such as the MLCPE, would prepare the development and investment plans for the area and together identify the financial resources for the implementation of the project. Owners of parcels of land inside the area might also be involved as partners.
Table 3: Housing types and densities

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<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Hectare</th>
<th>Land use %</th>
<th>Number of blocks</th>
<th>Flats per block</th>
<th>Floors per block</th>
<th>bedrooms per block</th>
<th>bedrooms per flat</th>
<th>Persons per block</th>
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Figure 2: Plan of Wellington Sub-centre and Housing Scheme – three-storey high-density housing block
Figure 3: 3D illustrations of street and housing block in proposal for Wellington Sub-centre Housing Scheme
10 Guidelines for House Design

Building types

The following typical building designs could be proposed as affordable housing in the urban renovation of Freetown:

- A three-storey building with two family flats of 65m² and shops on the ground floor (one town lot);
- A three-storey building with four flats of 32.5m² and shops on the ground floor (one town lot);
- A four-storey building with three flats of 65m² and shops on the ground floor (one town lot);
- A four-storey building with two flats of 65m², two of 32.5m² and shops on the ground floor (one town lot);
- A four-storey building with six flats of 65m², four flats of 32.5m² and shops on the ground floor (two town lots);
- A four-storey building with four flats of 65m² and eight flats of 32.5m² (two town lots);
- A five-storey building with six flats of 65m², four of 32.5m² and shops on the ground floor (two town lots).

Improved building design

FCC will encourage improved building designs and make them available for Freetown plot owners and investors. Well-prepared building designs should be made for standard types of multi-storey housing blocks, with all relevant technical details and specifications included. These specifications should include building inspection demands for building materials and concrete mixing. Furthermore, a quality description of working security regulations is required for the building site, with regulations on the use of the street and walkways during construction.

The aesthetic, as well as the function, of the architecture must take into account people’s lifestyles and habits in relation to the use of the building and its structure. Details must be well considered and the design must be robust, taking into consideration ease of use, functionality, and low maintenance costs. Buildings must also have easy and safe access, with well-designed staircases and building components. Well-qualified architects and engineers must be engaged in the design process. A building lasts a long time, often more than 50 years, and while habits might change, the design should also consider how to adjust apartment and room sizes with time, either vertically or horizontally.

It is well known that there are common problems concerning the quality of building materials and constructions, as well as the skills of constructors, building supervisors, and construction workers. No quality compromises must be allowed in regard to the construction components of the building. Durability considerations and good quality materials must be used for water pipes, sewerage, and electric materials and installations. However, variations in the selection of materials and quality of secondary components such as windows, doors, surfaces on floors and walls, bathrooms, and kitchens might be considered to lower building costs. It is obviously a major challenge when designing these buildings to produce economical designs, as the majority of families in Freetown have access to only limited resources for the housing costs.