

The Improvement of Slums and Informal Settlements in Freetown:

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Forward

Slums are one of the challenges that governments in most developing and the least developed countries are presently faced with. Unfortunately for Sierra Leone and in particular Freetown, this is not a stagnant problem, but an increasing one. Slums are on the increase, not only in terms of numbers but also in relation to the complexities involved in trying to see how best this social challenge should be addressed. In most African countries, housing has never been given significant priority compared to other social issues such as health and education.

It is therefore hoped that this report on slums and informal settlements would not only provide useful information on the general conditions of slums in Freetown, but also acts as a focal point for all key parties on how the lives of slum dwellers and inhabitants of informal settlements can be improved in line with Target 11 of Goal 7 of The Millennium Development Goals. Any contribution towards the achievement of this goal also supports other Millennium Development goals such as a reduction in the spread of AIDs and Malaria, greatly reducing infant and child mortality. Successful slum upgrading programmes can reduce infant and child mortality rates by producing acceptable living conditions in which children are less likely to contact fatal illnesses. In some of the worst slums it has been suggested that an improvement in housing conditions would result in a fall of up to 80% in infant mortality within the given area.

Living in an improved environment enables those on low income to live healthy lives and increases their economic productivity.

Quite a number of reports have been produced by various government departments and other organisations on slums and informal settlements in Freetown. This is however the first comprehensive report following the end of the recent civil conflict in Sierra Leone six years ago. Strategically the timing does make sense as the war did not only contribute to the creation of further slums by internally displaced persons, but also affected the social composition of slums in Freetown.

Slums, informal settlements and their inhabitants cannot be ignored as a passing phase that would one day go away. Most of those concerned have now realised that this will not happen and that the problem has to be addressed. The government of Sierra Leone now therefore seeks to take positive action to ensure that the social, economic and environmental conditions, of slums and informal settlement inhabitants is improved and they do not continue to be socially excluded from mainstream society.

I am indebted to a number of people and organisations who have made a valuable contribution towards this report by allowing us access to key information and critics that have been well intended and very useful. All errors and omissions are however the sole responsibility of the author. A special note of appreciation is reserved to the inhabitants of all slums and informal settlements around Freetown especially Susan's Bay for their contribution in the preparation of this report. I do hope that this report represents a ray of light at the end of the tunnel for them.

Part 1

Executive Summary

One of the key achievements of the Millennium Development Goals is the provision of a mechanism that governments of poorer countries such as Sierra Leone can use to implement strategies aimed at improving the lives of the poor. The government of Sierra Leone has already launched a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper in 2004. Housing is one of the key services addressed in this document. The role of housing in the alleviation of poverty is also acknowledged.

This report is a joint initiative of the government of Sierra Leone, The United Nations Development Programme and UN-HABITAT. It has been commissioned with two other reports namely: (i) a 5- 10 Year National Housing Programme and (ii) a Revised and Updated National Housing Policy. To date, Sierra Leone has not adopted a consistent and national approach to the issue of slums and informal settlements. Though slums and informal settlements are seen as an eyesore by many, a “not in my backyard” approach has been adopted as a way of dealing with the challenges they present. Needless to say, this approach has not worked. Slums in developing countries are a fact of modern life. The urban poor, who are unable to afford the market rent of decent homes, will continue to put up slums and informal settlements as an immediate solution to their housing problem. Housing prices in the private sector are often quoted in dollars and can only be afforded by middle and high income earners. In developed countries this gap is usually bridged by the social housing sector either through the direct provision of affordable housing by the government or by the government facilitating the availability of decent homes to those on low income. It is this latter strategy that the government of Sierra Leone now wishes to adopt.

Though not a new invention, the social housing sector has never fully developed in most African countries and Sierra Leone is not an exception to this. In most West African countries it has mainly concentrated its efforts in the provision of low income housing for civil servants as an income subsidy. A number of low cost housing schemes were introduced in greater Freetown in the 1970’s. As of now most of these have been sold off to the tenants at discounted prices. This has not only produced capital receipts but has also discharged the government of its repairing obligations.

This report is divided into three main sections. Part One, covers methodology, the nature of literature reviewed as part of this study, the reasons for the development of slums in Freetown and the general characteristics of slums and informal settlements. Part Two is an analysis of data obtained as part of the field survey on the housing, socio-economic, physical and environmental sanitation of Susan’s Bay slum settlement in the city centre of Freetown. This section also provides recommendations on how slums and informal settlements in Freetown can be best improved.

Part Three, is a concept paper on The Improvement of Slums and Informal Settlements in Freetown. Some information already covered in Parts One and Two, are summarised in

this section. Issues such as the role of slums and informal settlement in Freetown which agencies should be approached to fund the proposed improvements are also discussed.

It is hoped that this report will be the starting point of a consistent and positive approach aimed at improving the housing, environmental sanitation and the socio economic situation of the urban poor. This group is unable to access decent homes in cities such as Freetown due to their very limited resources and being unable to afford high housing costs.

Definition and Key Characteristics of Slums

There is no universally agreed definition of slums. However, slums often refer to poor housing conditions within cities. The word slum is generally used to describe “a wide range of low-income settlements and / or poor human living conditions”. (UN-HABITAT 2003).

Characteristics of Slums

(a) Lack of basic services and poor access

This is often cited as one of the main characteristics of slums. This includes lack or inadequate access to safe drinking water and sanitation. This is a very common feature of the slums around Freetown. Such conditions are better in some areas compared to others.

(b) Sub-standard housing and inadequate structure.

Slum areas are associated with a high number of sub-standard housing usually constructed using non permanent materials such as plastic and straw roofs. Floors are usually made of earth. Poverty amongst slum dwellers means that they are unable to afford decent housing structures. Such structures usually do not meet any building regulation requirements.

(c) Hazardous locations.

Slums are usually found in hazardous locations such as foreshores, hillsides and river basins. The usually expensive precautions taken to secure and protect buildings in such areas are not taken. This means that such buildings and their inhabitants are exposed to environmental disasters such as flooding and landslides. There are reported cases of lives being lost as a result of floods during the rainy seasons and also due to movements of large rocks.

(d) Overcrowding and high density.

Overcrowding refers to low space per person and high occupancy rates. Many slum units have five or more persons sharing a single room, which is also used for cooking, sleeping and living.

(e) Security of tenure.

Most slum dwellers do not have security of tenure. This means that they can be evicted at anytime. Residents have also suggested that this is an issue that should be resolved by the land being legalised and the existing tenants granted security of tenure by the government. This could be seen as a long term strategy of maintaining the units as the occupants are more likely to invest their limited income on carrying out the necessary maintenance, knowing they are not mere tenants at will.

The Development of Slums in Freetown

A number of reasons have contributed to the development of slums in Freetown. Slums are a strategy employed by the urban poor in meeting their housing needs. One of the strategies that have been used to this effect is the building of low quality rental housing units by the urban poor.

The population of Freetown has increase considerably within the last 20 years. In 1963 Freetown had a population of 127,000 this increased to 276,476 in 1974, then 469,776, by 1985. According to the most recent population census, the current population of Freetown is just under a 1,000,000. This increase in population has not been met by an increase in the number of dwelling units for those on low income in Freetown. The development of approximately 240 units of low cost housing by the government has been far too inadequate in meeting the housing needs of the increased population within the last 40 years.

The formal private sector developers have done nothing to assist in the provision of affordable housing for the urban poor. The prices of properties that are being constructed by this sector are definitely not within the reach of the urban poor. It is not unusual for rental prices within this sector to be quoted in US dollars. Rental prices are from around \$100.00 per month. Houses in this sector are being sold for at least \$50,000.

Key Findings from Susan's Bay Survey

Social

- Over 70% of the respondents were under 35 years of age. This reflects a very young and active section of the population that have the potential to make a positive economic contribution provided they are given the necessary opportunities such as skills and educational training.
- Over 50% of those surveyed were illiterate.
- There are several social organisations such as women's groups and youth organisations operating within Susan's Bay.
- 66% of the respondents have not moved into the area by choice but due to a number of reasons such as "cheap rents".
- Susan's Bay lacks basic amenities such as proper access roads, adequate water points, electricity, proper drainage system, adequate sanitation and proper rubbish disposal facilities.

Economic

- 38.4% have a monthly income of less than 50,000 leones.
- Most have to borrow money from time to time to bridge the gap between their income and their needs.
- 47.2% purchase medicine from street traders when ill as they are unable to afford the purchase price from chemists and private clinics.

Housing

- Most of the houses are built of very poor quality materials.
- Congestion is considered to be the most significant housing problem.
- Over 95% of the residents are tenants paying rent to slumlords who live elsewhere.
- 96% of the respondents do not have access to a private toilet.
- The disastrous effects, especially in relation to the environmental consequences, of slums and informal settlements are not only contained within the slums. Although much more concentrated within the slums, these consequences do spread outside the immediate surroundings. The offensive smells and air pollution are all too common when driving around roads close to some slum settlements. Also, those living in slum do have limited interactions with other members of society and some of the diseases they have contracted as a result of their living environment can be spread to other members of society.

Recommendations

In the process of improving slums and informal settlements the residents of such areas should be seen as the clients. A “hand me down” approach would not work. They should be fully consulted and their views taken into consideration. As most of them remarked during the survey no one (referring to outsiders) knows and is able to appreciate the gravity of their plights better than they themselves.

A process of improving all slums and informal settlements should be embarked upon. The strategy of upgrading and not relocation should be used. This would result in minimal upheaval compared to relocation. However in certain circumstances for example in cases where continued occupation results in lives being exposed to serious risks then relocation would be the only option. However in such cases efforts should be made to ensure that relocation is to a close by area. Experience has shown that relocation to out of city areas apart from being costly is often unsuccessful as people often miss their social connections and economic activities. They often return back to the city and occupy new or existing slums or informal settlement areas.

On the economic front this report suggests amongst other things the provision of informal credit opportunities for the inhabitants of informal settlements to provide a safety net in times of financial difficulties. The formal banking sector does not cater for the needs of this client group as they lack the normal collaterals needed to secure loans. Training opportunities for both skills-based courses including the use of information technology should be seen as a strategy aimed at improving the economic conditions of this client group. With improved skills and experience they should be able to secure better paid jobs. The fact that one of the residents of Susan's Bay was able to conduct the field survey is evidence that given the opportunity and adequate training they can secure and hold down employment, thereby improving their economic conditions.

Amenities such as health centres, schools, adults training schemes and nurseries should be provided as part of the improvement programme. Improved access to slums and informal settlements should also be given priority. Properly laid down roads and tarmac pathways should be included in the design brief. The current situation of most slums being inaccessible by vehicles is a health and safety hazard.

The provision of early years educational facilities have also been suggested. This should be means-tested thereby ensuring that those who are unable to afford the fees are not excluded. Homework clubs should also be considered. This would provide the children living in such settlements with the opportunity to have an able adult supervising their schoolwork. This is something that is currently lacking, due to the high level of illiteracy amongst inhabitants of slums and informal settlements. These children should see education as a way out of the ghetto.

Residents of slums and informal settlements should be trained on the use of locally available materials in housing constructions. The provision of building centres in slums and informal settlement areas has been suggested as a means of such skills being made available to the residents.

On a final note, the proposed improvements would only be successful if they have the full backing of the residents. A clear plan relating to the maintenance of any of the improvements should also be in place. A defined time should be specified in contracts within which contractors should rectify latent defects. The residents of slums and informal settlements do not only want but also in desperate need of the proposed improvement and, if managed properly, this could be a turn in the right direction in the history of the urban poor in Freetown.

Chapter One

Context

1.1

Introduction

This report is on slums and informal settlements in Freetown and how the lives the urban poor currently living in slums can be improved in line with the provisions of Target 11 of Millennium Development Goal 7.

The introduction aims to provide general information on the housing situation in Freetown in general. The development of slums and the main characteristics common to slums in Freetown in general are also explored.

The information relating to housing in Freetown in general has been obtained from the most recent Population and Housing Census, which was carried out in 2004

1.2

Background Information

Sierra Leone a former British colony and is one of the five English speaking West African Countries. It is located along the west coast of Africa, bordered by Guinea, Liberia and the Atlantic Ocean. Sierra Leone's total land area is 72,000 sq. kms.

Freetown is the capital city. As is the case in most other countries, there has been a steady increase in the population. This growth has however been mainly in the urban areas. During the past 40 years the population of Sierra Leone has increased from 2,180,000, in 1963 to 4, 976,871 in 2004. In Freetown, the population during this period has increased from 128,000 to 1,070,200 (Central Statistics Office, 2004). In summary, the population of the country as a whole has trebled, while the population of Freetown has increased tenfold.

Sierra Leone is a member of the commonwealth, the United Nations, The Economic Community of West African State and The Organisation of African Unity to name a few. It is also a signatory to many international treaties and conventions, such as ICESCR (Article 11), UDHR (Article 25) and the Habitat Agenda. The Habitat Agenda is of particular relevance as it is intended to influence national policy development in housing upgrading, resettlement and the provision of infrastructure. Membership of such organisations has a lot of advantages; it is often used as a status symbol in the international arena and provides member states access to facilities such as loans and the opportunity to influence international policies. Sierra Leone stands to benefit from being a signatory to these conventions. However such memberships also carry with them obligations that member states are required to fulfil from time to time.

Access to housing is a very important social issue in Freetown. The housing market for those on low income in Freetown is one in which demand far outweighs supply. In other words there is a very limited supply of housing available to the urban poor.

The government of Sierra Leone now wishes to address this issue and find solutions on how best the housing needs of those on low income can be met.

1.3

Purpose of Report

Though one three reports, this however mainly concerns The Improvement of Slums and Informal settlements in Freetown. A mapping exercise of all slums and informal settlements in Freetown was carried out. This is one of the terms of reference of the project. This has been a very useful in making an informed assessment of the size of slum and informal settlements in Freetown, and the quality of accommodation they provide.

Another objective of this study is to illustrate the effects of poor living conditions such as inadequate sanitation and lack of access to clean water on the urban poor. The most obvious and yet equally devastating effect of an inadequate provision or lack of access to such services is on the health of the urban poor. This does not only make them vulnerable but also more susceptible to diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS, cholera and malaria.

The main object of this project is provide the agencies concerned with working documents by means of a report and concept paper on how best the housing, environmental sanitation and socio-economic situation of slum and informal settlement dwellers can be best improved.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- The identification of all slums and informal settlements in Freetown.
- A review of the literature on the housing situation in Freetown in general and of the urban poor in particular.
- An analysis of the population, household and housing characteristics of slums areas and informal settlements.
- An analysis of the housing, environmental sanitation and socio-economic situation of a selected slum/informal settlement that is typical of slums and informal settlements in Freetown.
- A report and concept paper on The Improvement of Slums and Informal Settlements in Freetown.
- A report and concept paper on The Improvement of Slums and Informal Settlements in Freetown.

1.4

Methodology

The collation of the data and information used in this report and the concept paper was done in two stages. The initial stage was the collection and analysis of all identifiable secondary data relating to slums and informal settlements in Freetown. This includes, reports compiled by various government departments and non-governmental organisations, dissertations by students in and out of Sierra Leone and other data such as census reports.

The second stage was the collection and analysis of primary data on the housing, household, environmental sanitation and socio-economic characteristics of slums and informal settlements in Freetown. This included a field survey of The Susan's Bay Slum area.

The following slums and informal settlements were identified within Freetown: Kroo Bay, Susan's Bay, Kuntoloh, Greybush, George Brook, Old Wharf, Jamaica Town, Marbella, Kissy Brook, Red Pump, Mar of War Bay, Sorie Town, Moa Wharf, Dockyard, Crab Water, Banana Water, Odokoko, Portee Wharf, Congo Town Wharf, Tengbeh Town, Ginger Hall, Bomeh, Granville Brooke, Gwent Height and Mayiba

A needs analysis of both the secondary data and information obtained during visits to the slums was carried out in assessing which slum settlement should be used for the carrying out of the field survey. Though, as was expected, most of the slums were in desperate need of assistance, Susan's Bay was chosen as this was the one which has received the least amount of assistance from both government and non governmental organisations. Only two non governmental organisations have operated there within the last 20years. The households from which members were interviewed were randomly selected. Properties were allocated a number and placed in a bag. Household members from the first 250 to be selected were interviewed as part of the survey. The definition used to identify a house was that of a structure standing independently of the other structures and used mainly for sleeping purposes. For this reason toilets and kitchens were not considered to be houses. Male and female heads of households living in the selected properties were for interview by means of a structured questionnaire and by observation. Where a house was an adjoinee i.e. containing more than one accommodation unit, and therefore more than one household, only the male and female head of household occupying one of the accommodation units in the adjoinee was interviewed.

The two hundred and fifty households were equally divided between the 5 interviewers. One of the interviewers was a resident of Susan's Bay Slum Settlement. We had initial reservations about a resident forming part of this panel. The main reason for such reservations was that some interviewees might be embarrassed and provide less than candid answers. An outright rejection of any of the residents being an interviewer was vehemently opposed by the residents. We had to settle for individuals having the choice of refusing to be interviewed by a fellow resident if they did not feel comfortable with this. We also arranged for the resident to carry out interviews in areas away her immediate neighbourhood. The residents went on to explain that they fully trust one of their own to provide an accurate description of the scale of the challenges they are faced with everyday. This was a clear display of the level of trust they have for each other. The formal survey lasted two weeks. This was followed by a week of informal survey

during which members of the research team visited the settlement to observe the general situation in the settlement and hold discussions with various members of Susan's Bay community including informants, community leaders, and chiefs. This included some already interviewed and others not already interviewed. The purpose of this exercise was to ascertain their opinion on what they thought the keys problems of living in slums were and what they think is the best approach as far as resolving such challenges were.

Chapter Two

Primary and secondary data were reviewed as part of this study. A list of all literature reviewed in pursuance of this report has been detailed in the bibliography.

2.1

Housing Data

The most recent data on housing is that collated as part of the 2004 Housing and Population Census. Housing data was also collected as part of the 1985 Population and Housing Census. The two censuses prior to this in 1963 and 1974 did not collect any data relating to housing. The Central Statistics Office conducted a sample household survey on Household Characteristics and Housing Condition in Freetown in 1968.

2.1.1

Population and Housing Census 2004

The 2004 census collected data on the following areas on the characteristics of housing in Freetown:

- Number of people living in households.
- Structure and general condition of houses.
- Water and Sanitation, this covered information such as source of drinking water, types of toilets, bathing facilities, method of rubbish disposal.
- Accessibility to services and facilities.
- Type of tenure
- Type of material used in the construction of roofs, floors and walls
- Sources of energy used.

2.1.2

Other Sources of Data

Consultants, both national and international, university students, researchers, national and international NGOs, and various governmental departments have undertaken sample household surveys on the housing conditions in Freetown. Most of these however, have been carried out on specific areas within Freetown such as Kroo Bay, Susan's Bay and

Brookfields. The terms of reference of each survey usually dictates the choice of the indicators for data collection.

2.2

The Literature on Housing

There is a fair amount of literature on the housing characteristics in Freetown. This is not the case in relation to the rest of the country. The key sources of literature on housing in Freetown are the reports of consultants from international organisations such as UN, Goal and World Vision. (Hanson, D. 1969, Fitchett, R.E. 1972, r.e. 1972, Patel, C.B. 1977 and Wegge, J. 1986, Forde, E.R.A. 19991 and Muana, J.L.K. 1991. The Government of Sierra Leone's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Various reports, on urban poverty by organisations such as The World Health Organisation, The World Bank and United States AID. Dissertations written by Fourah Bay College students have also been a useful source of information on this topic. This includes: (Carew, H.1977, Ewulo, S.D.1985, Collier, A.O.U. 1988, Abdulai, J. 2000. Papers presented at national seminars and workshops (Muana J.L.K 1986 for The Sierra Leone Housing Corporation. Thomas A.C. 1985 and Campbell, E. 1977). On the whole only a few of the above literature have been published.

Chapter 3

3.1

The Development of Slums in Freetown

Freetown is the area between Allen Town to the east and Juba to the west. This area was later sub divided to greater Freetown and Urban Freetown. Urban Freetown then, consisted of the area between Up Gun Turntable to the east and Congo Cross to the west. Most recently urban Freetown has been split into urban Freetown East and urban Freetown West.

According to information obtained from The Freetown City Council (February 2006), there are 27 slums and informal settlements that are officially recognised by The Freetown City Council. Slums, generally refers to sub standard housing in urban areas that lack or have limited access to facilities such as clean water and proper environmental sanitation. If this definition is to be strictly followed, most of the houses in and around Freetown can be described as slums. However the conditions are not so bad in some areas as those who can afford it, buy water privately and arrange for private companies to collect their rubbish. The urban poor are trapped in such conditions are they are unable to afford the costs of buying water privately and make arrangements to have their rubbish collected by private companies.

Within the international context, the definition of slums used in the Millennium Development Goals is more commonly used. Housing is classified as slums if any combination of the following characteristics can be identified:

- Its occupants lack security of tenure.
- Lacks access to basic facilities such as clean drinking water and sanitation.
- Located on land not usually used for residential development.
- Overcrowding
- Sub-standard housing.

The Millennium Declarations was adopted by The General Assembly of The United Nations in 2002. This document especially Goal 7 is aimed at addressing the challenges of urban poverty and hunger, targeting those with a daily income of less than \$1. This goal aims to improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. The duty of ensuring that this is translated into a real change for slum dwellers in Freetown lies with the government of Sierra Leone, the UN-HABITAT and their joint partners.

It is also worth noting that most countries have developed a national meaning of the word slum. For example in the city of Kolkata, a minimum of 700 sq. m has to be occupied by

huts or the use of the Indian census definition of slums which requires at least 300 people or 60 households living in a cluster settlement, for an area to be described as slum.

3.1

Factors Responsible for the Development of Slums

A number of factors have contributed to the development of slums in Freetown. These include population increase, lack of an adequate response to the increase in population and under developed services in rural areas.

3.1.1

Population Increase

The population of Freetown has increased considerably in the last 40 years. Between 1933 and 1983 the population of Freetown increased from 161,000 to 500,000. In the most recent population survey of 2004 the population of Freetown was just under 1,000,000 (Central Statistics Office). This increase in the number of people living in Freetown has naturally generated an increase in the level of housing and other social amenities needed. If the population has not increased and the average household size of 6.0 in 1966 had remained stagnant, the then housing stock size of 56,500 household would have been adequate. This is based on the assumption that this stock would have been well maintained. The stock size would have of course fallen if houses were not adequately maintained, and had adequate water, toilet and waste disposal facilities. However housing in Freetown has failed to keep pace with the increase in population in both quality and quantity.

The quantity of housing has also been further reduced by the recent civil war. It has been estimated that around 350,000 houses were destroyed in Sierra Leone during the war

In 1989, it was estimated that 37,000 houses should have been built by 2000 to meet the housing need of the inhabitants of Freetown. This would have adequately dealt with the issue of overcrowding. This stock would have also provided a replacement for houses that were beyond repair and adequately catered for new households.

3.1.2

Level and Quality of Response

As mentioned above, the provision of an adequate response in both the quality and quantity of housing would have adequately dealt with this problem. However this has not been the case.

3.1.3

Response by the Public Sector

A National Housing Policy and Programme was included in The National Development Plan 1974/1975 that was formulated in 1974. This referred to the construction of 2,000 dwelling houses for those on low income living in urban areas. However, only 24 houses were constructed in Freetown as part of this programme.

The government also embarked on the “Low Cost Housing Scheme” from the 1960’s. This however has only resulted in the building of less than 1,000 houses between 1961 to the present date. These were insufficient in terms of numbers and had very high unit costs, and were therefore unaffordable to low income urban dwellers. The only means by which low income earners in Freetown would have been able to afford such properties would have been by the government subsidising the rent or selling them below the market price. These would have resulted in the government being unable to recover the investment capital but also being unable to create additional funds needed for the development of new dwelling units.

3.1.4

Formal Response by the Private Sector

From general observations, it is clear that the formal wing of the private sector has been actively involved in the construction of high quality modern dwelling units for owner occupation, leasehold and rental. Due to the high level of prices and the fact that this is often quoted in dollars, the urban poor have been indirectly excluded as they are unable to afford such prices. This response has been geared to and has successfully met the housing needs of upper and middle income households.

3.1.5

Informal Response by the Private Sector

The urban poor have responded to their housing need by building or renting out slums. Individuals have constructed badly put together homes using very cheap material and often unsuitable ones. In some cases fabrics such as cloth and plastic have been used to provide wall covering. Such dwellings have been cramped into as little space as possible. This practice has resulted in slums.

Four main reasons have resulted in the urban poor resorting to this method of dealing with their housing needs. These are: The high value of land prices in Freetown, not being able to afford good quality building material such as cement, corrugated iron sheets etc, the procedures for acquiring title to land can be very costly and daunting and being unable to access housing finance through banks as they lack the required collateral.

All of the above have resulted in the existence of unplanned housing settlements that lack access to basic services and amenities along the foreshore of the Atlantic Ocean, the

stream valleys and the hillsides. The creation and management of such settlements have contributed to the overall degradation of the environmental sanitation of these areas.

Emerging Practices

A few practices that have developed in the last 20 years though to a lesser extent have also contributed towards the creation in Freetown. These include practices such as the trend of land owners in Freetown to build poorly put together houses for those employed to protect their land. Often such employees are not paid but are allowed to occupy such houses lacking toilet facilities in return for their services. There are also a growing number of properties that were previously not slums falling into disrepair and ending up being slums. Low income urban dwellers in prioritising this reason has also led to a number of properties falling into disrepair and ending up being slums on what they spend their very limited resources on have opted to spend on essential such as food and health. Essential housing repairs have been ignored.

3.1.6

Economic Contribution

The fact that the country's economic growth and development have been rather poor since the 1890's, has not made it possible for those living in cities to have been able to spend on the provision of good quality housing and the provision of all the other necessary services. The growing problem of the government having to service its international debts has limited the amount of funds at its disposal to spend on housing.

Chapter 4

The Characteristics of Slums in Freetown

4.1

Definition and Characteristics of Slums

Freetown's slums and informal settlements demonstrates, that many of the physical characteristics common to slums and shacks settlements in other parts of Africa. However some of these characteristics are more evident in some slums and informal settlements than in others.

It is worth noting that though used interchangeably there is a difference between a slum and an informal settlement. In very simple terms a slum refers to “ a heavily populated urban area characterised by substandard housing and squalor” (Merriam – Webster Dictionary). For a slum to exist certain key characteristics must be present, (UN-HABITAT, 2003). These are:

- Lack of basic services.
- Sub-standard housing or illegal and inadequate building structures.
- Overcrowding and high density.
- Unhealthy living conditions and hazardous locations.
- Insecure tenure, irregular and informal settlements.

In some countries a minimum size of a settlement has been defined and added to the above characteristics. For example in India at least 300 people or 60 households living in a settlement cluster is required for an area to be classified as a slum. Sierra Leone has not adopted this method of defining a slum. This is probably something the government should worth considering.

Usually these factors are not to be found in isolation. In most slums a combination of these characteristics exists. For example the slum settlement of George Brook on has a few of the above characteristics, whereas Susan's Bay on the other hand demonstrates all five of the attributes listed above.

An informal settlement is an area in which the general trend is the building of houses on land that has not been legally acquired by the owners of the properties. As mentioned above informal settlements are one of the characteristics of slums. As the term implies there has to be number of houses for a site to be classified as an informal settlement. Again an indication as to the number of properties required to exist and within which

proximity has not been suggested by the government of Sierra Leone in considering whether a site should be classified as an informal settlement. In practice informal settlements usually only demonstrates a few of the attributes of slums. For example in Soree Town there are a number of houses of very high standard that have been built on land owned by the government. In this case, the only characteristic of a slum present is the lack of proper access roads.

4.1.1

Hazardous Locations and Unhealthy Living Conditions

Slums and informal settlements are mainly to be found on marginalised land. These are often along the seashore, on hillsides and basin of rivers. These are land that are not desirable and would not have ordinarily been used for residential developments. In Freetown, most of the slum and informal settlements with a population of over one thousand inhabitants are to be found along the seashore. Examples of foreshore slums with over 1,000 inhabitants are Kroo Bay, Susan's Bay and Marbella. Ojokoukou is along the basin of the River Ojokoukou and George Town is a hillside town close New England Ville. Such areas are usually prone to natural disasters such as landslide and flooding. This is particularly the case in the rainy season. Residents in such areas have to put up with the inconvenience of such floods which often leaves them temporarily homeless, and causes a great deal of loss of the already scarce possessions. In some cases life is lost in the process. Women and children the most vulnerable in such situation are at greater risk. The layout of these settlements also mean that immediate escape is not possible during disasters such as fire, as almost all of the slums in Freetown do not have vehicular access.

Unhealthy living conditions are a result of lack of basic services. Open sewers, improper pathways, uncontrolled dumping of waste and polluted environments are amongst the common features of all of the slums in Freetown.

4.1.2

Sub-Standard Housing / Inadequate Structure

Structures are often made of poor quality material most of which are impermanent materials that offer little protection against the elements. Materials used in the construction of houses in all of the slums in Freetown, are unsuitable given the given local conditions of climate and location. In almost all of these houses, the flooring is made of earth and the roof cover made porous materials such as plastic or straw. In some area such as in Wellington where mud is very common this is used to build blocks often referred to as "dauty block". The inhabitants of these slums and informal settlements are not in a position to afford adequate building materials such as cement and iron rods.

In general factors contributing to a structure being considered sub-standard are, for example, earthen floors, mud-and-brittle walls and straw or plastic polythene being used as roof cover are indicative of sub-standard housing.

4.1.3

Overcrowding and High Density

Over crowding is associated with a low space per person, high occupancy rates, cohabitation by different persons and a high number of single room units. In Freetown most of the slum dwelling units are associated with five and in some cases up to 12 persons sharing a one bedroom unit. Such single units are used for both living and sleeping. In a reported case, household members have to sleep in rotation. There is also some instances in which people have to pay 100 leones per night in return for being able to sleep for up to five hours.

4.1.4

Tenure Insecurity and the Threat of Eviction

Lack of security of tenure is a very common characteristic of those living in slums, security of tenure refers to a protection clause in a tenancy agreement or any other ownership of title document detailing the circumstances under which the agreement can be brought to an end by either party to the contract. Generally either party is required to give the other at least two months notice by law. Most of the residents of slums around Freetown, described themselves as tenants although they have never signed a contract to this effect. They however pay rent to “slumlords”, who in most cases do not own the land on which the property is erected. In most of the slums residents cited this as a reason why they are reluctant to improve the property, knowing that they risk being illegally evicted by slumlords at very short notice.

4.1.5

Lack of Basic Services / Poor Access

As is common in many of the slums worldwide, there is a lack or inadequate supply of basic services in all of the slums in Freetown. The gravity of this differs from one slum to the next. In George Brook and Kroo Bay there is evidence to suggest that effort, though inadequate has been made to address this issue. There are communal toilets that residents pay a minimal amount to use. In Susan’s Bay, the residents have to use the nearest toilets in Marbella. Lack of access to sanitation facilities and safe water are the most important feature of these areas. Absence of waste collection systems, electricity supply, surfaced roads and paths, street lighting and rainwater drainage are also common features.

Part Two

Chapter 5

Susan's Bay:

An analysis of the housing, environmental sanitation and the socio-economic conditions of this Susan's Bay slum settlement.

Household Survey Report

5.1 Research

Several research projects on the improvement of slums have already been done throughout the world. Of these, perhaps the most complementary to this survey's findings, is that of Rainer (2000). Rainer's research is based on an evaluation of a decade of UN-HABITAT projects. This has been used to produce a toolkit for successful upgrading of slums and informal settlements. Some of Rainer's recommendations were:

- The upgrading of slums and informal settlements.
- The provision of land for informal housing development.
- Supporting community based construction and the management of infrastructure.
- Supporting informal sector contractors
- Supporting small scale building materials producers.
- Supporting informal and community based financial systems.
- Supporting low – cost rental housing.
- Revision of building regulations and codes.

The above recommendations can be used as a guide in implementing any successful slum and informal settlement improvement programme.

5.2

Survey Methodology

In deciding which of the slums in Freetown should be used for the field survey, a simple needs analysis exercise was carried out. Only slums with over 15,000 inhabitants were considered as part of this exercise. Once this was completed it was obvious that all of the slums and informal settlements in Freetown are in need of being improved. Susan's Bay was however chosen as it ranked top of three areas with the highest needs priority.

Another reason for choosing Susan’s Bay is that the survey team has previously worked in this area and were therefore able to count on the good working relationship they have with some of the residents of Susan’s Bay. This is very important as residents of slums and informal settlements have become very sceptical of surveys and very reluctant to cooperate. They often view surveys as a waste of their time as “nothing ever gets done”. They also have experiences of organisations using the results of such surveys to solicit aid that they feel they have never benefited from.

It is hoped that the possibility of “bias” in the selection of Susan’s Bay has been avoided through the use of the “needs analysis test”.

A cast of dice method was also considered as an alternative method of selection. This was however abandoned upon careful consideration as this carried the risk of the area with the least needs priority being selected.

250 members of the community were randomly selected. Steps were taken to ensure that no more than one person per household was interviewed as part of the survey. This was to avoid the possibility of information on households being duplicated.

Table 1 Attributes of Selected Slums

Quality of Available Services

Slum / Informal Settlement	Toilet /Bathing Facilities	Access to Clean Water	Structural Quality	Location/ Environmental Sanitation	Assistance received
Kroo Bay	Fair	Good	Fair/Poor	Fair	Fair
Marbella	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair
Susan’s Bay	Poor	Fair	Poor	Poor	Poor
Ojokoukou	Fair	Fair	Poor/Fair	Fair	Fair
Man of War Bay	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair

5.2.1

Introduction and Overview of Susan's Bay

Susan's Bay is a foreshore slum settlement with a population of just of 15,000 inhabitants, (Population and Household Census 2004). It is very close to the Marbella slum settlement. Access to Susan's Bay is very restricted due to its location about 40ft below ground level. It is on a swampy piece of land on the foreshore of the Atlantic Ocean. This settlement has been in existence since colonial days but has grown considerably since then. The number of houses within the settlement has almost doubled within the last three years. In 2003 there were 325 houses, these have now grown to 621 presently. Most of the inhabitants are muslims. Such a high concentration of muslims is likely due to the fact that the muslims have always settled in that area of Freetown, east of the town centre. There are a number of muslim religious facilities close by including several mosques.

Most of the inhabitants of Susan's Bay belong to the Temene tribe. This can be explained by a number of reasons. Firstly there is a frequent boat service to and from Pork Loko province to Susan's Bay. Port Loko is a provincial town in the north of Sierra Leone of which the Temenes are the indigenous tribe.

Another possible explanation for such a high concentration of temnes in Susan's Bay is the general tendency of migrants preferring to stay close to relative and friends for support. This is very common in most Sierra Leonean communities.

5.3

Representative/Unrepresentative

The extent to which Susan's Bay can be described as being truly representative of all slums in Freetown is debatable. This is because slums and informal settlements have all had different inputs in their development as is the case with the rest of society. They are heterogeneous societies. The true picture of how representative Susan's Bay is of all slums and informal settlements in Freetown could only be drawn, through a comparative study of all slums and informal settlements in Freetown.

5.3.1

However Susan's Bay is representative of slums and informal settlements in Freetown in the following areas:

- Slums and informal settlements in Freetown are almost exclusively inhabited by the urban poor who are unable afford decent housing within Freetown.

- Inhabitants of slums and informal settlements in Freetown are often stigmatised.
- Most slums and informal settlements in Freetown have various organisations and social groups operating within them.
- The inhabitants are mainly employed in the informal sector, working as drivers, daily labourers, maids etc.
- They are mainly located on land not normally considered suitable for residential development such as hills, basin of rivers and along the seashores.
- They are generally overcrowded both in terms of number of units within an area and also in terms of the number of people per household.
- They are often constructed of cheap inferior materials that are not durable and do not offer much protection against the weather.
- They often lack or have an inadequate supply of basic services such as clean drinking water, sanitation and access roads.
- The residents are generally very vibrant, determined and upbeat, using their very scarce resources to make the most of life.

5.3.2

Unrepresentative

Susan's Bay is not representative of all slums and informal settlements in Freetown in the following area.

- Most of those interviewed as part of the survey indicated a preference of being moved to a new location nearby as a means of improving their living conditions. This is not the preference of all the slum inhabitants in Freetown. Most of them would prefer to have their current neighbourhood upgraded.
- Different communities have different needs. The needs of the inhabitants of Susan's Bay and the priority given to such needs might be similar but unlikely to be reflective of that of all slum and informal settlements communities.
- The very high concentration of Temenes and muslims in Susan's Bay is not representative of slums in general. In most of the other slums there is more of a social mix of residents in terms of religion and tribal background.
- Susan's Bay is located along the seashore, some slums and informal settlements are located along the bank of a river for example Ojokoko George Brook on the hills.
- The high concentration of people engaged in business does not represent all slums and informal settlements in general. In other slums a higher proportion of residents are likely to be engaged in other economic activities.
- The level of congestion, access to basic facilities, standard of housing etc varies from one slum or informal settlement to the next. From general observations the standard of housing along Greybush seems better compared to Susan's Bay. Quite a few of the houses there are constructed of durable materials. Walls are made of cement, roof of corrugated sheets and floors of concrete.

Chapter 6

Results of the Field Survey in the Susan's Bay Area

6.1

Social Aspect

This section relates to the data of the respondents interviewed as well as the social life of Susan's Bay residents in general. The information in this section relates to the sex, age, marital status and the length of time interviewees have lived in the settlement. Such information is useful and can be helpful in understanding the lifestyle dynamics of the inhabitants of Susan's Bay.

Background Attributes of the Households Covered

6.1.1

Gender

Of the 250 respondents interviewed, 42.4% were male and 57.6% female. This is representative of the gender distribution in the country as a whole.

Steps should therefore be taken to ensure that women are fully consulted about the improvement programme and their views taken on board thereby reflecting their dominance in the community. The improvement programme could also be used to address issues of gender imbalance within Susan's Bay community as a whole.

6.1.2

Age Distribution

The table below illustrates the distribution of household members by age. There are a high proportion of people (72.4%) below 35 years of age. An increase in age is usually accompanied by a reduction in the number of people in the household within that group. As would be expected of a survey of a growing population, the data confirms that the majority of the people covered were young. This implies that the majority of the population are of school going age or within the age bracket that is usually engaged in further education or training. Significant proportions of household members are not economically independent and are taken care of by other household members who are in employment or engaged in trade. (Qs 22 & 23) It is also worth noting that 8.4% of household covered fall within the age range of people considered "old" in Africa, i.e. over 45 years of age. Only 2.4% were over 56 years. This comes as no surprise as the average life expectancy in Sierra Leone is 37 for men and 39 for women (W.H.O.2005)

TABLE 2 Age Distribution of Survey respondents:

(a) 0 – 24	36.8%
(b) 25 – 35	35.6%
(c) 36 – 45	19.2%
(d) 46 – 55	6%
(e) 56+	2.4%

These findings confirm that Susan’s Bay slum settlement is dominated by a relatively young population, who have moved into the city from rural areas. In Freetown this is partly due to the civil war and also due to migration into the cities in search of better opportunities. In the context of slum improvement, it is very important to identify and make provisions for age specific needs of residents of Susan’s Bay. For example given that 36.8% of household members are below 24 years, adequate space for the development of facilities for children and young adults should form part of the improvement strategy.

The provision of nurseries, schools, youths and adults training facilities should be considered as part of the improvement programme.

6.1.3

Education

The study provided data on educational achievements of the household members in Susan’s Bay. This is presented in the table below

TABLE 3 Distribution of respondents by level of education attained

(a) No formal education	52%
(b) Lower primary education	6.8%
(c) Upper primary education	7.6%
(d) Some secondary education	25.6%
(e) Completed secondary education	4.8%
(f) Post secondary education	2.4%
(g) University	0.8%

Data on educational achievement show that 52% of the household members surveyed are illiterate. Only 14.4% attended primary school, and only half that number (7.6%) completed their primary education. Although 30.4% have some sort of secondary education, only 4.8 % have completed secondary schooling. Educational achievements for the members of households surveyed are very low, only 3.2% have post-secondary education. With such a low level of educational attainment, the majority of these people cannot access competitive jobs in Freetown. This very limited level of educational attainment explains why most of them are unemployed, self employed as petty traders or are employed in the informal sector for example as daily labourers.

Data on educational achievement suggest that the slum upgrading initiative should plan to work with people with relatively lower levels of education who are not likely to access formal employment in Freetown. Most of them are likely to engage in self-employment for their livelihood. Accordingly to help such people cope with the proposed changes, stakeholders involved such the government, Freetown City Council, UN-HABITAT and other agencies should invest heavily in supporting self-employment initiatives. The provision of educational related services as part of the improvement programme has already been suggested about.

6.1.4

Religion

Although Sierra Leone is a predominantly muslim country, the number of muslims in Susan’s Bay far exceeds the national average of 60% (source: US Department of State, 2003). 93.6% of those surveyed were muslims.

The provision of religious facilities should therefore be considered as part of the improvement programme. Steps should also be taken to ensure that community leaders within the muslim community are actively consulted and involved in the improvement programme.

6.1.5

Length of Time Lived in Susan’s Bay

This study attempted to establish the length of time that respondents have stayed in Susan’s Bay. There is a general perception that the civil war in Sierra Leone has played a considerable role in the increase in the number of households in slums and informal settlements. The data collected in this area however does not fully support this assumption as far as Susan’s Bay is concerned. 37.2% of the respondents have lived in Susan’s Bay for over 10 years. This shows that for these people residence in Susan’s Bay is not a temporary. In fact only 12% respondents moved into the settlement at the height of the civil war about 7 years ago. It is worth noting that since the end of the war 50.8% of the respondents have since moved into the area.

TABLE 4 How long respondents have lived in Susan’s Bay

(a) 1-2 yrs	16%
(b) 3-4yrs	14%
(c) 5-6yrs	20.8%
(d) 7-8yrs	7.2%
(e) 9-10yrs	4.8%
(f) 10+yrs	37.2%

A notable finding from this data suggests that residency in slums is now a permanent way of life for the inhabitants. Only 16% have lived in Susan’s Bay for the shortest period

i.e. 1- 2 years. 70% have lived there over five years. This confirms that the majority of residents have lived there long enough to consider it to be their permanent residence.

Usually, residing in one place for a long time helps one to gain an identity as a true residence of that area. These findings therefore confirm that residence in slums should not be considered as temporary. Survey data thus suggests that households living in Susan's Bay are likely to regard Susan's Bay as their true home. Accordingly an attempt to relocate them should be done with caution. Even though Susan's Bay is a slum its residents tend to consider it as their permanent home.

This finding suggests that re-location should only be considered as a last resort as part of the improvement exercise.

6.1.6

Membership of Social Groups and Rating of Benefits from Groups

Being a member of a social group is very common in most communities. Only 34% of the respondents belonged to any social organisation. The study further attempted to establish the types of social groups operating within Susan's Bay. The respondents identified many different groups, including; women's groups, men's groups, children's clubs, social welfare groups, savings clubs and business groups. Women's groups and social welfare groups are the most popular, at 34% and 27% respectively.

TABLE 5: Membership of Social Groups

(a) Women's group	34%
(b) Social welfare	27%
(c) Security group	10%
(d) Political group	2%
(e) Youth group	17%
(f) Men's group	8%
(g) Business group	11%
(h) Cooperative	4%
(i) Savings /Osusu clubs	5%

As far as the reasons for non-membership of such organisations is concerned. 74.7% of the respondents cited lack of interest as their main reason for not being members. 23.4% explained that they are unable to join such organisations because of the membership fees. This is a clear display of the level of poverty that is prevalent amongst slum dwellers as the membership fees for such organisations are usually minimal. Only 1.9% cited not being able to meet the rules as a reason for not joining any social organisation. This implies that in general such rules are not onerous and not used as a means of excluding certain members of the community.

The existence of such a range of social organisations means that they would serve as an entry point for intervention by implementing parties of the improvement programme.

A further analysis on the rating of benefits members received from these groups gives findings worth noting.

TABLE 6 Benefit derived from membership of a social group

(a) Great deal	2%
(b) A lot	2%
(c) A little	21.6%
(d) Very little	7.2%
(e) No benefit	68%

The data from the above table shows that only 2% of the respondents think membership of such social organisations provides a great deal of benefits. A similar low number (2%) feel they benefit a lot. 21.6% seem to gain “a little” benefit, 7.2 percent described the level of benefit gained as very little. However 68% of those surveyed feel that membership of such organisations does not provide any benefits at all.

Overall, one can conclude that the majority of the respondents do not seem to gain any benefit from membership of such organisations. A possible explanation for the mismatch between the number of groups and the level of benefit gained is that such organisations probably exist to meet “communal needs” at the expense of the personal needs of the members. Lack of resources and skills could also be another reason why such groups are unable to make any meaningful contribution in improving the lives of its members.

In the context of the improvement exercise, it is worth noting that Susan’s Bay has existing social structures in the form of the different social groups, which could be used to mobilise the community at large. The improvement programme could also be used as an opportunity to strengthen the capacity of such organisations, thereby ensuring that their members gain the most from such memberships.

6.1.7

Self Perception of Susan’s Bay Inhabitants

Urban slums are associated with a lot of poverty. In UN-HABITAT (2003: xxvi) this link is described as “slums and poverty are closely related and mutually reinforcing, but the relationship is not always direct or simple”. Given the above it is worth exploring whether those who live in urban slums such as Susan’s Bay readily identify with their slum environment. In particular the survey was keen to establish whether slum residents develop a sense of identity that helps them differentiate themselves from “outsiders” one of the main characteristics of being a member of a community.

The survey data confirms that 56% think there is a strong sense of community in Susan’s Bay. These people identified themselves with Susan’s Bay, they have a sense of belonging to the community. Most of the respondents cited having family ties in Susan’s Bay as the main reason for them having such a strong sense of belong to the community. Of the 46% of respondents who do not feel a strong sense of belonging to the Susan’s Bay community, most of these were not those who were born there, they were mainly those who have moved into the area within the last 4 years.

It is worth assessing the implications of this finding in the context of the improvement exercise. Although the majority of respondents consider themselves as being members of Susan’s Bay community, in terms of numbers, there is not a great difference between this group and those who do not see themselves as being part of Susan’s Bay community. It would be difficult to relocate those who identify themselves with Susan’s Bay. However, if strategically managed it should be fairly easy to mobilise most of the residents in support of the improvement exercise.

6.1.8

Living in Susan’s Bay by Choice

The household survey sought to establish whether people live in Susan’s Bay by choice? Given that Susan’s Bay is an urban slum characterised by widespread poverty, scarcity and crime, it is worth exploring whether people stay in Susan’s Bay by choice or whether they are forced by circumstances to stay there. Findings as part of this study shows that 66% of those surveyed do not live in Susan’s Bay by choice, whereas 34% indicated they have lived in Susan’s Bay by choice. Indeed the majority were forced by circumstances to live there they do not enjoy or appreciate living there. This is not surprising given the socio-economic and environmental challenges that people of Susan’s Bay have to contend with.

If the majority of residents do not live in Susan’s Bay by choice, it logically means that if they are provided with the opportunity to live in an improved environment, they would welcome this option. This point offers a critical entry point for the stakeholders involved in the improvement exercise. In particular, the findings suggest that the opportunity of improving this settlement would be grabbed by most of the residents. If managed well the improvement programme is likely to be supported by most residents of Susan’s Bay.

6.1.9

Reasons for living in Susan’s Bay

Those interviewed as part of this survey gave a number of reasons for living in Susan’s Bay. The table below helps to summarise these reasons.

TABLE 7

(a) Work	4.8%
(b) Parent/grand-parent	33.6%

(c) Cheap rent	5.2%
(d) Low income	5.2%
(e) Staying with friends/relatives	19.6%
(f) Social status	0.4%
(g) Own property	2.4%
(h) Affordable lifestyle	1.6%
(i) Own business	10.8%
(j) Cheap food	0.4%
(k) Married to resident	13.6%
(l) No other option of staying elsewhere	2%

Of the main reasons for living in Susan's Bay, living with parents and grandparents emerged as the main reason. This is hardly surprising considering a majority of the inhabitants are under 24yrs old. This was the reason given by 33.6% of those surveyed. This was followed by staying with friends and relatives ((19.6%). Surprisingly only 5.2 of the respondents cited cheap rent as a reason for living in Susan's Bay. This seems low at first glance, however this should be seen in the context of being part of the group of those who are unable to afford rent elsewhere i.e. those still living with parents/grandparents and those staying with friends and family. If these three groups are considered collectively, the data supports the view of slums being a response by the urban poor to their housing problem, most of whom are unable to afford rent elsewhere in Freetown.

Accordingly therefore, affordability of rent is one of the issues that should be fully considered as part of the improvement programme. The option of residents being able to part own and part rent their units to reduce their housing costs is an option that should be explored with the residents during the consultations with the residents.

6.1.10

Availability of and Accessibility to Amenities in Susan's Bay

Even though slums in general are characterised by lack of social amenities, Freetown City Council has made efforts in providing slum communities with a few of the basic facilities, the adequacy of these is another question.

This study captures a long list of social amenities and measures which of these are used by Susan's Bay residents. These include schools, government offices, health facilities, police stations/posts, roads and shops.

The tables below provide a list of existing amenities in Susan's Bay and show whether they are considered to be adequate.

TABLE 8 **Types of Social Amenities used by Susan's Bay Residents**

(a) Schools	25.2%
(b) Health facilities	4.4%
(c) Government offices	2.4%

(d) Freetown City Council offices	0%
(e) Police	1.6%
(f) NGO offices	0%
(g) Water points	20%
(h) Sanitation/drainage programmes	0%
(i) Roads	2.8%
(j) Telephone	1.6%
(k) Electricity	1.2%
(l) Shops	0.4%
(m) Banks	0%
(n) Technical training facilities	0%
(o) Religious facilities	34%

Of the above fifteen social amenities listed religious facilities are the most used by residents (34%). It is worth noting that most of these facilities are not to be found within the slum settlement itself, but within its immediate neighbourhood. In a sense this is a good thing as it implies that the residents are not completely socially isolated. They do have some interaction with members of other communities. Religious facilities were followed by schools at 25.2%. This was not surprising considering a high percentage of the population of Susan's Bay are of school going age. The use of water points ranked third at 20%. All of the others were insignificantly used i.e. at less than 5%. The question that follows from this is why are these facilities not fully used? From informal discussions with the residents, it seems very obvious that costs and the conditions of the facilities are the main reasons why these facilities are not fully made use of. The fact that only few of these facilities are used should be used as a basis to ensure that such obstacles to access and utilisation of these services are addressed as part of the improvement programme.

The non availability of some of these amenities such as banks, technical training facilities and sanitation/drainage programmes within the locality explains why some of these facilities are not being used by the residents.

Steps should also be taken to ensure that the existing practice of non-maintenance of public amenities is not followed. An adequate maintenance budget should be provided for as part of the improvement programme. This would prevent amenities not being used by the residents due to them being in a poor state of disrepair.

6.2

Economic Aspect

6.2.1

Introduction

Urban slums are a response to an insufficient supply of affordable housing in urban areas. It is therefore no surprise that often it is the poorest of the poor who live in slums. Slums

can therefore be characterised by abject poverty. Slums share the economic, social and spatial forces that shape and differentiate them from the rest of other urban areas. The socio-economic study of Susan’s Bay captures the unique characteristics of this particular slum and hopes to provide useful information in this area that should be useful in reaching key decisions in relation to the improvement programme.

6.3

Household Income

6.3.1

Distribution of Household Income in Susan’s Bay

TABLE 9 Main source of income

(a) Business	64%
(b) Rents from slums	2%
(c) Employment	4.8%
(d) Other	22.4%

This “snapshot” of sources of income within Susan’s Bay settlement portrays a very heterogeneous trend in urban communities. This explains the nature of occupation amongst the residents. It seems that income is mainly derived from business including rents from the renting of slums within the settlement (66%). It should be noted that only 2% quoted rent from slums as a source of income. This suggests that most of the units are owned by absent slumlords. This is likely to complicate the process of slum-upgrading, in that those with ownership of the new housing units as the “slum lords” might demand compensation for the demolition of their slums during upgrading. Only 4.8% cited being employed as a source of income. 22.4% of those surveyed relied on unpredictable and unsteady income sources. The “other” categories includes those in casual employment such as daily labourers and those helping friends and families run businesses and are being paid in cash.

The high percentage of residents whose main source of income is derived from business activities should not be ignored during the improvement process. Steps should be taken to minimise the level of disturbance caused to their business activities. This would ensure that the negative effect of these traders losing the goodwill of their customers is avoided.

TABLE 10 Types of business activity

(a) Selling vegetables	29%
(b) Selling second hand clothes	10%
(c) Hairdressing	7%
(d) Selling drinks	4%
(e) Other	53%
(f) Non-response	16%

6.3.2

In terms of types of business, 29% of those surveyed mentioned sale of vegetables as their main business activity. 10% cited the sale of second hand clothes. 16% did not respond to this question. Items mentioned under “other” included toiletries cooked food, newspaper, confectionaries and locally produced arts and crafts.

The information obtained from this section should be used as a guideline if some of the residents are to be presented with small business opportunities as part of the improvement programme

6.3.3

TABLE 11 Monthly Income

(a) Below 50,000 leones	48.4%
(b) Between 50,000 – 200,000	34%
(c) 200,000 – 500,000	3%
(d) Over 500,000	0.8%
(e) Non response	13.2%

48.4% of the respondents earned below 50,000 leones as a monthly income. 34% earned between 50,000 and 200,000 leones. 3% earned between 200,000 leones and 500,000 leones. Only 0.8% mentioned earning over 500,000. 13.2% of respondents did not answer this question. This does not necessarily imply that that this category of respondents might be engaged in any illegal activities. Although one cannot rule out a proportion of illegal activity, many people would find such a question embarrassing especially as the amount is likely to be very low. Another explanation is the fact that most people would not readily disclose details of their income to strangers.

Activities that can produce more income for the residents should be considered as part of the improvement programme.

6.3.4

Dependency

Dependency issues in Susan’s Bay were evaluated by using a table detailing the members of a household and their shared income. Of the respondents 34.4% of them were from a single household income. 25.2% had two household members providing income. 8.8% had three income earners and 20.4% had more than 3 people in their household providing income. Though a high percentage of households have more than 3 income earners this does not however amount to much as income in generally is very low and also due to the number of people living in such household, such income has to be distributed amongst a considerably amount of people. This point is fully supported by the table below showing combined household income.

6.3.5

TABLE 12 Combined Household Income

(a) Under 100,000	37.6%
(b) Between 100,000 – 500,000	29.2%
(c) Over 500,000	0.4%
(d) Non-response	18.8%

As far as the combined household income is concerned, 37.6% have a combined income of less than 100,000 leones. 29.2% have a combined household income of 100,000 – 500,000. 0.4% had a combined household income of over 500,000. 18.8% of the respondents did not answer this question.

6.3.6

TABLE 13 Number of dependents on Respondent's Income

(a) 1 – 3	41.2%
(b) 4 – 7	29.6%
(c) above 8	9.6%

60% of those surveyed provide financial support to non household members. Dependency levels within and beyond households are extremely high. 41.2% of households had between 1 and 3 dependents, and a further 29.6% had between 4 and 7 dependents. This is a high figure, given the very low levels of income. What makes the situation for many inhabitants so much worse is the fact that 60% of the respondents provide financial assistance to others not living within their household. It is not unusual for those living in cities to have to send money back to friends and families in the rural areas. 33.2% of those surveyed did not provide any financial assistance to non members of their household. This high level of dependency by household and non household members on very minimal income adversely affects a household's ability to meet day to day costs, let alone save.

It is hoped that the creation of employment opportunities as part of the improvement programme would reverse this trend.

6.4

Household Expenditure

Household expenditure can often be used to assess the well being of the individuals concerned. The trend that emerges from the Susan's Bay survey portrays a community living below the poverty line. Poverty is a deprivation of essential assets and opportunities to which every human being is entitled. (WDR 2000/2001). If the definition of extreme poverty adopted by The World Bank is to be used, i.e. those living

on \$1 or less per day, these data suggests a rather grim picture of the economic situation of the residents of Susan's Bay.

6.4.1

Expenditure by category

The majority of respondents spent all their available income on food, housing and clothing. Respondents claim to spend between 10,000 – 20,000 leones on rent. This is not surprising as 95% of the residents of Susan's Bay are tenants. Only about 5% are owner occupiers.

Very few had money to spend on education, especially beyond primary level, and most had little or nothing left over to spend on health costs, transport or leisure. These results were supported by answers to other questions. For example, the low expenditure on health is supported by the fact that most respondents buy medicine from street traders, the cheapest and least reliable source of efficacious medicines (Question 38: 47.2% buy medicines from street traders).

Income generating activities and subsidised health care facilities should be provided as part of the improvement package.

6.5

Sources of Credit

Of those surveyed 66.3% disclosed that they have to borrow money from time to time to close the gap between their income and their needs. The most cited source of borrowing is from micro credit unions at 22.8%. This is followed by loans from relatives at 18%, then loans from friends at 14.8 percent. Other sources cited were banks 2%, social clubs at 2%, business owners at 0.8%, loan sharks at 0.8%. 36.4% of those surveyed did not answer this question. Most of the respondents consider this to be a very personal question and decided not to answer to it. This might also suggest that some within this category do not borrow at all.

Less formal credit opportunities should be provided as part of the improvement package. Such credit facilities should be at affordable interest rates. Loan sharks that prey on the inability of the urban poor to access credit through formal institutions such as banks should be discouraged from operating in slum settlements such as Susan's Bay.

6.6

Sources of Food in Susan's Bay

From the field survey, it is obvious that the residents of Susan's Bay rely heavily on the open market for food items. 86.4% of those surveyed buy their food from the market. This is followed by a 12.4% who buy their food from kiosks and 0.4% who purchase

from shops within Susan's Bay. None of those surveyed buy their food from the supermarkets outside Susan's Bay. These figures could be explained by the proximity of the market and local shops and kiosks to Susan's Bay, and the fact that most have no money for transport costs, coupled with the issues of; flexibility of opening times, divisibility of products to smaller units and the option of being able to obtain goods by credit during difficult times. Goods are also usually cheaper from the market.

Steps should be taken to ensure that the activities of the local market, is not disrupted during the improvement programme. If this cannot be avoided, then another local market should be made available as the residents would not be able to afford the prices of the shops and supermarkets.

6.7

Assets

Assets are any items that a household can turn into cash. Assets can also be defined as what the household owns. 73.2% of those interviewed owned assets such as kitchenware like pots, kettles, knives and cups. Not surprisingly only, a relatively small proportion of the sampled owned expensive electrical goods such as fridges and cookers. Owners of such items made up a minimal 0.4% of those surveyed. Apart from the low income of the households, fear of theft may have also deterred ownership of such items. 2.8% of the respondents said they owned household goods such as chairs, beds, tables and stools. This would seem to be an underestimate, and further research in this area may be helpful. 9.2% owned entertainment items such as televisions and stereos. Only 4% of respondents owned mobile phones.

Lack of durable assets can be construed as a reflection of the non-existence of creditworthiness to the households, specifically in closing their income/expenditure gap. If the generation of income producing activities is taken up as part of the improvement programme and is successful it is hoped that residents would be able to save and use their savings to buy the sort of assets listed above.

6.8

Nutrition

Nutrition status is a result of the complex interactions between food consumption and overall status of health and care products. Poor nutrition is one of the main problems facing the majority of Sierra Leoneans presently and seriously affects the most vulnerable groups such as women and children.

The nutritional status of households in Susan's Bay was assessed through the food sufficiency level of the members. First, the quantity of food per household was established. Second the number of meals per day taken by household member was also established. This, to some extent, helped infer the poverty situation amongst Susan's Bay

residents. Approximately half, 49.6%, of those surveyed had three main meals per day and 48.8% of those surveyed do not have all three main meals per day.

6.8.1

TABLE 14 Breakfast

(a) Tea/coffee only	1.6%
(b) Tea with bread	17.2%
(c) Porridge	1.6%
(e) Food leftover	46%
(f) Nothing	32.8%

The majority of respondents, 46%, have food left over from the previous day for breakfast. 32.8% do not have any breakfast at all. 17.2% have tea and bread for breakfast.

6.8.2

TABLE 15 Lunch

(a) Bread	10%
(b) Rice and soup	53.6%
(c) Acha/gari	0.8%
(d) Other	0.8%

As rice is the staple food in Sierra Leone, it is not surprising that 53.6% of those surveyed have rice and vegetable soup for lunch. 32.8 percent have a variety of other food items such as cassava, potatoes or yam and 10% have bread. These percentages add up to 65.2%, which suggests that up to 34.8% have nothing at all.

It is not surprising that such a high percentage of respondents skip either breakfast, lunch or dinner. This is a common strategy employed by the poor who cannot afford all three meals per day.

6.8.3

Dinner

A similarly high proportion of the respondents have rice and soup for dinner at 49.2%. However, 61.6 percent agreed to not cooking a separate meal for dinner but using the left over from lunch. This represents not only a financial cost but also a time saving exercise. Only 20% would cook a separate meal for dinner and 18% did not have any dinner at all.

6.9

TABLE 16 Meat/Chicken as a Source of Protein

(a) Less than twice per week	42.4%
(b) Twice per week	12%
(c) More than twice per week	8.4%
(d) Everyday	3.2%

The above table shows that meat and chicken, which are often considered to be luxurious food items, are not consumed by most people. In fact 29.2% of the respondents provided information to suggest that they do not include meat or chicken at all as part of their weekly diet. 42.4% eat meat and chicken less than twice per week, 12% eat it twice per week, 8.4% eat it more than twice per week and 3.2% eat it every day.

6.9.1

Fish Consumption

Fish is a very cheap source of protein in Sierra Leone. It is readily available and most households in general can afford to eat fish on a daily basis. The statistics in this area follows the national trend. Of those surveyed 58% eat fish everyday. 32.8% eat fish more than twice per week only 9.2% each fish for twice or less per week.

6.10

Health Issues

Good health is a very important contribution in enabling individual and communities to participate in the economic, social and political development of a country. Good health also brings about economic growth, releasing resources that can then be used to achieve other developmental goals. Proper nutrition increases workers' productivity, decreases the number of days they are unwell and prolongs their potential working lives (World Bank 2002). The household survey data suggests that the economic effect of illness is a very strong one. For instance, the potential income loss from illness in selected developing countries averages 2.1 – 6.5 percent of yearly earnings. Hence, reducing illness could raise gross domestic product accordingly (WDI, 1991).

Statistics on health issues in Susan's Bay shows that malaria was the leading health problem with 78.8% of the respondents describing it as the most important health problem. The poor drainage system in Susan's Bay is conducive to mosquito breeding and this is manifested in the high rate of malaria infection. Malaria was followed by diarrhoea at 14%, typhoid at 5.6%. Surprisingly considering the widespread incidence of HIV/AIDS in Sierra Leone only 0.8% of the respondents see this as a serious health issue. This could be explained by the stigmatization still associated with this disease rather than a low level of incidence in Susan's Bay. The persistence of diarrhoea, malaria and typhoid reinforces that sanitation must be improved as part of the improvement programme. Health awareness workshops should also be incorporated into the

improvement programme. This would help residents to appreciate how their living conditions can influence their general health.

6.10.1

Frequency of Health Problems

According to the data obtained as part of this survey, 39.6% of the respondents report falling ill occasionally. 29.2% fall ill often and 29.6% fall ill rarely.

Susan's Bay residents have access to a variety of health facilities when they fall ill. The main health facilities used are chemists, street traders, dispensary, private clinics, private hospitals and public hospitals.

6.10.2

TABLE 17 Treatment patterns during illness in Susan's Bay

(a) Purchase medicine from a chemist	6%
(b) Purchase medicine from street traders	47.2%
(c) Use public dispensary	25.2%
(d) Use private clinics	5.6%
(e) Use private hospitals	4.4%
(f) Use public hospital	11.2%

The purchase of medicine from street market traders seem to be the most used source of medication during times of illness. This is worrying as this obviously involves self-diagnosis or diagnosis being made by unqualified sources. Furthermore, medicines purchased in this way are often of dubious quality, and may not be taken in accordance with manufacturers recommendations. They are, however, very cheap. 47.2% of those interviewed mentioned purchasing medicines from street traders as the main source of help during times of illness. This was followed by 31.2% using chemists or dispensaries. The use of private clinics and hospitals only accounted for 10%, this is not surprising as most of the residents are on very low income. 11.2% make use of public hospitals in times of illness, presumably when symptoms are sufficiently serious.

6.10.3

Reliability of Health Facilities

53.2% of the respondents consider public health facilities to be the most reliable form of health care facility. This is something that should be taken on board as part of the improvement programme.. 34.4% of those interviewed consider private health facility to be the most reliable source of healthcare. 12% of respondents did not answer this question. . This is because they do not use either public or private health care facilities in times of illness. They use herbs prescribed by "native healers when they fall ill.

A healthy nation can make a positive contribution in the poverty reduction target of the millennium development goals and also significantly contribute towards the success of the government of Sierra Leone's poverty reduction strategy. The provision of a public health facility such as a health centre should therefore be incorporated into the improvement plan.

6.11

Perception of Rental Value

Housing can be described as informal when it does not conform to the laws and regulatory framework in the city in which it occurs. Problem that confronts people living in the informal housing sector includes security of tenure and the provision of service (UN-HABITAT 2003). An increasing proportion of the residents of Freetown live in slums and informal settlements. This is currently estimated at over 60%. It should however be noted that most of the land occupied by these residents are land that is unsuitable for residential use. The improvement of Susan's Bay settlement should take this into consideration.

A willingness to rent an upgraded unit within Susan's Bay was also considered as part of this study. There is no doubt that there is a rental market for low housing in developing countries. This need has never been adequately met in Sierra Leone especially in Freetown. A very high proportion of slum and informal settlements inhabitants rent their homes. UN-HABITAT 2002 reported that house prices in the main urban cities are not becoming more affordable. For instance in Africa, increase in house prices have been accompanied by falling incomes in three-quarters of the cities. This has resulted prices becoming less affordable.

6.11.1

Rents Residents can afford for the Improved Units

40.8% of the respondents replied that they can afford to pay a monthly rent of less than £10,000 for the upgraded units. 3.2% can afford between 10,000 – 20,000 leones. Only 3.6% can afford 20,000 – 30,000 leones. 0.8% can afford a monthly rent of between 30,000 and 40,000. 4.8 % can afford between 40,000 – 50,000 leones. None of the respondents interviewed indicated they can afford a monthly rent of over 50,000 leones.

From this data it is very clear that over 70% of those surveyed can only afford their current rent irrespective of the units being upgraded. Another formula for recovering part of all of the expenditure involved in the improvement programme should be looked into. It is clear that recovery of capital costs through increased rent is not a practical option.

Increased income generating activities as part of the programme might result in residents being financially better off and therefore being able to afford a higher rent.

Slums are a combination of poverty and inadequate housing. Economic stagnation, increased inequality and increase in population, especially through migration have resulted in the present conditions in slums and informal settlements worldwide. These slums share the economic, physical and social attributes that shape and differentiate them from the rest of an urban area. These characteristics are therefore very important, when understanding slums. The physical and socio-economic study of Susan's Bay captures the unique characteristics of Susan's Bay and hopes to inform the government of Sierra Leone on how best the improvement programme should be approached and managed.

Physical Aspects

7.1

Introduction

This section looks at the physical attributes of Susan's Bay slum settlement. It covers areas such as housing, land ownership, physical infrastructure, environment and recreational facilities.

7.2

Quality of Shelter

The quality of shelter in most informal settlements is determined by a number of factors such as land legality, types of building materials readily available, infrastructure, income and density of houses. Generally the quality of housing in slums is usually of a poor standard. A "cheap as possible" strategy is often used in the construction of such houses. Usual structural requirements are not paid any attention to in such cases. Most of the slum dwellers are squatters and do not enjoy security of tenure. They live on land they do not have any legal title to, this means they face a daily threat of being evicted at very short notice.

From visual observations it is clear that most of the houses in Susan's Bay are built of rudimentary materials such as mud, timber, corrugated iron sheets, and plastic.

7.2.1

TABLE 18 Types of Building Materials - Floors

(a) Natural stone	36.8%
(b) Timber	3.2%
(c) Mud	23.2%
(d) Corrugated iron sheet	12.8%
(e) Plastic/other fabric	0.8%
(f) Cement	8%

According to the above table cement floors accounted for 22.8% of the houses. These would be situated on the old harbour hard-standings. 36.8% are made of natural stone, 23.2% are made of mud, 0.8% made of plastic and 2% made of timber.

7.2.2

TABLE 19 Types of Building Materials – Walls

(a) Natural stone	8.8%
(b) Timber	5.6%
(c) Mud	5.6%
(d) Corrugated iron sheet	59.6%
(e) Plastic/other fabric	1.6%
(f) Cement	18.4%

Most of the houses are built of very poor quality materials, have poor internal conditions and are permeated by elements of weather such as rain and wind. Leaking roofs, poor ventilation, pollution by noise and dust and sand and a lack of privacy are all a result of the poor material and construction methods used in the building of slum properties.

7.2.3

TABLE 20 Types of Building Materials – Roofs

(a) Natural stone	2.0%
(b) Timber	1.6%
(c) Mud	0.8%
(d) Corrugated iron sheet	84.4%
(e) Plastic/other fabric	4.8%

The residents are aware of the low quality of the houses they live in. They rated them as excellent (0%), good (4.4%), average (16%), poor (40%) and very poor (38.8%). This shows that a very high proportion of the residents consider the quality of their housing to be either poor or very poor.

The above can be seen in a positive light in that such a level of dissatisfaction with the quality of housing means that residents would easily support a programme aimed at improving their homes. However, because less than 5 % of those surveyed are owner occupiers, the majority would have reservations about an improvement programme which delivered benefits to the owners, but not the tenants – who have no security of tenure and can be forced to leave. Thus, any improvement scheme must address the issue of legal tenure as well.

7.3

TABLE 21 Number of rooms per household

(a) 1 room	68.8%
(b) 2 rooms	7.6%
(c) 3 rooms	3.6%

(d) 4 rooms	1.6%
(e) 5+ rooms	17.6%

Almost 70% of respondents live in single-room dwellings. Since we know from answers to Question 22 that approximately 30% of households have between 4 and 7 inhabitants, and that almost 40% have between 2 and 4 inhabitants, overcrowding is clearly prevalent. This will be a contributory factor to such issues as ill-health, domestic violence, etc.

7.4

TABLE 22 Perception of most significant housing problem

(a) High rent	6%
(b) Congestion	46%
(c) Poor walls	1.6%
(d) Poor floors	5.2%
(e) Poor roof	26%
(f) Lack of privacy	14%

Internal and external overcrowding is seen as the most major housing problem by the respondents (46%). 32.8% consider the poor structure of their homes to be a major problem. 14% saw the lack of privacy as a problem. Only 6% made reference to high rent as a problem. This supports the general view that people live in slums not by choice but due to low housing cost. For the very poor in urban societies, slums and informal settlements are only homes in urban arrears they can afford to rent or own.

The internal overcrowding compromises the health of the occupants. They are thus susceptible to contacting infections such as tuberculosis, skin infections and other diseases. The indoor environment is worsened by the use of crude energy such as wood, charcoal, and kerosene for cooking and lightening. These produces releases smoke and other poisonous gases.

7.5

Home Ownership

95.2% of residents are tenants. 4.8% are owner occupiers. The tenure of the head of the household has been used in cases in which the respondents were living with friends and family members.

The very high proportion of respondents who are tenants should be explored further during the improvement programme. Starter home initiatives such as help with deposit required to obtain a home ownership loan or reduced rates of mortgaged interest. This should be used as an opportunity to enable more residents to become owner occupiers if they so wish.

7.6

Land Ownership

One of the key challenges in Freetown is the shortage of affordable land for low cost residential development. Slums and informal settlements are a manifestation of the formal sector's inability to provide adequate affordable housing within cities. These settlements have continued to increase in number, sizes and density within the last 30 years. It is usual practice for inhabitants to occupy such land, put up a structure and then seek to legitimise occupation. This is usual through adverse possession i.e. they have occupied or taken possession of the land over a number of years and possession has never been claimed by another party.

TABLE 23 Land Ownership in Susan's Bay

(a) An individual	73.2%
(b) The government	14%
(c) Communal	0.8%
(d) Don't know	11.6%

According to this table none of the residents surveyed have any document to suggest that they own the land they live on. It is arguable whether the slumlords do have bona fide documents to support land ownership at all. 73.2% believe the land to be owned by individuals. 14% the government, 0.8% think it is communal and 11.6% do not seem to know who owns the land their homes are on.

It is therefore recommended that the issue of land tenure/ownership is fully addressed by the government, as the success or failure of the improvement programme will largely depend on who will ultimately own the land and the housing structure. This is a very important issue.

7.7

Sanitation and Drainage

7.7.1

TABLE 26 Access to toilet facilities

% of respondents without a private toilet	96%
% of respondents using communal latrines	71.2%

96% of residents do not have access to private toilets. Of this 96% who do not have access to private toilets 71.2% make use of communal latrines. 28.8 % use the sea or nearby gutters. Only 4% of the residents have private toilet facilities.

The amount of private and communal toilet facilities available should be increased considerably as part of the improvement programme.

7.8

Physical Infrastructure

The development of infrastructure and the provision of services, i.e. power, transport, communication, water and sanitation, are necessary facilities for development and sustainability of human settlements.

In urban informal settlements such as Susan's Bay there is hardly any form of infrastructure. These settlements only have limited and very basic services provided by the communities themselves with the support of civil society organisations. The provision and maintenance of infrastructure and services requires a considerable amount of capital investment which the government can hardly afford. Other issues to be considered are issues such as affordability, cost recovery, maintenance, community participation and public policy.

7.8.1

Access Roads and Public Transport

A close inspection of Susan's Bay settlement illustrates that urban services are almost non-existent. There are no tarmac roads or pathways within the settlement. Most of the roads are made of earth and so are the pathways. Vehicles are unable to access any of the houses. This is not helped by the fact that the settlement is within a deep, away from the main roads. In cases of illness residents have to carry patients out of the settlements to nearby access roads in order to get transport to a health facility. Similarly in cases of fire, the fire engines are unable to gain access to the settlement. The sort of risks this presents is all too obvious.

TABLE 24 Quality of Roads in Susan's Bay

Number of tarmac roads	0
Number of tarmac paths	0
Number of roads made of earth	5
Number of paths made of earth	17
Number of access roads	0
Number of access paths	0

Furthermore, most residents cannot afford public commuter services. So they walk to and from their places of employment and other frequented places. Consequently road planning during the upgrading of the settlement must take account of the fact that most of the inhabitants are pedestrians and therefore must provide adequate footpaths in addition

to vehicular access. The footpaths should be paved and adequate to serve the internal layout and structures and should also link the settlement to external roads.

7.8.2

Water Supply

The increasing number of inhabitants of Freetown has placed significant pressure on the available water resources. Various sources of water is available to the residents of Susan's Bay irrespective of the quality as shown in the table below

TABLE 25 Sources of Water

% who travel more than 100meters to access clean water	64%
% without their own water tap	82%
% who have to buy water	57.2%

64% of the respondents have to travel for more than 100yards to access clean water, whilst 35.2% have access to clean water within 100yards. The United Nations considers access to clean water within 100 metres to be adequate. 82% of those surveyed do not have access to a private tap, only 17.2% have a private tap. 57.2% have to buy water. The low income households pay more for water to the private companies than the rich pay to The Freetown City Council in some areas.

Sanitation and drainage is a major problem within informal settlements. 96% of those surveyed did not have access to a private toilet. This means that most of them have to share such facilities with non household members. In Susan's Bay pit latrines are very common. They are however usually inadequate and not properly maintained.

The latrines that are properly maintained within the settlements are usually the ones residents have to pay a fee to use. Residents who cannot afford the charges and do not have a private latrine or toilet defecate in the open spaces or by the sea. At night people defecate in polythene papers and throw them on the open drains, sea or garbage heaps. Such practices exposes other residents to more health hazards, the most affected being children who often play around the dumping area.

7.9

TABLE 27 Mode of excreta disposal

(a) Latrine	57.6%
(b) Bucket	0.4%
(c) Flush toilet	1.2%
(d) Bush/seashore/river/stream	10.4%

Pit latrines are very common in such informal settlements because of the prohibitive costs associated with the installation and use of water borne sewage facilities. Also such

settlements are densely populated and lack security of tenure, for these reasons they were not planned with water based sewage disposal facilities in mind.

There are no proper drainages within Susan's Bay settlement. Open drainage is prevalent. Due to lack of and poor drainage around almost every structure, there are stagnant, smelly, waters, which provide an excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes and houseflies. During the rainy season, runoff water in open drainage collects garbage including human wastes. These pose a real health hazard and are a general environmental disaster.

7.10

Energy

Affordable forms of energy are important to households living within informal settlements. There is no communal external lighting. Only 15.6% of the respondents have electricity either through the use of generators or illegal connections. Even in such cases electricity is used for lighting only, charcoal, kerosene and firewood are the commonly used cooking fuel.

7.10.1

TABLE 28 **Lighting Energy Used in Susan's Bay**

(a) Electricity	15.6%
(b) Generator	0.4%
(c) Kerosene lamps	70%
(d) Other	12.4%

7.10.2

TABLE 29 **Energy use for cooking in Susan's Bay**

(a) Electric/gas cooker	0%
(b) Kerosene stoves	2.8%
(c) Wonder stove	2%
(d) Wood/coal	93.6%

7.11

Communication

Communication is essential for information flow including information pertaining to development programmes. This can be useful for public education on issues such as promoting HIV/AIDS awareness, public health and civic education. The main modes of communication that seem to be used in Susan's Bay are loudspeakers, radios, telephones, television and word of mouth.

In the slum upgrading programme the most effective mode of communication and information flow should be provided, to enable information to reach as many people as possible. The use of modern communication technology such as cell phones and electronic mails should be encouraged. The extension of postal services to cover this area should also be done. Both the private and public sector should be involved in the provision of communication infrastructure depending on the suitability of each sector.

7.12

Environment

Cities generate waste that is disposed of within and outside such cities. They also consume natural resources as part of its daily activities. In the process of disposing of its waste and consuming of natural resources environmental problems are caused.

Such environmental problems have a lot of social impacts. These can be detrimental to human health, result in economic loss and causes damage to ecosystems on which both urban and rural areas depend. Often, the link between environmental damage and the results are ignored. For example the link between environmental damage and its economic effect cannot be easily made. However air pollution does have a direct health impact, for example, by causing respiratory diseases. This, in turn, can result in economic loss caused by employees having to take time off due to ill health.

Deforestation is another environmental problem in Freetown. Woods are constantly been cut down along the hillsides and are being replaced by make-shift houses. Such wood from the forest is also often sold to be used as a source of energy for cooking. This does not only results in a disruption of the vegetation, but increases the risk of soil-erosion, leading to flooding during the rainy season and thereby often causing deaths, especially in areas of sub-standard housing.

Currently the city is experiencing problems with its garbage collection and disposal system and scarcity of water. Freetown is experiencing a constant increase in the number of informal settlements.

Apparently about thirty new slum settlements have been discovered since the last census in 2004. These are characterized by poor housing and lack of basic services, such as clean water and sanitation.

7.11

Solid Waste

Solid waste in residential areas usually comprises organic waste. Other waste components include plastic, paper, medical waste, old textiles and items made of metal.

The Freetown City Council is responsible for the collection of rubbish within Freetown. The discharge of this duty has not been very successful. There is currently only one vehicle in the city for this purpose. Waste collection is restricted to main road collection points only and can be as irregular as once every other month in most areas around Freetown. In the affluent neighbourhoods, it is now common practice for private companies to be engaged in the collection of waste for a fee of around 20,000 leones per month.

In Susan's Bay and other informal settlements in Freetown, the City Council waste collection services does not exist. Unlike the middle and high income earners in Freetown, the residents of informal settlements are too poor and cannot afford private waste collection services. Residents feel that collection of waste within slums and informal settlements is amongst one of the services that the local authority has refused to carry out and have taken the view that providing such service is likely to be misconstrued as their approval of such settlements. The urban poor would therefore continue to create such settlements. There is overwhelming evidence to prove that even though such services have not been provided, slums and informal settlements are on the increase. Non provision of services does not deter their formation. The generated waste is dumped in all the available spaces such as the open trenches, the nearby sea and along pathways. This does not take long to rot due to the high humidity and stinks. It also pollutes the environment on a large ecological scale. Such dumping grounds make excellent breeding facilities for flies, disease carrying insects and animals. The fact that the informal settlements are very densely populated also means higher waste generation per unit area and in effect more environment pollution.

An adequate and effective system of waste disposal within the settlements should be integrated as part of the improvement programme.

7.14

Atmospheric Pollution

The full effect of urban air pollution is difficult to quantify. However what we do know from health reports on this subject is that it impairs human health and can also damage crops and vegetation.

In Susan's Bay because the pathways and surrounding roads are not paved this generates a lot of dust, especially during the dry season.

Smoke emanates from outdoor burning of waste and the use of crude fuels such as wood, charcoal and kerosene. Such atmospheric gaseous pollution have a detrimental effect on health especially in that of children. Dust enhances eye infection and often irritates the skin. Major health risks such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema have been associated with the domestic use of polluting fuel. Long term exposure has also been identified as a risk for cancer.

Noise is also another form of environmental pollution common in Susan's Bay. Loud music, noise from gatherings and the regular use of loud speakers all cause noise pollution. Noise pollution can damage human hearing and affects psychological and physical wellbeing.

There are a lot of offensive smells in Susan's Bay. This is mainly from rotting garbage, overflowing pit latrines and stagnant water. Such smells can cause headaches, nausea and general discomfort to the residents.

The sources of smells should be identified and measures taken to address the issue accordingly.

7.15

Water Pollution

The nearby sea is heavily polluted with silt, solid wastes from overflowing pit latrines and other forms of waste. In some areas of the sea the water has turned sewer-like and smells foul making the water unfit for human contact. Unfortunately, some residents of Susan's Bay and other informal settlements along the seashore use this heavily polluted water source for their human need such as bathing. Given that the residents have a high dependency on fish, one has to be concerned about the consumption of fish caught in or near polluted waters.

To maximise on space, settlement such as Susan's Bay are built up to the edge of the sea without leaving any riparian reserve for environmental conservation. This should be discouraged in the improvement process.

7.16

Land Degradation

From visual inspection of this settlement, it is clear that due to the lack of planning and very dense human settlement, land degradation has ensued. The gulleys caused by the rampant soil erosion by the roadside and pathways are evidence of this. The dumping of solid waste on the land and stagnant waters has greatly contributed to the degradation of the land. The lack of trees around that area means that residents are unable to benefit from natural shade, temperature control and the aesthetic beauty that trees provide.

Efforts must be made to deal with the problem of land degradation as part of the improvement programme. Measures such as, the provision of civil works to drain storm and waste waters should be implemented as part of the improvement programmed to prevent further soil erosion.

7.17

Recreation

Recreation is important for physical, mental and psychological well being. In the formally planned residential areas of Freetown such as Juba and Signal Hill, recreational facilities such as open play areas, cinema and community halls can be found. In the informal settlements such as Susan's Bay it is a completely different picture. Open space recreational facilities are almost non-existent.

From the information gathered as part of the survey and from visual inspection of the settlement by all five members of the survey team, there was no evidence of a sports ground or a playfield within the Susan's Bay settlement. There are no community halls either, but a small very baldly constructed makeshift area that is used for meetings and also as a local courtroom. There are two cinema centres and five film centres. There are no bars but drinks are readily available for sale by vendors within the settlement.

When upgrading Susan's Bay slum settlement, diverse recreational facilities should be included to cater for a wide variety of residents within the settlement. Recommended recreational facilities should include sports and open grounds, community halls, video show rooms, bars in communal areas away from the residences.

Chapter 8

Recommendations

8.1

Introduction

Though not representative of all slums in Freetown, the findings from this survey can inform and shape the improvement of Susan's Bay slum settlement. Though the general principles might be the same this should not be used as a panacea with regards to the improvement of all slums and illegal settlements in Freetown. Slums and informal settlements residents are heterogeneous and therefore have different needs and priorities. This section provides recommendations for the improvement of slums and informal settlements in Freetown under the following headings:

- Strategic
- Social
- Economic
- Physical

8.2

Strategic Recommendations

- The ownership of all of the land that Susan's Bay occupies should be established. The residents seem to think that this is mainly government land. If this is not the case then the issue of compulsory purchase orders and compensation would have to be determined as part of the improvement programme. Slumlords should not be compensated as this would send out a wrong message. There is also the issue of slumlords being allowed to make financial gains out of the plight of the urban poor. This amount can be used to further improve the lives of the urban poor.
- A risk assessment of all slums and independent settlement should be carried out by an independent consultant. This information would be very useful in determining whether sites should be improved or relocation considered. Resident sites that are considered to be unsafe should either be offered a relocation package or steps taken to adequately secure the sites.
- Residents should be offered security of tenure as part of the improvement programme. The urban poor should not have to live in constant fear of being evicted.
- Starter home programmes such as shared ownership schemes whereby housing units are part owned and part rent should be offered to those who can afford and are

interested in taking up such initiatives. This would be in line with the government's new role of that of a facilitator/enabler in relation to housing.

- Private organisations such as NASSIT should be encouraged to invest in social housing. The government should be prepared to offer “ trade off incentives” in return for this. This is usually in the form of tax exemptions or the provision of prime sites to such organisations in return for them providing a percentage of social housing.
- A detailed population and household census of all slum and informal settlements in Freetown. Although information on this area can be extracted from the recent population and household survey, a more detailed survey of this would be very useful in making a more detailed need analysis of this client group. Apparently another 30 slum settlements have been discovered in Freetown since the last census, this exercise would capture useful information relating to these settlements that do not form part of the last census data.
- The commission of a similar report on one of the provincial towns. This is because there is a shortage of literature on housing at regional level. Also, slums are not only confined to Freetown. This is a challenge that needs to be addressed in the regional towns as well. The information including the data obtained as part of this study is only relevant to Freetown and the recommendations cannot be used to address this problem at national level.
- The support of a local NGO with the necessary skills and experience in the provision of services for this client group. Such an organisation would be very useful in providing free housing advice to slum dwellers and residents of informal settlements. This service would be invaluable in providing advice and assistance on issues such as illegal eviction, domestic violence, rights and obligations of tenants and landlords and the legal procedure for bringing tenancies or licences to an end.
- The engagement of a consultant with the necessary skills, to lead and support slum dwellers in forming a national organisation aimed at improving the lives of residents of slums and informal settlements. The size of such an organisation would give it more influence than individual organisations trying to influence policies at local level. Examples of such organisations are:
 - (a) The National Slum Dwellers Federation in India. This organisation has over 700,000 members. They work on upgrading projects in India and also manage toilet blocks involving millions.
 - (b) The Kenyan federation has 137 savings groups in over 60 settlements with over 25,000 members. It is engaged in many upgrading projects.
 - (c) The Shack Dwellers federation of Namibia has over 300 savings groups with 12,350 member households. The federation has helped 2,300 member households acquire land for housing.

The formation and recognition of such organisations have a number of advantages. Firstly, they form partnerships with governments, especially local governments. This is mutually beneficial as large scale programmes are not possible without their support and without getting secure tenure. Secondly, such organisations provide governments who are committed to reducing poverty and meeting the MDGs, with representative organisations

of the urban poor with whom they can work. Thirdly such federations are able to influence government policies relating to the urban poor due to their membership size.

8.3

Social Recommendations

The improvement programme can use findings from the social data to design successful community development strategies. It can also be used to make sure that relevant information distribution programmes are in place. Services and structural design are specifically relevant to the community in question. The following social attributes are recommended.

- The canvassing of women's organisations to make sure that the views of women are fully taken on board as part of the improvement programme. This would only be fair as there is a higher proportion of female compared to male within the settlement.
- The provision of child caring facilities, schools, youth training programmes and adult educational facilities as part of the improvement programme. These would be very useful as a high proportion of those surveyed belonged to the age group that is most likely to be engaged in such activities. The provision of day care facilities would enable parents to take part in skills and adult vocational training courses. This can also be used to address the high level of illiteracy within the settlement. Adult education classes should also be provided.
- Prevailing customs and practices within the Temene tribe should be respected as a high proportion of the residents of Susan's Bay belong to the Temene tribe.
- The very high concentration of Muslims within the settlement should be taken on board as part of the improvement programme. Religious leaders should be consulted and their views concerning the design and form of the religious facilities taken into account. The provision of a mosque, Arabic classes for the children are the sort of facilities commonly found within Muslim communities.
- An improvement programme as opposed to a relocation programme should be proposed to the residents. This option would present residents with the least disruption, especially as most of the residents have lived there for over 10 years. Relocation would result in a loss of social contacts by the residents. The level of support such social networks provide within African societies should not be underestimated.
- The large number of social organisations that exists in Susan's Bay can also be used as a platform for canvassing opinions about the improvement programme. A reassessment of the level of benefits such memberships provide can be done as part of the improvement. If well managed, this could lead to an increase in rating of the level of benefit membership of such organisations provide. Such groups can be used to rally support for the

improvement programme. Such empowerment can address the issue of misgivings and at the same time improve the capacity of such social groups.

- The lack of availability of social amenities is an issue that should be fully addressed as part of the improvement programme. The new design should include the provision of amenities such as government offices, technical training facilities, well laid out roads and paths, decent sanitation and drainage facilities, access to clean water within 100 yards and health care facilities are a few of the social amenities that are currently lacking. The management and maintenance of such facilities should also be provided for as part of the improvement programme.
- Provisions should also be made for a health promotion programme which should also be embarked upon as part of the improvement programme. Residents should be offered advice on issues such as how to prepare a balanced diet, the importance of living in a healthy environment and the link between improper sanitation and illnesses such as malaria and typhoid.

8.4

Economic Recommendations

The improvement programme can use findings from the economic data to form a realistic view as to how much the residents of Susan's Bay can afford as far as the costs of the provisions of the new services are concerned. The data collected about sources of income, business activities, sources of credit, rental value and expenditure can be used in determining what steps should be taken to ensure that the economic situation of the residents of Susan's Bay is improved.

- The expansion of income generating business activities should be incorporated into the improvement programme, as a large amount of respondents are already engaged in business and this is the main source of income. A very low percentage of those surveyed were in employment (4.8%). The reason for this could be further addressed as part of the improvement programme. For example if this is due to the fact that the residents lack the required skills and experience, then skills and experience based training courses should be provided. There should be government supported incentives for employers who show a willingness to provide work experience opportunities providing the necessary skills and experience needed to enable those interested in taking up paid employment.
- Steps should be taken to ensure that the disruption caused to local businesses as a result of the improvement programme is kept to a minimum. The market should be preserved at all costs as a large proportion of the residents depend on the market for their livelihood.
- There is scope for the nature of the sort of business activities currently undertaken by the residents to be improved. The capacity of residents to be engaged in businesses that produce a lot more income can be addressed as

part of the improvement programme. This would be very beneficial if successful as a large number of the residents do not only have to provide financial support to household dependents but also to dependents living away from home. It is also hoped that this would result in residents being able to purchase other essential services such as healthcare and housing.

- The issue of lack of access to credit from the formal institutions should be addressed as part of the improvement programme. Informal forms of credit such as micro finance initiatives / Osusu should be encouraged to operate within Susan's Bay as part of the improvement programme. Such organisations offer credit at very low interest rates and do not require any of the usual collaterals often demanded by formal institutions such as banks. Such initiatives provide some degree of economic stability and also promote community cohesion.
- The new rents of the improved units should be affordable to the urban poor, if not the residents will be price out of the improved units by those who can afford the rent. The government should consider the provision of a rent subsidy for those who will not be able to afford the new rent. A budget for such subsidy should be provided for as part of the improvement programme. Such subsidy should also be means tested.

8.5

Physical Recommendations

The physical data obtained as part of the survey should be used as a starting point for the planning of infrastructural improvements. Furthermore, plans in this area should be shaped by the suggestions of residents. This would ensure that residents are given the opportunity to become active stakeholders in the new units. Issues such as making maximum use of space, designing out crime and the properties being well managed and maintained would ensure that the neighbourhood is somewhere the residents are proud to live in.

- An overwhelming majority of the residents are tenants. Tenure schemes, that addresses renting as an option should therefore be offered.
- The quality of roads and availability of clean water, access to decent toilet facilities, less polluted form of lighting and adequate recreational facilities should all be included as part of the improvement programme.
- Though not aware of the full extent of pollution, the residents are aware of the various forms of pollution. To deal with this problem, the following solutions that have been suggested by the residents should be incorporated into the improvement programme.
- Residents have suggested that alternate disposal methods of waste should be considered. For example the burning of waste away from the residents

should be taken up to deal with the current high level of air pollution within the settlement.

- Roads should be paved to reduce the current high level of dust pollution. This should also be done in relation to any other open air facilities e.g. playground, done as part of the improvement programme.
- To deal with the problem of noise pollution, the residents suggest that communal drinking facilities such as bars and cinemas should be located away from the houses.
- The construction of proper drainage systems and toilet facilities are essential in dealing with the problems of pollution and disease.
- Water pipes should be made of a more durable material to help with their current problem of water pollution.
- Trenches should be constructed to prevent further land degradation.
- A more organised system of solid waste disposal should be set up and residents should be educated and encouraged to use more acceptable methods of waste disposal. This might be an opportunity to get unemployed youths engaged in an income-generating activity that also improves their surrounding at the same time.
- Plans and all new initiatives should be publicised by word of mouth as this is the most reliable source of information within the settlement. There should be a systematic method of information distribution and an outlet for feedback to ensure that the content of the intended information is not modified or the wrong message is not conveyed in the process.

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