

## Answers

- 1. Definition and data on Informal settlement:** There has been no exclusive study done on informal settlement in Liberia to date; hence there is no empirical statistical data on informal settlement to include definition, identification/mapping of settlement and number of households and total number of people. However Liberia population by the time of the last census in 2008 was 3,489,072. With an annual growth rate of 2.1% (69,781.44) the population of Liberia by 2018 is at least 4.2million and the average household size is 5 persons. In According to the 2008 National Population and Household Survey the informal settlement of West Point has a population of 29,120 and a household of 5,600; Clara Town 17,680 with a household of 3,400.
- 2. Information on access to water and sanitation, electricity, etc. including availability and cost:** Electricity, water and sanitation and basic social services are general not available across Liberia especially in rural settlement. Water, sanitation, electricity and other basic social service are mainly provided in urban Montserrado. Electricity is available in most of the informal settlement in Liberia including West Point, Clara Town, Logan Town, New Kru Town, Sonewein, Peace Island, Slip Way, Doe Community, LPRC Community etc. Many inhabitants of informal settlements in Liberia cannot afford electricity due to the high cost per kilo watt (\$1.00 USD 2.6kw/hr). Knowing that informal settlements residents are low income earners, the Government provided street lighting which many consider as inadequate.

Another major challenge faced by residents of informal settlements is access to safe drinking water. There are no real communal pipes to supply water to residents of both informal and formal settlements since the collapse of an aging bridge that consisted of water pipes in 2006. As a result, residents from formal and informal settlements in Central Monrovia buy water at \$15.00 (Liberian Dollar) every day per 5 gallons containers. Communal wells found in most of the informal settlements in Liberia are mostly used for washing and cleaning utensils but are not safe for drinking. Handling Sanitation issues are serious challenges being tackled by government, NGOs and humanitarians in informal settlements in Liberia. There are a lot of communal toilets in the settlements charge at \$5.00 Liberian Dollars per use but, residents complain of the sanitary conditions and distance from their homes. As a result, many residents constructed makeshift toilets over nearby rivers or wetlands for use by family members. Consequently, wet land, beaches and rivers adjacent informal settlements pose serious environmental challenges on a perpetual basis. Solid wastes are often disposed of in rivers, beaches and wetlands due to lack of inadequate access to collect solid wastes piled up in the settlements.<sup>1</sup>

**3. Information on Environmental, Health, Security Concern in and experiences including violence against women:** No information available specifically on informal settlement.

**4. Information on Plans to upgrade informal settlements:** There is no recent plan to upgrade informal settlements. The Authority

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/CAFiles/Projects/FINALOVERSION.pdf>

acknowledges that in September 2017, a new units called Slums Upgrading was inaugurated at the National Housing Authority but has not commenced active work to date. The Authority in the past only provided housing units for retirees and those actively working as government own way of upgrading its citizens.

- 5. Primary reasons for people living in informal settlements:** The growth of the informal settlement in Liberia is mainly due to internal displacement as a result of the Liberian civil wars (1989-2003), growth in population and increase economic means in urban areas, lack of urban planning, zoning and poor regulation of settlement the population in Monrovia was considerable at optimal level as compare to the current population that stands at over one million in the city. During the civil war in Liberia, many rural dwellers migrated to Monrovia in search of safe heaven. As a result, many of them who are consider low income earners and cannot afford to dwell in standardize settlements found themselves in abandoned public buildings and slum communities (informal settlements) that are owned by the government of Liberia. Furthermore, the lack of access to land by the urban poor is one of the key contributory factors responsible for the growth of slum settlements (Informal settlements) in Monrovia. It has often been said that the issue of land is one which is likely to cause another war in Liberia if not reformed effectively and efficiently. Also, the gap between housing costs is another contributing factor to the rapid increase in population in informal settlements in Liberia. The National Housing Authority prior efforts to remedy housing facilities did not consider providing housing

facilities to informal settlement dwellers. The government was focused on supporting the delivery of highly subsidized mortgage housing projects for a select few public servants with permanent employment or who were retiring.

**6. Laws in place to protect the rights of residence of informal settlements.** There aren't any specific laws to protect people in informal settlements during upgrading. Often the property law of Liberia is used by Government and Private individual to repossess land holding informal settlement. Government only informed squatters about pending demolitions if there are projects to be implemented on lands that are occupied by squatters and in most cases provide cash compensation or resettlement options. The Slum Upgrading Unit under the NHA has developed two guidelines in collaboration with City Alliance and Habitat for Humanity International which includes 1. Slum Upgrading Guidelines 2. Voluntary Relocation Guidelines. Those are policies that the new Slum Upgrading Unit hoped to work with.

**7. Information on International Development Assistants Received for Informal Settlements:** There are a number of NGOs and INGOs contributing to community related programs in informal settlements in Liberia but, they are not engaged in direct provision of low income housing in informal settlements. The main reason being that housing is a capital-intensive exercise requiring a high amount of investment that is not usually recoverable in the prevailing circumstances.

However, a number of NGOs and INGOs operating in Monrovia only provide funding for housing-related essential services in informal settlements. These include; The World Bank, UNDP, EC, Concern, Right to Play, UNICEF, Tear Fund, ADB, MSF, JICA, Oxfam, Goal ZOA, DFID and GTZ. They provide services such as water and sanitation, health facilities, community development initiatives, micro-finance and solid waste. Even with all the interventions by the organizations, Liberia is far from alleviating the bad living conditions. These organizations do not work on their own, they work in partnership with the government of Liberia through its agencies and depend on supports and assistances they receive from the government before they successfully implement their programs. Usually, national development agenda ignore human rights as a structural framework through which responses to informal settlement can be sustained

8. Information on Successful Upgrading or Resettlement. Nothing recent to share.