

THE PROBLEM OF SQUATTER SETTLEMENT IN OKPOKO, OGBARU-NORTH L.G.A OF ANAMBRA STATE

Ogbuefi L.I

Department of Urban and Regional Planning,
Chukwuemeka OdumegwuOjukwu University, Uli Campus, Anambra State, Nigeria.
email: li.ogbuefi@coou.edu.ng

Abstract: The Squatter settlements in many of 21st century urban cities are inevitable phenomena. They are characterized by overcrowding, inadequate accommodation, limited access to clean water and sanitation, lack of proper waste disposal system and deteriorating air quality. This paper examines the problems of squatter settlement in Okpoko, and the factors that contributed to the growth and development of squatter settlement in the study area. This paper further identified the effects of squatter settlement on the environment/condition of houses in Okpoko, and it is based on data collected through field survey using a set of questionnaires. The study area was divided into nine (9) strata/wards. For the purpose of this study, a sample size of 78 was derived using 2% valid number of buildings in Okpoko, while Stratified Sampling Technique was adopted to ensure that all the strata were equitably and sufficiently represented. The data gathered are summarized in the forms of tables/percentages and bar chart format. The result of the study indicates that the formation of squatter settlement came into play as a result of the strive for better livelihood through rural-urban migration in Okpoko, and the absence of effective development control to ensure sound, safe and sustainable environment. This paper recommends the active involvement of public agencies in the provision of houses, social rehabilitation, and programme for socio-economic enhancement, community venture projects, urban settlement improvement project, sanitation etc.

Keywords: Squatter Settlement; Environment; Rural-Urban Migration.

INTRODUCTION

Squatter settlement in our society today is an inevitable phenomena, this is because often times, the desire for better livelihood drives people to move from their places of abode to informal settlement. In the developing countries, rural-urban migration has been a consequence of industrialization and has been associated with economic development

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(Brunn and willies, 1983).The rapid rates of rural-urban migration and unplanned expansion of cities have resulted in several negative consequences, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. Most cities in developing countries are expanding and the population is moving to unplanned settlements on the peripheries, at the expense of agricultural lands and areas of natural beauty (Lowton, 1997). It has been indicated that squatter settlements is responsible for the manifestation of social injustice and poverty that covered a wide range of low-quality housing conditions, in particular slums and squatter settlements (UN-Habitat, 2004) and (Mo wud, 2006).As the population of urban areas increases, the size of poor people and the needs and demands for goods and services also increases. Among these needs/demands, housing is the most demanded. The demand for housing is perfectly inelastic and it's higher than supply. This explains the reason for shortage of affordable housing in many developing countries of the world. The recent growth of urban areas has caused the deterioration of the environment through emissions of wastes, lack of urban planning, absence of legally enforceable affluent standards and weak city waste disposal systems.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Okpoko informal settlement has multi-sectorial problems, and has gone beyond the control of Local Planning Authority within its jurisdiction. In furtherance to the above, the UN-Habitat after extant studies and due consultations on the causes and effects of Okpoko Informal Settlement, advised that our environment is a common heritage for all and must be cared by all. In the light of the above, the major factor that encouraged the movement of people from rural to urban areas is the desire for better livelihood of the society living in the rural areas, related to seeking better job opportunities. However, the fast population growth in urban areas, increases the pressure on basic urban facilities and infrastructure, and the demand for decent and affordable housing. The inability to satisfy the ever increasing housing needs and demands of the urbanites, lead to the following problems;

Poor Environmental Condition: this is as a result of lack of proper system for waste management especially in the squatter settlement areas.

Poor Housing Condition: Most informal settlers belong to the low income group of the society, and are either unemployed or into small scale informal businesses. They live in houses constructed with

substandard materials with no incentive to spend on housing and are in perpetual fear of eviction and demolition by authority.

Another identified problem is flooding; this happens mostly as a result of blocked drainages and water channels, during raining seasons these allow water to overflow into houses, causing flooding, property damages, loss of lives and socio-economic dislocation.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this paper is to examine the problem of squatter settlement in Okpoko environment. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Determine the factors responsible for the growth and development of fringe-squatter settlement in the study area.
- ii. Identify the effects of squatter settlement on the environmental condition of Okpoko.
- iii. Find out the conditions of housing in the study area. and
- iv. Recommend possible solutions that will be geared towards slum elimination in Okpoko.

Hypotheses

The paper sets to verify two hypotheses, null and alternative hypotheses which are stated thus;

- i. H_0 = the problem of squatter settlement in Okpoko is not significantly accelerated by rural-urban migration.
- ii. H_1 = the problem of squatter settlement in Okpoko is significantly accelerated by rural-urban migration.

The Study Area

Prior to 1950, as a fringe zone and the flood plains of River Niger, Okpoko was sparsely populated by farmers who engaged in intensive farming to support the early strategic settlements of businessmen and traders, on the bank of River Niger since the river was a major line of communication, and attracted traders and other settlers from areas like Igala, Aboh and Awka/Orlu uplands. Subsequent migration into the bank settlements towns of Onitsha between the 16th and 19th century (1850+) which now included European and African Missionaries as well as Europeans in the service of commercial firms, notably the Royal Niger Company (1855), John Holts and John Walker. Consequently, the combination and interaction of these factors resulted in the fast growth and present commercial, religious and educational status of the town. The

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period signified the first stage of spatial growth and development of then Onitsha City (pre 1925), and the River Bank Settlements which led to the development of trading points at Otu Okwodu and Otu Obosi (present Head Bridge and Cotton Mill sites respectively). With increase in trading activities, both points developed and coalesced to form a chain of coastal trading centers (Hopaz Consultancy Services, 2010; 2012). This made people to reside in area like Okpoko because of its proximity to these commercial areas.

The first cause of the growth was the migration of traders from the Awka uplands into Onitsha. Because they could not find places to settle, the existing fringe farmers' settlement became their safe haven and as well, opened a trail for their relations who were seeking jobs at Onitsha to settle alongside with them. Subsequently, there was an influx and migration mainly from Orlu uplands, became attracted into this trading and commercial activities and easily made their home among the farming communities in Okpoko area, and led to the gradual increase in the farming population among the early Okpoko settlers (Hopaz Consultancy Services, 2010; 2012). In a bid to outsell and outwit the other and effectively assert ownership, parcels or pieces of land, often of irregular shapes and sizes were sold, resold and leased in perpetuity to non-indigenes. This brought about development without approved building plans. These activities resulted in the spontaneous, haphazard, unplanned and illegal settlement of the area with little or no provision for public facilities and amenity spaces (Hopaz Consultancy Services, 2010; 2012).

Physical Location Map



Fig 1: Location of Anambra State within Nigeria.

Source: Google Map (2017).



Fig 2: location of Qgbaru-North within Anambra State.

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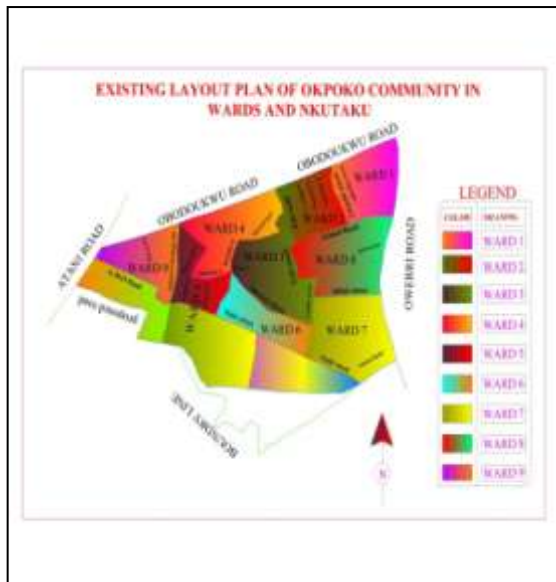


Fig 3: location of Okpoko in wards.
Source: Google map (2017)

Fig4: Arial Photo of Okpoko
Source: Google Earth view (2017)



LITERATURE REVIEW

Squatter settlements have various definitions, but that suggested by UN-Habitat program is the most widely applicable. According to UN-Habitat a clear definition of squatter settlement is hardly available. Many synonymous words have been used in literature to refer to squatter settlements. These include: informal settlement, spontaneous, irregular, unplanned, and marginal settlements (Lamba 2005:2) some literatures have used the term slums and informal settlements interchangeably (UNHSP: 2003C), while a clear definition for squatter settlement is still elusive, some organizations have given description of squatter settlements

and slums. According to UN-Habitat (2002), slums are residential areas in towns and cities that lack adequate access to water and sanitation and secure tenure and their buildings are of poor structural quality with insufficient living area. The UN-Habitat categorizes squatter settlement into inner city and fringe/peripheral squatter settlements (UN-Habitat: 2004).

The critical factors affecting the formation of squatter settlements are notably related to several major interrelated challenges. Studies show that rapid urbanization and influx of people to urban area, lack of development control mechanisms, inadequate formal land distribution, lack of resources, poverty and socio cultural factors are major causes of informal settlements (Goz, 2005). Similarly, in regions of Nigeria, insufficient planning and unrealistic zoning regulation, inconsistent and complex legislation, unnecessary bureaucracy for land development and permitting, marginalization, poverty and lack of financing mechanism for affordable housing, illegal sub-division and construction on agricultural lands, political reluctance to confront the situation and lack of important spatial information are the factors of squatter settlement. However, the formation and expansion of squatter settlements vary from place to place. Each with its unique and distinct characteristics and peculiarity. This explains why it is difficult to devise a uniform slum upgrading strategy for all slum areas.

Informal settlements make housing more affordable and reduced transaction cost, but it cannot be mortgaged or used as collateral for other business purposes (Desoto, 2003). Housing affordability here does not signify housing quality or decent housing, but it is pertinent to note in the words of Agbola and Onifade (2016) that informal settlers are technically considered homeless. The sprawling of poorly controlled settlement developments has resulted in many environmental, Economic and Social impacts. Expansion of the squatter human settlements has been the major cause of pollution of ground water sources, the uncontrolled expansion of human settlements has led to conversion of the best agricultural land into settlements. Occupiers usually do not pay property tax or user fees, thus reducing the revenue of the municipality to provide essential services. In economic terms, informal settlements mobilized significant public and private investments, which remain outside of the formal economy and investment cycle (Desoto, 2003).

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METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this research, both primary and secondary sources of data collection were used. Observations and oral interviews (face to face) were methods used in gathering the necessary/needed data. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The questionnaires were structured in close-ended format to enable the response from the available options.

Sampling Technique:

Stratified Sampling Technique which is a form of probability sampling method was used. The entire streets in Okpoko was grouped into nine (9) wards/strata using the computations with the survey statistics of 4,012 as the total valid number of dwelling units in Okpoko.

Sample Size:

2% out of the 4,012 total numbers of buildings/houses was sampled, having 78 as the (2%) valid sample of houses and 514 as the estimated number of sampled households (i.e. the number of persons living in 78 houses) with an estimated average number of households per dwelling to be 6.96 and average household size or persons per household to be 7.0 respectively.

Table 1: Listed number of valid building according to survey grid areas and (2%) valid sampled house and households.

S/N	GRID/WARDS	Valid No Of Houses/Building	(2%) Valid Sample of Houses	No of sampled (2%) valid Household
1	ONE	458	9	61
2	TWO	556	11	74
3	THREE	765	15	103
4	FOUR	649	12	81
5	FIVE	221	4	28
6	SIX	226	5	33
7	SEVEN	215	4	26
8	EIGHT	661	13	80
9	NINE	261	5	28
	TOTAL	4012	78	514

Source: Researcher's Statistical Survey and Analysis, 2010.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Table 2:Percentage Distribution, why the respondents choose to live in the area

Community ward	Feel at home	Proximity to work place	Marriage	Affordability	Inheritance	Total (%)
One	6.3	25.5	14.9	42.5	10.8	100
Two	0.8	29.4	22.6	40.7	6.5	100
Three	3.0	27.4	13.5	40.2	13.5	100
Four	1.9	33.5	19.1	40.0	5.8	100
Five	1.3	28.0	14.9	46.5	10.3	100
Six	1.0	23.7	10.3	53.0	12.0	100
Seven	0.3	29.4	11.3	54.4	6.9	100
Eight	5.6	33.5	19.1	59.1	1.9	100
Nkutaku	5.2	23.5	17.1	53.2	1.0	100
Total	A=2.8	28.2	15.8	47.7	7.6	

Sources: Fieldwork (2016)

The above table showed the reasons why the respondents lived in the study area. 2.8% of the respondents feel at home, 28.2% of the respondents lived there because of its proximity/nearness to their place of work, 15.8% lived in the area because they were married there; a greater proportion of the respondents lived there because of its affordability/low rent which accounts for 47.7%, while 7.8% of the respondents lived in the study area because they were indigene of the study area.

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Table 3:Percentage Distribution of how the respondents feel living in the study area

Community wards	Unsatisfied	Manageable	Not protected	Terrible	Total (%)
One	44.8	19.1	12.7	23.4	100
Two	23.5	41.8	10.2	24.5	100
Three	56.4	31.9	10.9	0.8	100
Four	39.9	55.1	4.8	0.2	100
Five	39.4	55.5	5.0	0.1	100
Six	41.2	55.3	3.4	0.1	100
Seven	30.7	54.6	9.5	5.2	100
Eight	32.4	55.2	10.0	2.4	100
Nkutaku	24.5	65.3	9.5	0.7	
Total	36.9	48.2	8.4	6.3	

Sources: Fieldwork (2016)

Table 3 above, shows the feeling the respondents have towards the places they are living in the study area. 36.9% of the respondents are not satisfied with the area they are living, 48.2% of the respondents are managing the area based on the circumstances surrounding their reasons of living in the study area, 8.4% are not protected in the study area, and 6.3% feels terrible living in the study area.

ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

Table 4: percentage distribution of the types of waste generated from the building

Community wards	Liquid waste	Solid waste	Gaseous waste	Solid & liquid	Total (%)
One	24.3	31.9	1.3	42.5	100
Two	19.3	30.9	8.3	41.5	100
Three	18.6	33.1	0.0	48.3	100
Four	13.1	39.2	4.4	43.3	100
Five	17.5	35.0	0.7	46.8	100
Six	19.9	20.7	3.2	56.2	100
Seven	12.2	22.8	3.2	61.9	100
Eight	14.4	34.6	8.8	42.2	100
Nkutaku	20.9	29.3	9.2	40.6	100
Total	A=17.8	30.8	4.3	47.0	

Sources: Fieldwork (2016)

From the table above, 17.8% of the building generates liquid waste, 30.8% of the buildings in the study area generate only solid waste, 4.3% of the building in the study area generates gaseous waste, and 47.0% of the building generates both solid and liquid waste. The absence of sustainable systems of refuse collection and disposal is a major cause of unsanitary environment.

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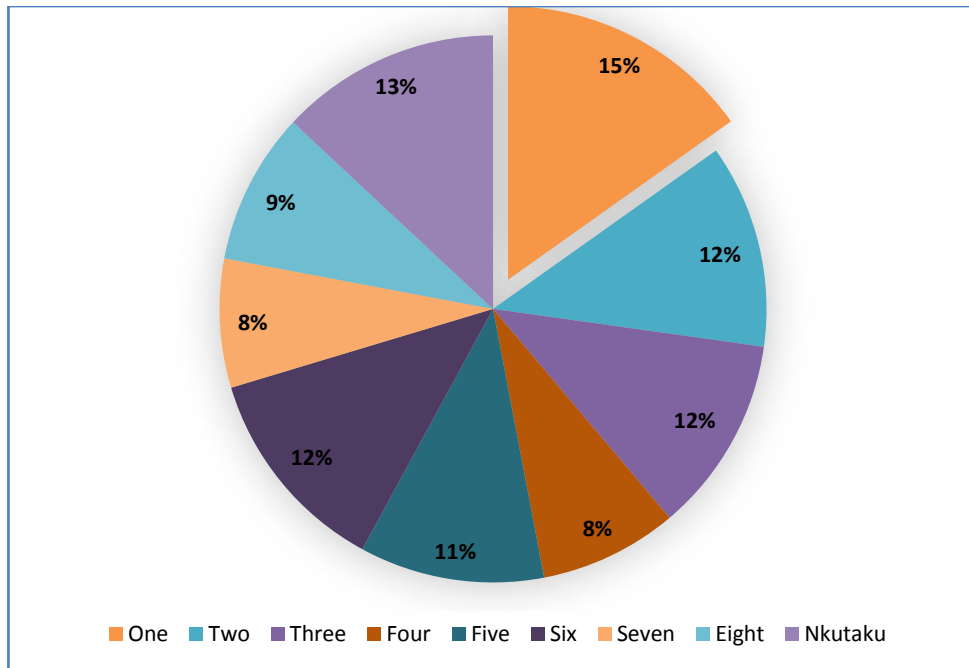


Fig1: Pie chart showing the type of waste generated from the building

Table 5:Percentage Distribution of how often they cart-away waste from the neighborhood

Community wards	Daily	Weekly	Twice per-week	Occasionally	Total (%)
One	0.0	61.8	12.7	25.5	100
Two	0.0	59.9	19.0	21.1	100
Three	0.0	50.5	19.0	30.5	100
Four	0.0	22.8	9.0	68.2	100
Five	0.0	35.5	9.0	55.5	100
Six	0.0	68.8	9.0	22.2	100
Seven	0.0	31.5	9.0	59.5	100
Eight	0.0	22.8	9.0	68.2	100
Nkutaku	0.0	30.8	19.0	50.2	100
Total	A=0.0	42.7	12.7	44.5	

Sources: Fieldwork, 2016.

From the table above, nobody responded to the option of waste being cart-away on daily bases, accounting for 0.0%, 42.7% of the respondents said that waste are being cart-away on weekly bases, 12.7% said that waste are being cart-away twice in a week, and 44.5% of the respondents said that waste are being cart-away occasionally. From the foregoing the respondents are not really satisfied with the operations of the waste management agency, in that they only visit the study area once in a while.

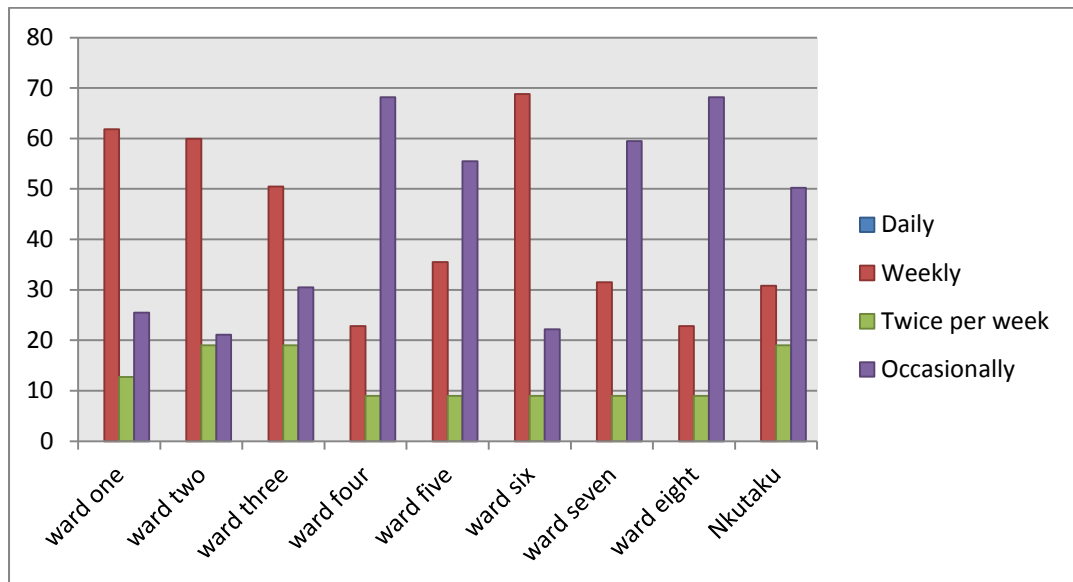


Fig 2: A bar chart showing how often waste are being disposed in the study area

Testing of Hypotheses

Chi square (χ^2) test was used to test the below hypotheses.

H₀= the problem of squatter-settlement in Okpoko is not significantly accelerated by rural-urban migration.

H₁= the problem of squatter-settlement in Okpoko is significantly accelerated by rural-urban migration.

Likert scale for weighting questionnaire items or segments of questions was used to sample opinions of respondents as thus:

A= Agree, S.A= Strongly Agree, D= Disagree, S.D= strongly disagree

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Hypotheses Table 1: Frequency Distribution on why the respondents chose to live in the study area?

option	Feel at home	Proximity to place of work	Marriage	Affordability	Inheritance	Row total
A	2	9	5	8	2	26 (Row 1)
S.A	0	4	3	20	0	27 (Row 2)
D	2	2	2	3	3	12 (Row 3)
S.D	3	0	0	1	1	5 (Row 4)
Column total	7	15	10	32	6	70

Source: Fieldwork and Analysis, 2016.

Calculation of the expected is thus;

$$Fe = \frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column total}}{\text{Grand total (GT)}}$$

$$= \frac{26 \times 7}{70} = \frac{182}{70} = 2.6$$

Contingency table (Observed (O) and Expected (E) table

Option	Frequency (f)	Feel at home	Proximity to work	Marriage	Affordability	Inheritance	Row total
A	O	2	9	5	8	2	26 (Row 1)
A	E	2.6	5.571	3.714	11.88	2.228	26
S.A	O	0	4	3	20	0	27 (Row 2)
S.A	E	2.7	5.785	3.857	12.34	2.314	27
D	O	2	2	2	3	3	12 (Row 3)
D	E	1.2	2.571	1.714	5.485	1.028	
SD	O	3	0	0	1	1	5 (Row 4)
SD	E	0.5	1.071	0.714	2.285	0.428	

Source: Fieldwork and Analysis, 2016.

$$\text{Chi square } (X^2) = \sum \frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$$
$$= \frac{(2-2.6)^2}{2.6} + \frac{(9-5.571)^2}{5.571} +$$

$$138 + 2.110 + 0.445 + 1.267 + 0.023 + 2.7 + 0.550 + 0.190 + 4.754 + 2.314 + 0.533 + 3.7823 + 12.5 + 1.125 + 0.047 + 0.126 + 1.071 + 0.714 = 34.39$$

Thus, the contingency table consists of two (2) Rows and five (5) Columns.

$$df = (R-1) (C-1)$$

$$df = (4-1) (5-1) = (1) (4)$$

$$df = 3 \times 4 = 12$$

Therefore, $df = 12$

At $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level

Computation of critical value (Decision Rule)

The critical value of chi-square (X^2) at the intersection of degree of freedom 12 at 0.05 level of significance has a constant value of 21.206

Since the calculated value of 34.39 is greater than the critical value of 21.206, the null hypotheses (H_0) which stated that the problem of squatter-settlement in Okpoko is not significantly accelerated by rural-urban migration will be rejected. In other words, the alternative hypotheses (H_1) which stated that the problem of squatter-settlement in Okpoko is significantly accelerated by rural-urban migration will be accepted.

Results:

- i. A greater proportion of the respondents/household heads ranges between the ages of 41-50 years. The obvious implication of this finding is that the people who responded to the research questions were people who have more comprehensive information about the condition of their respective households.
- ii. The inhabitants of Okpoko are mostly low income earners whose average monthly income is slightly above ₦10,000 and monthly expenditure is between ₦11,000 to ₦30,000. This is very poor for someone who earns slightly above ₦10,000 monthly.
- iii. A significant proportion of the households in the project area live in precarious houses that are not durable in terms of the quality, unapproved by Town planning standards considering the disjointed

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or very irregular and closed pattern of the houses/ settlement and its location in areas that are prone to flooding. This is a strong indicator of urban quality and poor condition of houses.

- iv. The respondents chose to live in the project area (Okpoko) because of the affordability of houses, proximity/nearness to work places as well as inheritance purpose.
- v. The absence of sustainable refuse collection and disposal system is the major cause of unsanitary environment. The practice of indiscriminate dumping of solid waste on the road and open drains, coupled with uncontrolled household liquid wastes, are responsible for the unsanitary and unhealthy environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION IN THE STUDY AREA



Plate 3: A created drainage channel at Chidiebere Street (ward three)
Source: field survey (2016)



Plate 4: indiscriminate dumping of solid waste at the sakamori drainage nkutaku
Source: field survey (2016)



Plate 2: Dirty building close to the sakamori drainage nkutaku



CONCLUSION

This research establishes that the formation of the squatter settlement came into play as a result of the strive for better livelihood which triggered rural-urban migration in the study area (Okpoko) and on the absence of strong planning policies in ensuring sound, safe and sustainable environment through development control. The planning authorities

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responsible for controlling development in the area should take action in order to eliminate or reduce the continuing growth of slum in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approach that has been receiving considerable attention from various government and public authorities has been the "enabling" approach, where instead of taking a confrontationist attitude, governments have strived to create an enabling environment, under which people using and generating their own resources, could find unique local solutions to their environmental, housing and shelter problems. The enabling approaches include the following:

- **Social rehabilitation:** where the objective was to improve the settlements and cleanliness of the environment, renovating poor houses through a self-help mechanism.
- **Program for socio-economic enhancement:** resulted into increasing household's income and harmonized social relationship among residents.
- **Community venture projects:** resulted into improving housing quality, which also provided funds for Vocational training project aimed at increasing the youth skills,
- **Urban settlement improvement project:** resulted into improving physical facilities, such as-drainage, footsteps, garbage bins and public toilets within the locality.
- **ASWMA involvement in sanitation:** Anambra State Waste Management Agency should involve themselves in the sanitation of the area; at least every second Saturday of the month, they should move into the area to check the residents environment and services. Charges should be giving to every streets and compounds that are found dirty.

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