INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH AND SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION (IJRSI)
ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

Socio-Economic Impact of Urban Renewal Projects on the Livelihood of Residents in Gusau Metropolis

Ugba Dajo, PhD., Abubakar Abdulazeez, Dr. Bashir Bello, PhD.

Department of Sociology, Federal University Gusau

DOI: https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1307000086

Received: 15 July 2026; Accepted: 20 July 2026; Published: 29 July 2026

ABSTRACT

Urban renewal projects contribute significantly to improving the quality of urban infrastructure as well as the living conditions of urban dwellers. However, they often result in the displacement of low-income settlements, disrupt informal economies, and alter existing social structures. Therefore, understanding how urban renewal projects affect the social and economic lives of residents can provide useful insights for developing appropriate support measures to assist those affected by such projects. However, research on how urban renewal projects affect urban residents in Gusau Metropolis remains limited. The primary objective of this study was to examine the socio-economic impacts of urban renewal projects on the livelihoods of residents in Gusau Metropolis. The sample size of the study consisted of 371 respondents. Data were generated through questionnaires, key informant interviews, and field observations. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as tables and percentages. The hypothesis of the study was tested using Chi-square statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic approach and triangulated. The results revealed that road infrastructure, drainage systems, and market development were the major urban renewal projects executed in Gusau Metropolis. The study established that urban renewal contributed to transforming local communities by improving infrastructure and creating job opportunities, particularly in the construction industry for youths. However, displacement, loss of businesses, and weakened community solidarity were also major concerns. Residents adopted different coping strategies, including relocating businesses and borrowing money to sustain their livelihoods. The major intervention provided by the government was cash compensation to some victims of development-induced displacement. The study recommends that the government should provide low-interest loans, grants, economic empowerment programmes such as skills acquisition and vocational training, as well as counselling services for residents affected by urban renewal projects.

Keywords: Displacement, infrastructure, low-income, urban dwellers, urban renewal

INTRODUCTION

Living in cities has become one of the most common forms of human settlement around the world. As human populations continue to migrate from rural to urban areas in search of better living standards, cities are expanding at an unprecedented rate. It is estimated that more than half of the world's population, or 4.4 billion people, already live in cities (World Bank, 2025). It has also been projected that by 2050, when the global urban population is expected to have more than doubled, nearly seven out of ten people worldwide will reside in cities (World Bank, 2025).

In Africa, World Bank estimates indicate that the number of people living in urban areas will double to more than 1 billion by 2042 (African Cities Research Consortium, 2023). In Nigeria, a similar trend is evident. According to UN-HABITAT (2023), Nigeria's urban population is growing at an annual rate of 4.1%, which is nearly twice the national average. The proportion of the population living in urban areas increased from 9.4% in 1950 to 52% in 2020 and is projected to reach 70% by 2050, when the country's population is expected to exceed 400 million, making it the third most populous country in the world (UN-HABITAT, 2023).

As urban populations continue to expand globally, cities are increasingly confronted with complex development challenges. In Nigeria, many cities have experienced urban decay due to the inadequate provision and deterioration of basic urban services, including potable water supply, electricity, efficient transportation systems, affordable housing, and waste management (Aliyu & Amadu, 2017). These challenges have largely resulted from the inability of urban authorities to keep pace with rapid urban growth and the increasing demand for infrastructure and essential services. Consequently, Nigerian cities continue to face significant livability challenges, characterized by inadequate infrastructure, housing deficits, and poor service delivery (World Bank, 2025).

Consequently, one of the key strategies for addressing deteriorating urban infrastructure, improving the delivery of essential services, and enhancing the aesthetics of urban environments is the implementation of urban renewal projects. According to Ataide, Itoro, and Udofia (2025), urban renewal is a major approach aimed at revitalizing urban areas through infrastructure development, housing improvement, and the enhancement of economic and social conditions. The first attempt to implement an urban renewal strategy aimed at improving the urban environment in Nigeria began in Lagos in 1955, following the cholera and bubonic plague outbreaks of 1929 (Mabogunje, 1974). Similarly, the Town and Country Planning Ordinance of 1946 had already provided a legal framework for such interventions through planning schemes (Bello et al., 2022). Since then, several cities, including Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, and Kano, have implemented urban renewal projects to address urban challenges such as slum proliferation, poor road networks, and inadequate public services (Adedayo & Malik, 2014; Ugochukwu, Abasilim, Akortha, & Suharyanto, 2025).

Zamfara is one of the ten poorest states in Nigeria and has experienced inadequate urban infrastructure and poor social service delivery since its creation in 1996 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). The mismanagement of public funds, a weak financial system, poor urban governance, and insecurity have hindered the development of critical urban infrastructure and the provision of basic social services in the state (Glasser & Wright, 2020). However, in the past two years, Zamfara State has invested significantly in urban infrastructure and improved service delivery. According to Lawal (2024), the state's urban renewal agenda comprises several components, including road construction and rehabilitation, healthcare, housing, and environmental management. Lawal (2024, p. 4) summarized the state's urban renewal agenda as follows:

> For all those visiting Gusau after a while, the difference is certainly clearer, and we will do more to uplift the standard of our infrastructure to create a better and enabling environment for easy life and for investors to come and do business and thrive.

It can be distilled from the above statement that the state has invested in urban renewal projects with the aim of improving the standard of social service provision and repositioning the state on the path toward more prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable urban development. For instance, the Zamfara State Commissioner for Information and Culture, Hon. Mahmud Muhammad Dantawasa, noted that Governor Dauda Lawal has executed projects worth over ₦10 billion across each of the 14 local government areas, covering sectors such as health, education, roads, agriculture, water supply, and commerce, thereby reflecting a vision of inclusive development (Balarabe, 2025).

There is no doubt that urban renewal projects are expected to improve the quality of urban infrastructure and attract investment. However, such projects can also have negative impacts on the livelihoods of residents. Urban renewal projects frequently lead to the displacement of people, particularly in low-income settings, disrupt informal economic activities, and alter existing social structures (Abubakar & Bello, 2021). In Gusau, where many residents depend on informal businesses for their livelihoods, the adverse socio-economic consequences of these projects can produce undesirable outcomes. This is because informal sector workers generally lack formal employment contracts and social security protection; therefore, even minor disruptions can have severe consequences for their livelihoods. This view is supported by Cernea (1995), Harvey (2008), and Sego (2026), who argue that development interventions such as urban renewal can produce uneven outcomes. Although these projects may improve urban environments, they can also contribute to development-induced displacement, economic impoverishment, social disruption, and inequality, particularly among vulnerable groups. Similarly, the demand for land can result in the physical displacement of local populations and affect their livelihoods either temporarily or permanently, leading to economic displacement (IFC, 2002).

Unfortunately, most resettlement programmes often focus on cash compensation or replacement housing while failing to consider the broader dimensions of people's lives affected by resettlement (Cernea, 1999a; Human Rights Watch, 2013). Therefore, understanding how urban renewal projects affect the social and economic lives of residents can provide valuable insights into developing appropriate support measures to assist those affected by such projects. However, research on the socio-economic effects of urban renewal projects on residents of Gusau Metropolis remains limited. Against this background, this study examines the socio-economic implications of urban renewal projects on the livelihoods of residents in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State.

Objectives of the Study

The following research objectives have been developed to guide the study:

i. Identify the major urban renewal projects implemented in the Gusau metropolis.

ii. Assess the social impacts of urban renewal projects in the Gusau metropolis.

iii. Examine the economic impacts of urban renewal projects in the Gusau metropolis.

iv. Examine the strategies adopted by residents to cope with the changes brought about by urban renewal projects in the Gusau metropolis.

v. Assess the nature of interventions provided to assist residents affected by urban renewal projects in the Gusau metropolis.

Hypothesis

The following research hypothesis guided the study:

i. Ho_1: Urban renewal projects do not have a significant negative effect on the socio-economic well-being of residents in the Gusau metropolis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Urban Renewal

The concept of urban renewal emerged in the United States after the Second World War as a policy response to urban decline, particularly through government-led efforts to redevelop deteriorating urban areas (Nachmany & Hananel, 2022). Roberts and Sykes (2000) conceptualize urban renewal as a comprehensive and integrated vision and action that leads to the resolution of urban problems and seeks to bring about lasting improvements in the economic, physical, social, and environmental conditions of an area. Similarly, Richards (2014) refers to urban renewal as planned interventions aimed at upgrading deteriorating neighborhoods by addressing the physical aspects of urban decay, including poor housing, inadequate infrastructure, limited water and sanitation services, and insufficient community facilities. The common idea in both definitions is that urban renewal is a planned intervention aimed at addressing urban decline and improving the overall condition of deteriorating areas. Urban renewal, as conceptualized in this paper, refers to government-led interventions designed to improve urban infrastructure, enhance service delivery, and improve the living conditions of urban residents.

Socio-Economic Impact of Urban Renewal Projects on the Livelihood of Residents

The literature presents contrasting perspectives on the impacts of urban renewal in developing countries. Some studies suggest that urban renewal in developing countries enhances employment opportunities and contributes to poverty reduction (Collins & Shester, 2013; Roberts & Okanya, 2022). Proponents argue that redevelopment initiatives can stimulate economic growth, improve infrastructure, and create new livelihood opportunities for local communities. Its primary aim is to improve the built-up urban environment in response to changing social and economic needs (Zheng, Shen, Wang, & Hong, 2017).

According to Caltabiano (2018), urban renewal interventions that invest in a city's attractiveness through the improvement of open spaces and the stimulation and diversification of entrepreneurial activities can provide positive outcomes for residents' quality of life. Urban regeneration often seeks to improve the physical, economic, and social environments of disadvantaged neighborhoods (Srivarathan, Jørgensen, Lund, Nygaard, & Kristiansen, 2023). Based on these views, urban renewal initiatives can be regarded as mechanisms for enhancing urban environments by promoting economic growth, improving infrastructure, creating livelihood opportunities, and strengthening the physical, social, and economic conditions of disadvantaged communities.

In contrast, other studies contend that urban renewal often represents a process of gentrification that undermines spatial justice (Morris, 2017). Urban renewal and redevelopment initiatives in rapidly growing cities of developing countries are often pursued to improve urban environments, attract investment, and promote economic development. However, these interventions frequently involve displacement and resettlement, which can pose significant challenges for residents of informal settlements by disrupting their livelihoods and socio-economic conditions (Wu, 2004; Nikuze et al., 2019; Qian, 2019; Yang & Zhang, 2023).

According to this perspective, redevelopment projects may lead to the displacement of vulnerable populations, reduce access to affordable housing, and exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities. Although redevelopment can attract market investment, demolition and reconstruction have been widely criticized for generating significant sustainability challenges (Zheng, Shen, Wang, & Hong, 2017). In China, large-scale urban renewal projects have resulted in widespread residential displacement, with affected residents relocating to areas characterized by poorer housing conditions, reduced access to urban amenities, and longer commuting times (Li, Tan, Liang, & Zhao, 2025).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored in the Sustainable Livelihood Framework. The approach is associated with Robert Chambers (Natarajan, Newsham, Rigg, & Suhardiman, 2022). The framework aims to help stakeholders understand different perspectives and engage in structured and clear discussions about the various factors that influence livelihoods, their relative importance, and the ways in which they interact (Department for International Development [DFID], 1999). In this study, urban renewal projects are viewed as one of the many factors that can disrupt the livelihoods of people in low-income settings. Consequently, the framework suggests that understanding how urban renewal projects affect the livelihoods of poor communities in Zamfara State can help stakeholders design appropriate interventions to support and sustain people's livelihoods.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Location of Study

Gusau Metropolis, the capital of Zamfara State in northwestern Nigeria was created in 1996. The Zamfara State Bureau of Statistics (2022) states that the local Government has a population of 685,670. The primary occupation of the people is crop and livestock farming. The major ethnic groups in the study location are Hausa and Fulani. The LGA is bordered to the east by Katsina State and Kotorkoshi, to the north by Kaura Namoda and Birnin Magaji, to the west by Bungudu, and to the south by Dansadau and Kaduna State.

Over the years, the state has witnessed a significant rise in urban population. Government policy to modernize the city is a key driver of urbanization process in the state. Though the rising cases of banditry and kidnapping for ransom has also forced most rural population to migrate to Gusau for safety. This has not only contributed significantly to expansion of the population of the city, but also created challenges such as unplanned settlements, housing shortages, and strained infrastructure (Lawal & Yusuf, 2023). Since 2023, the state government has invested heavily in urban renewal projects. Some these projects include road reconstruction/rehabilitation, bridges/culverts, modern motor park, and market upgrades to boost the economic activity of the state (Mohammed et al., 2023). Urban renewal initiatives are expected to enhance development, they have interfered with people's livelihoods, particularly among low-income and informal workers in developing countries. The choice of Gusau as a case study is because the city has experienced rapid population growth together with

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

investment in renewal initiatives for the past three years, offering insight into the socio-economic impacts of urban regeneration projects in the study area.

Research Design

The study utilized a mixed methods design. A mixed methods research design is employed when both qualitative and quantitative research methods are combined in a single study. The benefit of using this approach is that it provides a more holistic understanding of the socio-economic implication of urban renewal project on the livelihood of residents of Gusau metropolis, Zamfara state.

Population and Sample

The target population of the study consists of two groups. The first group is made up people who are 18years and above living within Gusau Metropolis. This Population according to the Zamfara State Bureau of Statistics (2022) is 685,670. However, only 400 respondents will be selected and studied using Yamane (1967) sample determination formula. The second category was made up of twelve (12) key informants who were purposively selected based on their deep knowledge and understanding of the socio-economic implication of urban renewal project on the livelihood of residents of Gusau metropolis, Zamfara state.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size of the study was determined using Yamane (1967) formula. The formula is expressed below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n= sample size

N = Population size

e = level of significant

1 = Constant level

$$\text{Therefore } n = \frac{685670}{1+685670*(0.05)^{2}}$$

$$n = \frac{685670}{1+685670*0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{685670}{1+1714.18}$$

$$n = \frac{685670}{1715,18}$$

n = 399.76

n=400

Sampling Technique

Quantitative Method of Sampling

In this study, a multi-sampling technique comprising of cluster and simple sampling techniques were used to select respondents for the study. In the first stage, cluster sampling was be used to divide Gusau into eleven (11) clusters (wards) These wards are Galadima, Madawaki, Magami, Mayana, Sabon-gari, Wanke, Wonaka, Tudun-Wada, Ruwan-bore, Rijiya and Mada. In the second stage, due to insecurity, only council wards or clusters that were safe for data collection were selected. Consequently, the clusters/wards selected were Galadima, Mayana, Sabon-gari, Tudun-Wada and Madawaki. Lastly, simple random sampling technique was used to select 400 respondents for the study.

Qualitative Method of Sampling

The study purposively selected Twelve (12) key informants or stakeholders to complement data to assist the researcher gain insight into the impact and urban renewal in Gusau Metropolis. The key informants were selected due to their deep understanding of the subject matter under investigation. The key informants include (2) Directors in the State Ministry of Urban Development and Environment, (2) Traditional rulers, (2) civil society organizations, (2) journalists and (3) business people in Gusau.

Method of Data Collection

Data for the study was collected using questionnaire and key Informant interview. Questionnaires were distributed to members of the public on the socio- economic effect of urban renewal project on the livelihood of residents of Gusau metropolis. Similarly, Key informant Interview (KII) was conducted with key informants such as Directors in the Ministry of Urban Development and Environment, Traditional rulers, civil society organizations, journalists and business people in Gusau LGA.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively using inferential statistical tools such as tables and percentages. On the other hand, KII was analyzed thematically using Braun and Clarke (2006) six - step approach for identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. Together, the quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated to help the research gain a deeper insight into the topic under investigation.

Reliability Testing

Reliability testing was conducted to assess the consistency and credibility of the questionnaire instrument. Before the main survey, the questionnaire was reviewed and refined based on expert feedback and pilot testing to ensure that the questions were clear, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives. The internal consistency of multi-item variables was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, with values above 0.70 considered indicative of acceptable reliability. For the interview component, the reliability of the qualitative data was strengthened through the use of a semi-structured interview guide, consistent questioning procedures, and systematic coding of interview responses.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the data collection process. Prior to participation, respondents were informed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any time. Informed consent was obtained from all questionnaire and interview participants. To protect participants’ privacy, personal information was kept confidential, and interview data were anonymized during transcription, analysis, and reporting. The research procedures followed relevant institutional ethical guidelines.

Data Quality Assurance Procedures

Data quality assurance procedures were implemented to ensure the accuracy and validity of the collected data. Completed questionnaires were carefully checked for missing information, inconsistent responses, and data-entry errors before statistical analysis. For interview data, recordings and transcripts were reviewed to ensure accuracy, while thematic coding procedures were applied systematically to enhance the reliability of interpretation. Triangulation between questionnaire findings and interview insights was also employed to improve the credibility and robustness of the research outcome

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

RESULT

Socio- Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, including gender, age, marital status, education level, occupation, and monthly income.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	**Category**	**Frequency**	**Percent (100%)**
Sex	Male	228	61.5
	Female	143	38.5
	Total	**371**	**100.0**
Age	18-24	43	11.6
	25-34	111	29.9
	35-44	112	30.2
	45-54	75	20.2
	55 & above	30	8.1
	Total	**371**	**100.0**
Marital Status	Single	85	22.9
	Married	251	67.7
	Divorced/Widowed	35	9.4
	Total	**371**	**100.0**
Education	No formal education	35	9.4
	Primary education	44	11.9
	Secondary education	150	40.4
	Tertiary education	142	38.3
	Total	**371**	**100.0**
Occupation	Trader	172	46.4
	Artisan	57	15.4
	Civil servant	47	12.7
	Farmer	27	7.3
	Unemployed	32	8.6
	Student	18	4.9

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

	Retired	18	4.9
	Total	**371**	**100.0**
Monthly Income	Less than N50,000	183	49.3
	N50,000 – N100,000	110	29.6
	N100,001 – N200,000	52	14.0
	Above N200,000	26	7.0
	Total	**371**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were male 61.5% (228), which clear reflects the patriarchal nature of economic activities in Gusau, where men often dominate informal trading and artisanal work. Females constituted 38.5% (143), indicating their significant involvement in livelihoods affected by urban renewal. In terms of age, most respondents were in the productive age brackets of 25-34 (29.9%) and 35-44 (30.2%), suggesting that urban renewal impacts working-age adults who support families. This has implications for household stability, as disruptions to their livelihoods could affect dependents. Marital status revealed that 67.7% (251) was married, underscoring the family-oriented nature of the population and the potential ripple effects of economic disruptions on children and spouses. In terms of educational attainment, majority of the respondents representing 38.3% (142) reported higher education, and 40.4% (150) indicated secondary education. This shows that majority of study population are educated and have capacity to evaluate the effects of urban renewal. The occupational distribution shows that majority of the population representing 46.4% (172) were traders and this is expected because Gusau is a commercial hub of the state. The majority 49.3%, (183) was vulnerable to the economic shocks of renewal programs and earned less than N50, 000 per month. This demographic profile implies that low-income, informal sector workers are disproportionately favored by urban regeneration in a predominantly agrarian-commercial setting like Gusau.

Major Urban Renewal Projects Executed in Gusau Metropolis

To identify the major urban projects executed in Gusau Metropolis, data on the distribution of respondents regarding these projects was collected and is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Major Urban Renewal Projects Executed in Gusau Metropolis

Project Mentioned	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Road reconstruction	131	35.3
Construction of new market	44	11.9
Ultra-modern motor park	24	6.5
Construction of drainages/culverts	107	28.8
Fixing of street lights	65	17.5
Total	**371**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

The result presented in Table 2 indicated that majority of the respondents represented by 35.3% (131) mentioned road construction as one of the major urban renewal projects executed in Gusau Metropolis. This was followed by the construction of drainages and culverts represented by 28.8% (107), fixing of street lights 17.5% (65), construction of markets 11.9% (44) and construction of motor mark 6.5% (24). This data suggests that road reconstruction, drainages and culverts and street lights were the widely recognized urban renewal projects identified by the respondents.

Qualitative interviews substantially corroborated the quantitative rankings and offered additional insight into residents' actual experiences. Several respondents mentioned road expansion directly to enhanced mobility but also to interruptions in their daily routines:

Respondent 1 noted: "*The biggest thing is the new market and widening of roads… many traders had to move their stalls.*"

Respondent 2 added: "They are building a new drainages/culvert, but they removed some workshops near the old one. The roads are better now, but business is harder."

Other responses similarly underlined the joint impact of market redevelopment and road changes:

Respondent 5 stated: "Roads and the big motor park are the main projects people talk about."

It can be concluded based on the quantitative and qualitative data that road infrastructure, drainage system and market development are major components of urban renewal projects undertaken in Gusau Metropolis by the Zamfara State Government.

Social Impact of Urban Renewable Projects on Residents

To examine the social impact of urban renewal projects on residents in Gusau Metropolis, data on respondents' perceptions of the social effects of these projects was collected and is presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Social Impact of Urban Renewal Projects on Respondents

Type of Social Impact	Frequency	Percent (%)
Displacement	112	30.2
Loss of social networks	53	14.3
Demolition of Houses/Shops	94	25.3
Loss of local identity	30	8.1
Uncertainty	82	22.1
Total	**371**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

The data in Table 3 revealed that the three most significant social impact of urban renewal projects on residents in Gusau Metropolis are displacement (30.2%), demolition of houses/shops (25.3%), uncertainty (22.1%), loss of social networks (14.3%) and loss of local identity (8.1%).

A comparism with qualitative data from key informants also indicated that urban renewal projects had negative social impacts on respondents.

Respondent 1 explained: "We were displaced from our old home and now we hardly see our neighbors or friends."

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

Respondent 2 added: "The project forced many families to move; our community ties are broken because everyone is scattered."

Several respondents related displacement specifically to the loss of daily social interactions:

Respondent 5 stated: "After being displaced, we lost contact with people we used to meet every day at the same place."

Respondent 8 noted: "Displacement made it hard to keep up with family and friends; the new place feels lonely."

On the positive note that some respondents emphasized physical changes that indirectly helped social life:

Respondent 3 remarked:

"There were too many unconfirmed stories about this demolition. Some say our area will not be affected some said it would be affected. This gave me sleepless night. Then finally, most of the shops on our street were demolished

Respondent 10 commented:

"There was no clear information from government as to which areas would be demolished. Up till now, those of us whose shops are here in front of King Fahad hospital in Samaru, live in constant fear because there are rumors that our shop will still be demolished

These accounts show that, while infrastructure improvements (particularly improved roads) provided some social benefits by facilitating movement and cleanliness, displacement, demolition of houses/shops, uncertainty and the loss of social networks caused a much stronger sense of disconnection and emotional strain for a larger proportion of the population.

Economic Impact of Urban Renewal Projects on Residents

To examine the economic impact of urban renewal projects executed in Gusau Metropolis, data on the distribution of respondents regarding these economic impacts was collected and is presented in Table 4

Table 4: Economic Impact of Urban Renewal Projects on Respondents

Type of Economic Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Loss of business / livelihood / customers	108	29.1
Increase in income opportunity	68	18.3
Job creation	81	21.9
Loss of land / property	59	15.9
Business visibility	55	14.8
Total	**371**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

The data in Table 4 demonstrates that the major economic consequence of the urban renewal initiatives have both positive and negative impact.

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

On the positive impact, majority of the respondents (21.9%) stated that urban renewal projects created jobs for residents especially in the construction industry, 18.3% were of the view that urban renewal projects increased income opportunities for while 14.8% stated that urban renewal projects.

On the other hand, some respondents believed that urban renewal projects impacted negatively on their economic conditions. From the data collected, 29.1% of the respondents decried the loss of their business and customers due to the urban renewal projects going on in Gusau Metropolis while 15.9% stated that they loss land/property as a result of the urban renewal projects executed in their area.

Qualitative responses provided deeper insight into these tendencies. Several respondents noted how relocation and displacement directly damaged their economic base:

Respondent 1 stated:

“My shop was moved far away and I lost many regular customers.”

Respondent 2 added:

“Fewer people come to buy now because of the changes in location.”

Others noted the combined pain of property loss and growing living costs’

Respondent 5 explained:

“We lost part of our land near the road expansion and now rent is much higher in the new place.”

Respondent 8 noted:

“The project took some of our family land and the cost of housing has gone up a lot.”

At the same time, some respondents noted some favorable economic improvements connected due to improved infrastructure:

Respondent 3 remarked: “The new roads make it easier to bring goods, so some days I earn more.” Respondent 10 observed:

“After the market was upgraded, more people come and business is slowly getting better.”

These disparate experiences show that although the projects gave some people new opportunities (primarily through the construction industry and business visibility), the negative effects were far more pervasive and severe, especially the loss of established business locations, clientele, land/property.

Coping Strategies Adopted by Residents

To examine the coping strategies adopted by residents as a result of urban renewal projects executed in Gusau Metropolis, data on the distribution of respondents regarding these coping strategies was collected and is presented in Table 5

Table 5: Coping Strategy Adopted by Residents

Type of Coping Strategy	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Changed job or business type	98	26.4
Relocated business / shop to new location	157	42.3

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

Relied on family / relatives for support	10	2.7
Reduced spending / tightened budget	17	4.6
Started additional income-generating activity	14	3.8
Borrowed money / took loan	75	20.2
Total mentions	**371**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 5 shows that the majority of respondents (42.3 %) stated that the major coping strategy adopted was the relocation of their businesses/ shop to new location as a result of the urban renewal projects. Data collected also indicated that 26.4% were the opinion that people in the study area switched their jobs or business types while 20.2% were of the view that they borrowed money/took loans to start other businesses.

Data from key informants' interview indicated that most displaced persons depend on social networks as their first port of call for help.

According to Respondent 1,

"I relied on my family to help me with money and food while I looked for a new place to sell."

Respondent 2 continued, saying,

"To be honest with you, things would have been worse for me and my family if not for the support I received from my relatives and friends."

Others described how they felt compelled to radically change their way of life or geographical location:

Respondent 5 said,

"I had to change from selling shoes in the old market to doing other menial jobs because my business was affected"

Respondent 8 clarified:

"We moved the shop to another area and we lost most of our old customers due to change in location."

In essence, most of the significant buffer was found to be reliance on family and social networks, demonstrating the vital function of social capital in situations when formal institutional assistance was thought to be insufficient or nonexistent.

Relocation and job/business changes were also common, although respondents commonly characterized them as challenging, expensive, and only partially successful often accompanied by statements like *"it is not enough" or we are still struggling"*

The fact that 58.2% of respondents used coping mechanisms shows that Gusau locals have a high degree of adaptability in the face of major disturbance. The 41.8% of respondents who said they had no coping mechanism, however, indicate that a sizable portion may not have been able to adjust successfully possibly as a result of a lack of resources, a traumatic relocation, or the depletion of available options putting them at greater risk of long-term livelihood insecurity.

In conclusion, a variety of coping mechanisms used mostly were relying on family support, changing jobs or businesses, and moving, these techniques were mostly unofficial, unstable, and unable to completely restore pre-project social and economic stability.

Nature of Interventions Made to Assist Residents Affected by Urban Renewal

This section examines the extent, type, and perceived adequacy of any assistance or interventions provided to residents affected by the urban renewal projects. Respondents were asked whether they received any form of assistance, the type of assistance (if any).

Table 6: Nature of Interventions to Residents Affected by Urban Renewal Projects

Nature Assistance	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Financial compensation / cash payment	304	81.9
Temporary relocation / housing support	28	7.5
Business / shop relocation assistance	19	5.1
Skills training / livelihood support	11	3.0
Other (food items, transport allowance, etc.)	9	2.4
Total	**371**	**100**

Source: Researcher's Survey (2025)

The data in Table 4.7 demonstrate that financial compensation or cash payment was the most common type of assistance received (81.9%), far outnumbering other types such as temporary relocation or housing support (7.5 %), business/shop relocation assistance (5.1 %), skills training or livelihood support (3.0%), and miscellaneous aid (2.2%). Qualitative replies gave vital information into the nature and perceived adequacy of these interventions. The majority of users characterized the help as inadequate, symbolic, or insufficient to rebuild their livelihoods:

Respondent 1 stated:

"We got some money from the government, but it was too small to cover our losses or start again."

Respondent 2 added:

"Only cash was given. No help with finding a new shop or paying rent in the new place."

Respondent 5 explained:

"The compensation came late and was not enough; it did not solve our economic problems."

A few respondents reported obtaining slightly more complete support, but nevertheless voiced dissatisfaction:

Respondent 8 noted:

"They gave us money and helped move some things, but it was not enough to rebuild what we lost."

Respondent 10 remarked:

"We got a small amount and some transport help, but no training or long-term support."

These reports demonstrate a clear pattern: while help was offered to a majority of those directly affected (especially the displaced), it was generally short-term, financially constrained, and administratively driven rather than comprehensive or development-oriented. Very few respondents reported receiving support for long-term livelihood restoration (e.g., skills training, microcredit, business recovery aid, or permanent housing solutions), and even fewer described the intervention as inadequate.

The predominance of one-off financial appears that interventions were designed primarily to facilitate project implementation and reduce immediate resistance (for example, through token payments), rather than to truly protect or restore the livelihoods and social well-being of affected low-income residents the very groups most vulnerable to displacement and economic marginalization.

Test of Hypothesis

This section presents the statistical analysis used to test the study's hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested to determine the significance of the relationship between urban renewal projects and the socio-economic well-being of residents in the Gusau metropolis.

Table 7: Urban renewal projects do not have a significant negative effect on the socio-economic well-being of residents in the Gusau metropolis

Null Hypothesis	**Test**	**Sig.**	**Decision**
Urban renewal projects do not have a significant negative effect on the socio-economic well-being of residents in the Gusau metropolis	Chi-square Test of Independence	2.48	Retain the Null Hypothesis

Source: Author's computation, 2025 (using SPSS 21).

The Chi-square result indicates that there is no statistically significant association between urban renewal projects and the socio-economic well-being of residents in Gusau metropolis, $\chi^2(2, N = 371) = 2.48, p = 0.287$. Since the significance value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that urban renewal projects do not have a statistically significant negative effect on the socio-economic well-being of residents.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section presents findings of the study in line with the five research objectives of the study. The discussion combines quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the socio-economic and social implications of urban renewal projects on residents' livelihoods in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State.

The first objective of the study was to identify the major urban renewal projects executed in Gusau Metropolis. Data collected indicated that the key urban renewal projects executed in the study area were road expansion/reconstruction, the ultra-modern motor park, and market modernization/upgrading. The findings of the study are consistent with those of the Zamfara State Government's (2024) Urban Renewal Agenda, which aims to uplift the standard of infrastructure in the areas of building and rehabilitation of roads, education, water supply, health, and housing. The essence of investing in the state's urban infrastructure is to create a better and enabling environment for a comfortable life and to encourage investors to come, do business, and thrive. Similarly, a study conducted by Dajo and Ibeh (2025) also confirms that the Zamfara State Government launched an ambitious urban development initiative to improve the poor state of urban infrastructure through the reconstruction of drainages to ensure better flood management and a safe urban environment.

In the second objective, the study observed that urban renewal projects had negative social impacts on the living conditions of residents in Gusau Metropolis. These negative impacts include displacement, demolition of residents' houses/shops, uncertainty, and loss of social networks. This finding agrees with that of Das and Shukla (2011) and Bennett and McDowell (2012), who noted that even when urban renewal strategies result in improved material living conditions, they can still cause considerable social consequences, such as displacement.

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue VII July 2026

The third objective established that urban renewal projects have both positive and negative economic impacts on the living conditions of residents. While the positive impact indicates that urban renewal projects undoubtedly create jobs, especially for young people in the construction industry, and increase income opportunities.

The fourth objective sought to examine the coping strategies adopted by residents in Gusau Metropolis as a result of the urban renewal projects being executed in the state. It was observed that, although urban renewal projects created jobs and increased opportunities for income-generating activities, they also disrupted people's livelihoods and resulted in job losses. To navigate these disruptions, the majority of residents relocated their businesses/shops, changed businesses, and borrowed money from family and friends to establish new businesses.

Lastly, the study found that financial assistance was the major form of intervention provided to residents affected by urban renewal projects in Gusau Metropolis. It must be noted that issues of resettlement extend beyond financial compensation. Unfortunately, the traditional approach adopted by government and corporate organizations in many poor countries is that providing cash compensation to victims of urban displacement solves all their problems. This implies that displacement is not merely an economic problem but also reflects cultural, social, and emotional attachments. As rightly observed by Cernea (1999), Human Rights Watch (2013), and Vanclay (2017), an excessive focus in resettlement practices is placed on the replacement of housing or monetary compensation, while insufficient attention is given to other aspects of life affected by displacement.

The Chi-square analysis revealed that urban renewal projects do not have a statistically significant negative effect on the socio-economic well-being of residents in Gusau Metropolis ($\chi^2(N = 371) = 2.48, p = 0.287$). Although residents experienced varying socio-economic outcomes, the differences between those affected and not affected by urban renewal were not statistically significant. This suggests that factors other than urban renewal projects may have influenced residents' socio-economic well-being.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is undisputable that urban renewal projects contribute in improving urban infrastructure and social service provision in Gusau metropolis. However, it also creates unintended consequences such as displacement of households, business premises and weakened social networks. It is therefore pertinent for government to move from purely "infrastructure-led" development to "people-centered" development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made:

i. It is obvious that most displaced businesses relied on borrowing as a copying strategy. It is therefore recommended that Government should provide low-interest loans or grants to help displaced small businesses recover.

ii. Government and non-government organizations should set up counselling units in communities displaced by urban renewal projects to provide emotional and psychosocial to affected communities.

iii. It is obvious that some of the residents lost their jobs due to the urban development programmes in the state. Therefore, government can assist those who lose their jobs by engaging them in economic empowerment programmes such as skills acquisition and vocational training programmes to open doors for new sources of livelihood.

REFERENCES

1. Adebisi, F. A., & Nurudeen, M. A. (2014). Effects of urban renewal programmes on the slum residents of Lagos metropolis, Nigeria. Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, 16(8), 30–43.

2. African Cities Research Consortium. (2023). African megacities and insecurity: Preparing for a complex future. https://www.african-cities.org/african-megacities-and-insecurity-preparing-for-a-complex-future/
3. Afinowi, T., & Nara Monkam, N. (2025). Advancing context-specific urban indicators for African cities: A systematic review. npj Urban Sustainability, 5, 105. https://doi.org/10.1038/s42949-025-00292-y
4. Aliyu, A. A., & Amadu, L. (2017). Urbanization, cities, and health: The challenges to Nigeria—A review. Annals of African Medicine, 16(4), 149–158. https://doi.org/10.4103/aam.aam_1_17
5. Ataide, H. O., Ebong, I. B., & Udofia, E. K. (2025). Urban renewal programmes and infrastructural development in Uyo metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria: An assessment. MSI Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 2(7), 1–27.
6. Bello, A., et al. (2022). Assessing the impact of urban renewal on the built environment in Nigeria. In M. Kardaslar & M. Faruk (Eds.), International Korkut Ata Scientific Researches Conference.
7. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
8. Cernea, M. M. (1995). Understanding and preventing impoverishment from displacement: Reflections on the state of knowledge. Journal of Refugee Studies, 8(3), 245–264. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/8.3.245
9. Cernea, M. M. (1999a). Why economic analysis is essential to resettlement: A sociologist's view. Economic and Political Weekly, 34, 2149–2158.
10. Collins, W. J., & Shester, K. L. (2013). Slum clearance and urban renewal in the United States. American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 5(1), 239–273. https://doi.org/10.1257/app.5.1.239
11. Dajo, U., & Ibeh, J. M. (2025). Urban flood risks and regeneration in Zamfara State: Balancing development and displacement. Port Harcourt Journal of Society and Environment, 5(2), 8–13.
12. Department for International Development. (1999). Sustainable livelihoods guidance sheets. https://worldfish.org/GCI/gci_assets_moz/Livelihood%20Approach%20-%20DFID.pdf
13. Glasser, M. D., & Wright, J. (2020). South African municipalities in financial distress: What can be done? Law, Democracy & Development, 24(1), 413–441.
14. Human Rights Watch. (2013). What is a house without food? Mozambique's coal mining boom and resettlements. https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/05/23/what-house-without-food/mozambiques-coal-mining-boom-and-resettlements
15. International Finance Corporation. (2002). Handbook for preparing a resettlement action plan.
16. Li, L., Tan, Y., Liang, J., & Zhao, P. (2025). Measuring mass displacement of urban renewal in Shenzhen, China: Using longitudinal mobile phone trajectory data. Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space, 57(5), 635–651. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X251336904
17. Mabogunje, A. L. (1968). Urbanization in Nigeria. University of London Press.
18. Morris, A. (2017). "It was like leaving your family": Gentrification and the impacts of displacement on public housing tenants in inner-Sydney. Australian Journal of Social Issues, 52(2), 147–162. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.10
19. Natarajan, N., Newsham, A., Rigg, J., & Suhardiman, D. (2022). A sustainable livelihood framework for the 21st century. World Development, 155, 105898. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2022.105898
20. Roberts, R. E., & Okanya, O. (2022). Measuring the socio-economic impact of forced evictions and illegal demolition: A comparative study between displaced and existing informal settlements. The Social Science Journal, 59, 119–138.
21. Sego, J. J. (2026). Human rights in resettlement policies of European bilateral development finance institutions operating in Sub-Saharan Africa: Hitting the mark? Journal of Internal Displacement, 16(1), 127–154. https://doi.org/10.4314/jid.v16i1.7
22. Srivarathan, A., Jørgensen, T. S. H., Lund, R., Nygaard, S. S., & Kristiansen, M. (2023). "They are breaking us into pieces": A longitudinal multi-method study on urban regeneration and place-based social relations among social housing residents in Denmark. Health & Place, 79, 102965. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2023.102965
23. Ugochukwu, D. A., Akortha, E. C., & Suharyanto, A. (2025). Urban renewal and its implications for displacement and insecurity in Nigerian cities. Public Administration & Regional Studies, 18(1), 25–41.
24. UN-Habitat. (2023). A better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world. https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2023/07/nigeria_country_brief_final_en.pdf

25. Vanclay, F. (2002). Conceptualizing social impacts. Environmental Impact Assessment Review, 22, 183–211.
26. Vanclay, F. (2008). Place matters. In F. Vanclay, M. Higgins, & A. Blackshaw (Eds.), Making sense of place (pp. 2–11). National Museum of Australia Press.
27. Wijayaningtyas, M., Lukiyanto, K., Nursanti, E., & Laksmana, D. I. (2022). The effect of economical phenomenon on informal construction workers' earnings within COVID-19 pandemic: A mixed method analysis. Heliyon, 8(8), e10321. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e10321
28. World Bank. (2025). Nigeria urban livability and mobility programmatic advisory services and analytics (ULM PASA). https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/ en/099120825221511324/pdf/P501265-a4de204f-a12a-4b57-bc1a-e2cbb591d311.pdf
29. World Bank. (2025). Urban development. https://www.worldbank.org/ext/en/topic/urban-development
30. Yamane, T. (1967). Statistics: An introductory analysis (2nd ed.). Harper and Row.
31. Yang, Q., & Zhang, C. (2023). How does the renewal of urban villages affect the resettled villagers' subjective well-being? A case study in Wuhan, China. Land, 12(8), 1547. https://doi.org/10.3390/land12081547
32. Zheng, W., Shen, G. Q., Wang, H., Hong, J., & Li, Z. (2017). Decision support for sustainable urban renewal: A multi-scale model. Land Use Policy, 69, 361–371. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2017.09.046