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KANO: DEVELOPING A MODERN ISLAMIC PILGRIMAGE CITY

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1. **Introduction**

This presentation briefly highlights the prevailing notable environmental issues in Kano city and why we think FCI and ESG investments are the ideal means of solving them, especially for a developing city like Kano and also facilitate the making of Kano as a modern sustainable Islamic pilgrimage city a reality. Kano city¹ is the capital of Kano State in Nigeria, a commercial and industrial centre. The city is well over 1000 years old has a population of minimum 4.5 million and majority are Sunni Muslims of Sufi orders. We have a pilgrimage every year of at least two million adherents in Kano

2. **The Kano Challenges**

Air Pollution

Air pollution is common due to many factors such as increasing number of automobiles, solid waste incineration and the proliferation of fossil fueled electricity generators at homes, businesses and industries. Kano city has no carbon emission control regulation.

Polythene Trash

Public water distribution system is inefficient making clean potable water scarce. This has promoted the popularity of a popular polythene packaged table water known as 'Pure water'. The word is just catchy it is not pure. Discarded used 'Pure water' poly bags and other poly bags are now widespread on the streets and in neighbourhoods. We have trash of polythene every nook and corner.

Declining foliage density

The foliage density in Kano has decline over time largely due to the cutting off of trees for road network expansion. Chopped trees are not being replaced

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kano>

adequately. Also, a number of old public gardens have already been converted into commercial or posh residential properties.

Municipal Solid Waste

With more than 4.5 million people Kano city generates huge metric tons of municipal solid waste daily². The collection system remains largely ineffective and corrupted, and the waste's sustainable usage potentials remains untapped. Furthermore, the traditional sewage collection is both outdated and unhygienic, resulting to improper sewage disposal causing many public health and sanitation issues. The government spent a lot of money to collect the garbage but it is not done.

3. **Why FCI & ESG Investments Are The Way Forward**

If you take the current trend of two or three years ago Europe is no longer at ease with people crossing the Mediterranean into Europe the so-called illegal immigrants. If FCI is placed there it could check the outflow.

In Kano if you invest in some of the eco themes then people can stay because they will not be attracted to move anywhere. If not they will join the bandwagon to improve on their lives. The effects of bad governance especially in Africa and other third world countries has created myriad of problems including social decadence, economic and ecological problems. Most of these problems can be tackled through FCI and ESG investments better than conventional investment methodology offers. For instance, FCI and ESG investments would not allow mismanagement of people and abuse of their natural resources to endure in the name of investment as is the case in many third world countries.

Most societies especially in the third world countries faces many challenges including public sanitation, uncontrolled carbon emissions, labour and human rights abuses, etc. Kano city is in one way or another is indeed connected to some of these issues, and accordingly fits very well within the social and ecological capacity frameworks of FCI and ESG investments.

Considering 90% of Africa's population are either Muslims or Christians, FCI investments for example, will become relevant and easily adaptable both for faith reasons and also for FCI's ability to impact on peoples' lives and environment. The Kano city's population being 99% Muslims, naturally makes the city suitable for FCI to succeed.

² Links to additional relevant information is provided on the reference page.

Essentially, impact investments are typically neither self-centered nor exclusively profit driven. The FCI investment alone typifies element of ‘give and take’, and this means fairness in business and financing. While the FCI and ESG both allows profit making, they also have the capacity to prevent taking undue ‘advantages’ in businesses, making everyone involved a winner. And this singular feature alone would no doubt make FCI and ESG to be the investment and financial vehicles for the future.

When we consider what is happening in the Niger Delta – an oil-rich area doing business for 60 years since oil was discovered. The means of livelihood was fish but now because of oil pollution there is no more fish. People are more challenged and can no longer farm. They are agitating that the big oil companies should go because they haven’t seen the return from the extract from the communities.

It is no longer rosy for all.

Take the garbage from Kano why not make it into electricity giving money and helping the city to grow – make it into organic fertilizer to help the farmers and get a return.

Any form of investment that can provid food security, social harmony, promote health, reduce agitation for terrorism, wars, that kind of investment is worthy for anyone. We have affliction on one hand and medicine on the other. For goodness sake why not use the medicine and solve the problem?

4. **Conclusion**

(i.) The quest to transform Kano city as a modern Islamic pilgrimage city hinges therefore on the injection of the requisite FCI and ESG capital inflow into the city. The city’s population, industrial and commercial statuses has all what it takes to provide the ideal place for successful impact investments. Already viable impact investments opportunities have been proposed³, and FCI in particular would provide the perfect means of actualizing them.

(ii.) The FCI and ESG models are most suitable for use particularly in the developing world. The case of Kano city is worth siting. With its prevailing ecological, social and governance issues, the city has all the factors available in one place that FCI and ESG investments in the first place aims at addressing.

³ See Kano city’s Presentation, First Sacred Cities Investment meeting, London July 2017.

- (iii.) The collective dividends from FCI or ESG compliant investment in Kano city such as the ones we are envisaging, would be financially viable and would positively touch on peoples' lives.
- (iv.) The introduction of FCI and ESG investments in the economy of Kano city would help to accelerate the distribution of wealth.
- (v.) Impact investors in Kano city stands to take advantage of business monopoly because presently there are very little or no impact investments of the kind being proposed for the city.

Finally, any investment that has potentials to promote meaningful and sustainable development like on food security, jobs creation, poverty reduction, public health, social harmony and peace promotion; such is a worthy investment type to encourage and undertake. And this is why the FCI and ESG investment models are so relevant and both points to the way forward.

Reference Links

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Yassin Garba Maisikeli is a member of the Supreme Council of the Qadiriyyah Sufi Order in Nigeria, coordinating environmental projects as well as advising on Science & Technology. He is member of the Central Working Committee of the Sultan Foundation for Peace & Development. He received formal religious education at the famous Madrasat Ulumuddeen in Kano and training in electronics and engineering at Kano State Polytechnic (1983), the British National Radio & Electronics School, UK (1984) and the Southern College of Technology, Georgia, USA. (1994). He has translated and published two works on Sufism in Hausa in 2008 and 2011 and on the Green Hajj Guide. He has represented the Qadiriyyah Sufi Order at many international events promoting sustainable development. He speaks Hausa, English and Arabic. He is married with six children. (Nigeria)