

Nwachukwu Egbunike - Floating School Replaces Stilts In Lagos Slum



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Poverty is no news to Africa: actually the poverty porn dominates media frames about the continent. What is new however, is the rising tide of innovation and creativity. From Cairo to Cape Town, Lagos to Lusaka, some are silently working for change, carving a niche and retelling a sordid narrative punctuated by wars, poverty and famine. Just as African mobile networks are transforming the way commerce operates, architects are also giving rein to their imagination. It was therefore heart-warming having a chat with Chiagozie Fred Nwonwu, a Lagos-based Nigerian writer, about his recent visit to Makoko and his impressions about the Makoko's new floating school.

Makoko, a slum in Lagos State, Nigeria, was partially demolished last year by the government - drawing public ire. However, from this apparently hapless city, springs forth an innovative green architectural solution that grants hope to the hopeless. The Makoko Floating School designed by NLÉ Architects with sponsoring from the United Nations Development Programme and Heinrich Boell Foundation.

Chiagozie attended at a local workshop last year, where participants were encouraged to come up with innovative ideas to solve local climate-change problems. "Makoko was one of three communities in Lagos that were identified as to be in great need of the type of interventions the workshop aimed to propose."

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