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Professional Practice

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### Architecture in Developing Countries

Architecture in Third World/developing countries like Burkina Faso, Egypt, Nigeria, India etc. presents major challenges to architects. The quality of life of local people is to be improved, but this is to be done without impairing architectural functionality. Some of them are economically very well-established, such as Egypt or Nigeria. Other nations, especially in the sub-Saharan Africa, have been battling hunger and poverty for many decades. For example, there is a lack of infrastructure and stable political institutions. There are many workers, but building materials are expensive and difficult to procure. Architects who want to build in poor African countries have to overcome these challenges. Different principles apply in order to create architecture here. More than normal, about 75% of the projects in these countries are either financed by International profit minded developers and most of the time these developers do not understand the culture of the area but rather see the countries as an "Investment Project". There are currently at least twenty of these new cities under construction in Africa and about twice that number in the works. These developments have permanently altered the continent's urban outlook, and have offered it something different from the limitations of colonial architecture that it was once known for.

### **Case Studies: Egypt & Nigeria**

#### **Egypt**

After more than a decade, Egypt has returned to its plan to construct Africa's tallest building. Sited on the Nile River in central Cairo, the skyscraper was designed by the late Zaha Hadid in 2007. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and the government are working with the project developers, "Living in Interiors", to create the twisting "Nile Tower" with a design that will rise 70 stories. Overlooking views of Cairo, the Nile and the pyramids, the project hopes to symbolize Egypt's growth and the development of the country. The development has been made possible with the increase of investment in the Egyptian real estate. Now, developers hope to drive growth across the country with close to \$250 billion dollars worth of construction projects currently underway.

#### **Nigeria**

The architecture of Lagos is an eclectic mix of different types, styles and periods. Buildings range from traditional vernacular architecture to tropical, modern architecture or a mixture. The oldest European-styled buildings date back to the 17th century. Elements of Portuguese architecture introduced by returnee ex-slaves from Brazil and the Caribbean, although present all over the city, predominates in Lagos Island. Colonial-style architecture flourished during the Lagos Colony.

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