

Catholic Diocese of Sokoto

Ten-Year Strategic
PASTORAL PLAN
2012-2022

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Foreword

God is love and those who live in love live in union with God (1Jn 4: 16)

The supremacy of God's love can help us to create a world that is beyond our narrow visions of belief, region, religion, ethnicity or any other category with which we can identify ourselves. God's love for us is unconditional and all inclusive and it is this love which makes all things possible. The document in your hands, this ten year pastoral plan, is a fruit of this love just as it is an expression of our faith in God who calls us to live in union with Him and with one another and to collaborate in God's mission in the world, particularly in the diocese of Sokoto. The realization of the vision and the commitments contained in this document will be made possible if we love one another and remain in intimate union with God who is love.

Public reactions to the announcement of my appointment to the Episcopal seat of the Diocese of Sokoto by the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, last year were as humbling as they were assuring. I was to be the fourth bishop of this small but strategic and challenging diocese which already has a history of a courageous missionary journey in the faith. SMA Fathers initially led this long journey before the Dominicans took full control of it with the appointment of Bishop Edward Lawton who was later succeeded by Bishop Michael Dempsey and my immediate predecessor, the zealous Bishop Kevin Aje.

The turnout at the Trade Fair complex for my ordination on September 8th 2011 was an indication of the challenges, the hopes and the great possibilities that lie ahead of us. The mosaic of humanity was indeed a celebration of the possibilities inherent in our dear country.

It is in attempting to envision that journey ahead, a journey which I was now called to shepherd along with the good people of Sokoto diocese, that I decided that we would need to collectively develop a Vision, some kind of a blue print that would guide us on our way. We agreed on a Ten-Year Strategic Plan as a major starting point.

It is, therefore, with great joy and deep gratitude that I present this Plan, the fruit of our deliberations on the way ahead for the faithful and the men and women of good will in the Diocese of Sokoto. It is the result of many days and hours of thinking,

praying, reflecting and sharing on the journey ahead. A range of consultations were undertaken in the diocese almost right from my assumption of office. These consultations included pastoral visits throughout the diocese, reports, written assessments, a three-day retreat as a diocese, as well as other review meetings and discussions, involving the priests, religious and laity of the entire diocese. We collectively developed our Vision for the diocese and agreed on this Ten-year Strategic Pastoral Plan. It is the result of faithful and committed dedication and it is, in a sense, the result of friendship and celebration.

Covering over 109 square kilometers, straddling four states (Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara) the Diocese of Sokoto is the largest on the African continent and perhaps in the Catholic world. Our numerical strength is quite infinitesimal, less than 1% of a population of over 16 million inhabitants, the proverbial mustard seed (Mt 13:31). We are small in number, but like the Mustard seed, we as Church in Sokoto are called to become a shelter for many. Our challenge is to live out the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who has called on us to be the light of the world, a city built on the top of a hill which cannot be hidden (Mt 5:14). The key to our apostolate is Witnessing to our faith as Christians and thus to be a 'strong and positive sign of the Gospel values in the wider society'. This includes a focus on our common humanity with our neighbors of all religions and tribes, and the need to create cross-cutting structures that can serve the larger society in such areas as Health and Education.

I therefore call on you, my brothers and sisters of the Catholic community in the Diocese of Sokoto, to take this Document to heart. I enjoin you, as Moses enjoined his people, to meditate on its contents (Ps 1:2; Jos 1:8). This dream is ours and the vision will be realized only if we sincerely commit ourselves to it in a spirit of love and faith. Let each one of us, bishop, priests, religious and laity, commit ourselves to making this vision a reality. May the Lord of the harvest (Mt 9:38) who has entrusted this responsibility into our hands strengthen our vision. Our task is huge but we are confident that with God all things are possible. To God be glory forever and ever. Amen.


 + Matthew Hassan KUKAH
Bishop, Catholic Diocese of Sokoto.
 15th June, 2012, Feast of the Sacred Heart

Introduction

The Catholic Diocese of Sokoto was created in 1954. It covers the present day Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi and Katsina states. The Diocese has a total congregation of about 40,000 baptized Catholics with 21 Parishes, 2 Mass Centers, and 93 outstations. As of February 2012, the diocese has 33 priests, 70 professed sisters and 176 trained catechists. There are 5 convents in the diocese. In September 2011, Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah was installed to shepherd the diocese.

The Need for a Strategic Plan

“Strategic planning is a tool for organizing the present on the basis of the projections of the desired future. That is, a strategic plan is a road map to lead an organization from where it is now to where it would like to be in five or ten years.” It is with the above in mind that the diocese embarked on a strategic plan of action so as to focus its activities in such a way as to be result-oriented and manage available resources in a prudent manner.

The Strategic Planning Process

After Bishop Kukah was installed, he embarked on a pastoral visit to assess “the state and status of the resources available in the diocese.” This was the first step in the strategic planning process. He then met with different pastoral agents of the diocese such as priests, religious, Catechists and other members of the laity. He also met with different groups in the church such as the Catholic Men's Organization (CMO), Catholic Women's Organization (CWO) and Catholic Youths Organization of Nigeria (CYON). As part of the strategic planning process, an assessment survey was administered among the priests to ascertain their views as to the strengths and areas of improvement for the diocese and their individual vision for the diocese and capabilities for driving the vision.

To climax the strategic planning process, the Bishop put together a team of facilitators to work representatives of the diocese through a four-day strategic planning process. On the whole more than 50 people from different arms of the diocese were represented at the meeting.

In his opening remarks at the strategic planning retreat, Bishop Kukah said that like Gandhi he's in a hurry because 'my people are ahead.' He said that as the leader of the diocese, he does not know his way around and that he cannot lead without knowing his way. He said that they will draw insights and expertise from each other and see together what needs to be done. He emphasized that he is particular about identifying areas of collaboration. He said that there is a great need for education of the people in the diocese and that his vision is that of a diocese where the laity can stand confidently and defend the Faith. In conclusion he said that he hoped that whatever agreement that is reached by the participants at the retreat will be seen as their own.

Approach of the Strategic Planning Process (SPP)

The approach for the strategic planning process was twofold; first was appreciative inquiry (AI) as elaborated by David Cooperrider of Case Western University in the US. Cooperrider noted that AI is a process of discovering the life-giving force of any entity. His view is that every organization or individual has key strengths that have led to its survival over time, and that it is important to keep building on these key strengths. Cooperrider however does not ignore weaknesses, but makes the positive assumption that by building on the strengths of the entity, the weaknesses will be overcome with time.

The second approach for the SPP was action research (AR) as theorized by Kurt Lewin. Lewin views AR as a kind of social change process that is aimed at uncovering issues and proffering solutions to them. AR is not like the traditional research that simply reports findings. AR on the contrary not only reports findings but also works with the subjects of inquiry to design mitigation measures to address the issues identified.

Identified Key Strengths of the Diocese

At the end of the SPP retreat, some of the key strengths of the diocese that were identified include the following: That the diocese was born and nurtured by the Dominicans and they have inculcated the values of prayer and excellence in hard work. The diocese enjoys a warm relationship with people of other faiths in the area including Muslims. The diocese has experienced, matured and well-trained priests and religious. The diocese also has qualified lay people. There have been no scandals in the diocese and the clergy and laity have enjoyed tremendous cooperation. Till date there has not been any court case between the priests and any other group in the diocese.

Almost every parish has a school, there are 3 health centers in the diocese and the 5 convents in the diocese are involved in health and education. In summary it was noted that the greatest strength of the diocese is its human resources and that this has gotten a boost with the posting of Bishop Kukah to lead the flock.



Vision statement

To be a strong and positive sign and instrument of the Gospel values in the wider society.

Mission statement

Building on the faith and foundation of those who have gone before us,
we aim to strengthen our bonds as a community,
spread the Good News of the Gospel through collaboration
and become an influential presence in our society.

Specific Activities in Focus Areas

- Pastoral

- Self-Sufficiency

- Education

- Dealing with issues of the Hausa Christians (Maguzawa)

- Justice, Dialogue, Peace and Reconciliation

■ Pastoral

This involves a total overview of the entire diocese and addresses the following questions: What kind of Church are we now in Sokoto diocese? What kind of Church do we want to be? What is preventing us from being the kind of Church we want/need to be? What steps do we need to take to be the kind of Church we need to be? What do we need to do to take these steps?

Main issues to be addressed

- Expansion of parishes or church institutions over the next ten years
- Confront our Financial dependence and restraints
- Institutionalize our diocesan structures
- Transform the environmental hostility, perceived and/or experienced by Christians in the area

Agreed steps/actions

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 1: Design and enforce a clear diocesan organogram.	Based on Pastoral Plan and present diocesan structures.	Before June 2012	Bishop, Vicar general, Representatives of Priests, Religious and Laity
Step 2: Have a written and clear financial policy especially with regards to budgeting and expenditure.	Based on the budgets received from the parishes/institutions and with a vision of pastoral and development plans for the next ten years. <i>(The OP system of budgeting in place in Sokoto can serve as a guideline.)</i>	Before December 2012	Financial Advisors and the diocesan financial committee.

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
<p>Step 3: Develop a clear pastoral policy/plan and in concrete collaboration, as laity, religious and clergy, ensure its implementation through effective monitoring and evaluation.</p>	<p>Ensure this Pastoral Plan is made known throughout the diocese.</p> <p>Motivate all priests, religious and laity to assume communal commitment to this Pastoral Plan.</p> <p>Committees on each area to be established.</p> <p>Diocesan Committees to ensure the diocese is informed of its activities. Give regular progress report at relevant diocesan meetings.</p>	<p>Massive awareness campaign of the Pastoral Plan in all parishes and schools from June 2012 to June 2013.</p> <p>Before June 2012.</p> <p>Three-monthly written reports to Chancery.</p> <p>Progress Report presented to diocese during Annual Senate.</p>	<p>All priests and religious. Diocesan presidents of CWO, CMO and CYON.</p> <p>Bishop to nominate.</p> <p>Diocesan committees on each of the priority areas.</p>
<p>Step 4: Increase our financial independence through diversified sources of income.</p>	<p>See below for detailed steps on Self-Sufficiency</p>		

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
<p>Step 5: Intensify methods to increase the number of indigenous members, and to reach out to other Christians, Muslims, and to people in rural areas.</p>	<p>Opening of new parishes and mass centres.</p> <p>Increased missionary formation of the faithful so as to witness to and proclaim the Good News more audaciously in our everyday lives, and in our places of work.</p> <p>Greater involvement in interfaith and ecumenical activities.</p> <p>Utilize and maximize the presence of Federal institutions for evangelization especially of youths through CYON and Catholic Corpers.</p> <p>Use our Primary schools as places of evangelization by encouraging attitudes of dialogue and openness to Muslims and other Christians in the Schools and recognize the importance of children in evangelization.</p>	<p>As from Feb 2012.</p> <p>Annually during the October missionary month.</p> <p>Annually during the Week of Prayer for Christian unity, Ramadan, and other relevant opportunities.</p>	<p>The entire diocese must feel responsible for supporting the expansion of parishes and church institutions.</p> <p>Parishes; Schools; Diocesan Directors of PMS, Mission, Ecumenism and dialogue; Lay organizations.</p>

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
<p>Step 6: Creatively address concrete relational issues from a justice perspective within a legal and constitutional framework.</p>	<p>Provide a space where the grievances experienced by Catholics in the diocese can be heard and documented so that these are situated and redressed through the correct channels within a constitutional framework.</p> <p>Find innovative and creative ways of addressing issues of compensation for properties destroyed in religious-ethnic violence.</p>	<p>Documented and situated in their constitutional framework before March 2013.</p>	<p>JDPC, Parish priests, Lawyers, human rights activists, those directly involved with the poor and voiceless in our midst.</p>
<p>Step 7: Provide structured capacity building for (i) relevant issues of pastoral engagement as a missionary church, such as catechetical training in basic catholic doctrine, (ii) for increased engagement in the educational and health sectors and (iii) for prudent financial management of resources.</p>	<p>Develop School of Catechists in Malamfashi so as to open access to other Catholics.</p> <p>Vocational Centre to be opened in the diocese.</p> <p>Training in budgeting and financing of all priests, and all entrusted with administration in the diocese.</p>	<p>Before Oct. 2013</p> <p>Before June 2014</p> <p>Workshops given by experts annually.</p>	<p>Bishop, Director of Malamfashi Centre, Education Secretary, and Education committee.</p> <p>Bishop, Education Secretary, and Education committee.</p> <p>Finance Committee</p>

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 8: Explore and increase partnerships with government and the private sector in areas of apostolate such as education and health	Become informed of government policies for youth empowerment	Before June 2013.	Chancery and the JDPC

■ Self-Sufficiency

In concrete terms, by self-sufficiency in this SPP, we mean budgeting and planning, penetration and empowerment, measurement and accountability.

Main issues to be addressed

- Economically dependent in terms of sustainment and expansion
- No financial plan at parish or diocesan level e.g. budget
- No financial policy at parish or diocesan level

Agreed steps/actions

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 1: Ensure prudent and accountable stewardship and administration of the goods of the church entrusted to us.	Provide a detailed Account of the financial strength of the diocese. Every parish and diocesan institute to draw up and submit to the diocesan Chancery a clear written budget	Before December 2012	Every parish priest, parish council and parish Financial Committee and/or Every administrator and financial management team of diocesan institutions.

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 2: Minor projects operating in every parish.	Identify and implement, with appropriate methods of supervision and administration, possible minor profit making projects according to the needs of the area and the comparative advantages of the parish and the potential partners within the area (Possible minor projects include: barbing salon, viewing centre, canopy rental...)	Before December 2013	Every parish priest together with principal lay societies (CWO, CMO, CYON)
Step 3: Develop a ten-year strategic financial plan	As above under Pastoral (step 2)		

■ Education

During the SPP, education was identified as a key area of evangelization and empowerment. It was therefore agreed that in the next 10 years it shall be a priority area of our pastoral focus.

Main issues to be addressed

- Difficulty of registering schools with the government
- Restructuring and improving standard of schools required
- Need to diversify educational opportunities to target different segments of the population e.g. nursery for small children, primary/secondary for children and youths, skill acquisition for matured men and women and those that could not further their education etc.
- Co-education is not appreciated by the Muslim population
- Lack of a concrete diocesan educational policy (the number of schools; population of the schools; single or co-ed; quality of education; staffing, structural issues; funding; harmonization with government)

Agreed steps/actions

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 1: Fast-tracking the process of registering schools with the government.	Initiate and bring to a constructive conclusion a process of dialogue with the State Ministries of Education on the issues involved	Before June 2013	Bishop, Diocesan lawyers Administrators of schools, Education Secretary, Education Committee

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 2: Develop a Diocesan educational policy	Have a comprehensive report of the state of all the church-owned schools in the diocese.	Before Dec. 2013	Education Secretary, OP major superior, School administrators, Lay experts
Step 3: Restructure and improve the standard of schools	Adherence to the educational policy; Regular monitoring of parish schools	Continuous process	Diocesan Education Secretary
Step 4: Diversify educational opportunities to target different segments of the population	Diverse empowerment programmes of men, women and youth particularly those who have no professional training.	At least three different empowerment programmes should be held in the diocese annually.	JDPC, Education Committee with CWO, CYON, CMO and volunteer professionals from the lay faithful
Step 5: Open a Minor Seminary for the formation of future priests, catechists and other lay leaders.	Identify location Secure land.	Before May 2013	Bishop, Education Committee, Finance Committee
Step 6: Re-brand education to make it more attractive to Muslims	Have in the diocese at least one secondary school of high standard for boys and one for girls in each of the four states.	Before January 2015	Bishop, Education Committee, Finance Committee

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
<p>Step 7: Open a good library/ resource centre in our diocese to help priests, religious and laity in our ongoing formation.</p>	<p>Making it part of the Diocesan Secretariat design.</p>	<p>Before January 2015</p>	<p>Bishop, Education Committee, Finance Committee</p>

■ Dealing with issues of the Hausa Christians (Maguzawa)

Some population in the diocese, particularly the Hausa Christians, for one reason or the other and in diverse ways, are treated as minorities. This has led to marginalization and at times discrimination.

Main issues to be addressed

- The issue of marginalization in education such as scholarship, employment and access to health
- Insufficient boarding/hostels to accommodate school children from rural villages/building of schools in the villages where they are domiciled
- Language and cultural barrier with priests and other Catholics
- Lack of schools, health centers and development projects
- Mindset/attitudinal change

Agreed steps/actions

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 1: Create more parishes among the Maguzawa	Clustering of Mass centres. Delineation of boundaries.	At least two parishes to be opened before January 2013	Bishop
Step 2: Study to learn from and improve the CAPOR experience		Before Dec. 2012	JDPC, Committee Concerned for Hausa Christians, Leaders of the Maguzawa community (male and female)

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
<p>Step 3: Have a broad-based approach to development (cooperatives, skills acquisition centers)</p>	<p>Study the needs and opportunities found among the Maguzawa people. People to be trained to take responsibility for themselves through cooperatives, and skills acquisitions training centres, in accordance with their particular challenges.</p> <p>OP RUDAP project can serve as a model.</p> <p>The Principle of Subsidiarity should be prominent in all development projects</p> <p>Use creativity and initiative and avoid total reliance on government or on outside aid.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>JDPC, Education Committee, Committee Concerned for Hausa Christians, Leaders of the Maguzawa community (male and female)</p>

■ Justice, Dialogue, Peace and Reconciliation

The SPP retreat identified justice, dialogue, peace and reconciliation as key elements of evangelization and relationship-building. It was therefore agreed that in the next 10 years, the diocese shall make this a key focus area.

Main issues to be addressed

- Difficulty in the environment with regards to acquiring land, registration of schools, individual experiences particularly of the Hausa Christians; Laity not equipped/confident for political participation

Agreed steps/actions

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Step 1: Identify areas of collaboration with government and private sector on issues of education and empowerment	Establish positive relations and enter into dialogue with relevant state ministries and with funding agencies such as DFID and others.	Before Dec 2013	Bishop, Justice, Dialogue, Peace & Reconciliation Committee, JDPC
Step 2: Seek collaboration with Muslims	Be informed about and enter into dialogue with Muslim or non-denominational state organizations involved in issues of justice and development.	Before Dec 2013	Bishop, Justice, Dialogue, Peace & Reconciliation Committee, JDPC

WHAT	HOW	WHEN	WHO
	<p>Creatively reach out to Muslims as neighbors and partners and work together on issues of justice, development, youth employment, women, etc</p> <p>Dialogue with Muslims on how to manage reconciliation and ensure killing and destruction of one another's properties does not happen again.</p>		<p>Men, women and youth church organizations should reach out to counterpart Muslim organizations: CWO, CMO, CYON, KSM, KSJ</p>
<p>Step 3: Address concrete cases of discrimination and marginalization as an issue of justice within a legal and constitutional framework</p>	<p>As above under Pastoral (step 6)</p>		

Reflections on other emerging issues from the SPP

- The Catholic Women Organization (CWO) appreciates those priests who support them but needs guidance from priests on internal difficulties such as empowerment of women and income generating projects; leadership and registration issues.
- Need for more collaboration and dialogue/ planning between priests and laity at parish level.
- Need to improve diocesan-run health care services and make them available/affordable especially at the rural level.
- Need to celebrate success and motivate achievers.
- There is the need for greater clarity on the role of Parish /Pastoral Councils. This is often confused with the Parish Laity Council and leads to friction. This can be included in the policies being drawn up for the diocese.
- Alternative sources of employment should be sought for Christian youth since getting them into such government programs as You-Win may be difficult.
- Education Secretary should be qualified in education; possibility of Loyola type school in Sokoto.
- Need to allow priests to stay for sometime in a parish to actualize certain projects.

Leadership

To drive the above vision and mission with the accompanying activities is leadership. The SPP retreat delegates deliberated on the issue of leadership as the driving force for the next 10 years.

- Leadership is a process not an event
- Key Ingredients of leadership: Knowledge & a Sense of Service
- Key Functions of leadership: Goals setting using SMART
- Key leadership capabilities: Prepare, Vision, Execution
- Effective leadership drives followership
- Burden & Vision
- Communication/ Execution (Trust)
- Making the impossible become possible is the hallmark of transformational leadership

Financial Implications of the Strategic Plan

It was estimated that to bring the above strategic plan to fruition within the next 10 years, the diocese will need approximately One and a half Billion Naira (N1.5 billion). This will be used to address structures and personnel issues that include the following:

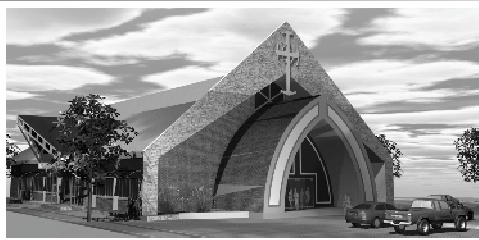
PROJECT	APPROXIMATE COST (₦)
1. Building of a Pastoral Centre that will enable the diocese to host events and earn some income. (50 rooms, Hall, Chapel to seat 200)	200 million
2. Construction of a diocesan secretariat with office complex for the various coordinators for education, health, justice and peace and ICT. (Hall, Chapel to seat 200)	150 million
3. Building of 10 new parishes, outstations and mass centers in the next 10 years.	200 million
4. Construction of hostels within the Federal institutions in the diocese as a way of reaching the population especially youths in the schools e.g. University of Sokoto, Federal Polytechnic, Kaura Namoda etc.	450 million (150 million each @ 3)

PROJECT	APPROXIMATE COST (₦)
5. Building of more schools in the indigenous communities to minimize the cost of hostels and eliminate the complaints associated with taking their children away.	150 million (three schools @ 50 million each)
6. Recruitment of a lawyer and other project staff to provide support for the justice, peace, dialogue and reconciliation initiative, development of educational, health and financial policy for the diocese.	10 million
7. Building of a Minor Seminary in the diocese for the formation of priests.	100 million
8. The construction of a Loyola-type of model secondary school to bridge the quality gap in education in Sokoto.	100 million
9. Provide educational opportunities for the priests and train new ones especially from the indigenous population.	10 million
10. Support micro-credits and projects for the Maguzawa members of the diocese with a view to empowering them and addressing some of their more pressing livelihood needs.	100 million
APPROXIMATE TOTAL	1.5 BILLION NAIRA

Conclusion

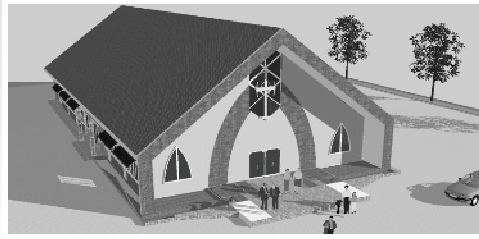
Our vision as a diocese is clear, our mission is unmistakable and our strategy for actualizing the plan is through collaboration and strategic partnership. We therefore appeal to you to help bring this Strategic Plan to life. We believe in it, we know that we shall achieve it by the special Grace of God through the generosity of each one of us. In the process, Sokoto diocese, with its strategic location, will become an ever vibrant ecclesial presence, a living organism and a model for the Church everywhere that is sent to witness to the Good News and the Gospel values in our pluri-religious and pluricultural society and world.

PROPOSED BUILDINGS



Model of Proposed Cathedral

N100 million



Model of Proposed Church Buildings
10 new parishes, outstations and mass centers

N200 million



Model of Proposed Parish Buildings
10 new parishes houses

N200 million



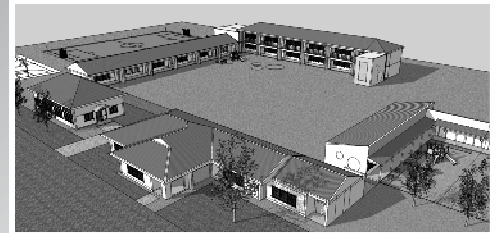
Model of Proposed Building of a Pastoral Centre
50 rooms, Hall, Chapel to seat 200

N2200 million



Model of Proposed Diocesan Secretariat
Hall, Chapel to seat 200

N150 million



Model of Proposed Schools in the indigenous
communities to minimize the cost of hostels

N150 million (3 Nos.)

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