

# **Interview with RSA territorial representative for Nigeria, Oladayo Ramon Ibrahim**



Oladayo Ramon Ibrahim is a lecturer of Urban and Regional Planning at Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu, Lagos, Southwest Nigeria. He holds two masters in Geography and Planning, and Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Lagos and he is currently working on his PhD, also in Urban and Regional planning, at the University of Lagos. I am married with children.



**What are your research interests?**

My thematic research interests are in Rural and Regional planning, Tourism development, Urban development and Infrastructural development. I am the author of a book on tourism, planning and development in Badagry, Lagos and have written articles on this subject in a range of local and international journals, including a number of articles for Regions.

**Why did you decide to join the RSA, what do you bring to the role of territorial representative?**

As well as being a member of several other professional and scholarly associations, my interest in these areas of academic research motivated me to join the Regional Studies Association. In particular, I see this role as enabling me to improve the practice of regional planning in Nigeria and to sell the idea of regional studies to a wide range of potentially interested people in all sectors of Nigerian life.

To give an example, Nigeria has about 100 universities with either a department of Geography and Planning, a department of Urban and Regional Planning, or in many cases both. In addition, there are 95 polytechnics in Nigeria with more than three-quarters of them having a department of Urban and Regional Planning. The academic staff and students in all of these tertiary institutions are potential members of the RSA and could benefit from engaging with the society. Furthermore, members of the public, government, civil society, as well as related disciplines such as, Economics, Sociology, Political Science, all have interests that intersect with Regional Studies and are areas where the society could grow and

become influential.

Therefore, I see it as my responsibility to encourage and facilitate the growth of the Regional Studies Association in Nigeria and to advise new members about the services the RSA can provide, especially those that can link the Nigerian Regional Studies community into the wider international academic community and enable members to share their work across borders with like-minded scholars.

### **What challenges and opportunities are faced by early career researchers in your area?**

A notable challenge for early career researchers in Nigerian Universities, who have studied geography and planning and have chosen to specialize in regional planning, is that by Federal Government Law (Decree No.3 1988), they are not recognized as planners. Whilst the profession variously refers to itself as Town and Regional Planning, Urban and Regional Planning, or City and Regional Planning, in practice and content, if perhaps not in name, the profession has neglected regional aspects of planning and remains focused on the development control of towns and cities. Despite this setback, there is therefore a real opportunity to create an effective, sustainable practice of urban and regional planning in Nigeria, which could be achieved by encouraging the integration town and urban planners with specialists in regional planning and perhaps even amending the law to accommodate those on the regional side of the profession.

### **About Oladayo**

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