



NIGERIA URBAN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

The management of towns and cities in Africa is part and parcel of the public sector management system. The system revolves around land management, housing and infrastructure development. Operational system are organised on sector basis through ministries, department, agencies and boards etc. The method adopted for the paper is the qualitative approach. The study relied essentially on data from published, unpublished materials and observations. Data collected were sorted using contents analysis. The findings of the study indicated that the traditional (sectorial) approach to urban management has not effectively deliver on urban management mandate. It also shows that urban management affair is solely state driven. There is less collaboration and citizen participation in the affairs of managing the cities. In conclusion the sectorial urban management is deficient in approach as it is not holistic in attending to city challenges. There is need for a broad-based urban management system involving all stakeholders in urban development both public sector and private sector, NGOs and CBOs. The study therefore recommends paradigm shift in the approach, suggesting participatory management, commitment to urban planning and development and importantly develop an integrated approach to urban management system.

Keywords: *City, Integrated, Planning, Urban Management, System, and Participation*

Introduction

Urban management is a complex field that encompasses strategies, activities and instruments that make a city work through policies that allow and regulate investments, partnerships, and developments of different kinds (Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies IHS, 2019). Africa, urban management refers to the political and administrative structures of cities and the major challenges that they face to provide both social and physical infrastructure services (Wekwete, 1997). Urban management therefore, is designed to improve the quality of life of citizens and urban productivity and to create an environment that supports economic, social, and the environment. Africa's urban management system is state driven and engages in sectorial infrastructure provision. Nigeria experience of urban management follows the system and operation of is carried out by the three tiers of government; the federal, states, and local councils. The cities are administered through ministries, departments, boards and agencies etc.

The sectorial provisions of infrastructure schemes had problem due to approach, the lack of synergy among government agencies and are not holistic approach. Urban management problems could be classified into physical and non-physical forms (Ding, and Lai, 2012); the physical related to the spatial arrangement while the non-physical to socio-economic. It is pertinent to ask why are there multiple challenges in the urban centres with the range of urban management institutions. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to examine urban management systems in Nigeria with specific focus on Abuja, the Federal Capital City. This is to identify management challenges and suggest the way forward for an effective urban management system for the city.

Research Methodology

The method adopted for the paper is the qualitative approach. The study relied essentially on data from published, unpublished materials and observations. Basic concept were reviewed such as urban management concept, urban management system, and urban policy. Database searches using the internet

form an integral part of the data collection process. Content analysis was used in sorting the relevant issues as they relate to the subject matter.

Theoretical Underpinning

Concept of Urban Management (UM)

The emergence of urban management was in response to meeting urban development challenges and a paradigm shift from the government sectorial approach in urban infrastructure project (Wekwete, (1997), which operation was largely supply-driven model and state-cantered. Dijk, (2006) defined urban management as the effort to co-ordinate and integrate public as well as private actions to tackle the major problems inhabitants of cities are facing in an integrated way, to make a more competitive, equitable, and sustainable city. It consists of a broad mix of activities, (administration; coordination; planning; building and construction controls; enforcement of regulations; fiscal control; and the maintenance of facilities) that make urban areas function (Alan, Nguyen and Henry, 2006). Urban management is about managing the city in an integrated, coordinated, participatory, broad-based and holistic in approach to address challenges of the city.

Concept of Urban Management System (UMS)

UMS is about the ability to plan and model whole systems that optimize transportation and the built environment, resources including energy and water, and natural systems (Shanghai Manual, 2012). UMS consists of the processes by which life in metropolitan areas is organized and operated. UMS as a system encompassing all means, methods, and tools to realize goals set by city general plans (Hu, 2000). UMS is the structure and process put in place to run the affairs of the cities to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the operation of urban management. According to IHS, (2019) an effective urban management system is one the infrastructure is accessible and functional, resources and services are equitably distributed to the population, and that interests of the different stakeholders, are represented and count in the decision making process in future developments.

Nigeria Experience of National Urban Development Policies (NUDP)

Successive governments have taken a number of actions and introduced a number of legislations and policy measures in response to the urban problems (National Urban Development Policy (NUDP), 2012). The operation of these

policies are carried out through the three-tier government structure; the Federal, State, and Local Government. A NUDP was formulated in 1992 and this was followed by the establishment of an Urban Development Bank to finance urban infrastructure and public facilities. (UN-Habitat, 2014; Paul, 2019). It has the goal to develop a dynamic system of urban settlements, foster sustainable economic growth, promote efficient urban development, and ensure improved standards of living for Nigerians. The 1992 NUDP was reviewed in 2006 to develop a dynamic system of urban settlement that was to foster sustainable economic growth, promote efficient urban and regional development and ensure improved standard of living and wellbeing of Nigerians. A revised NUDP 2012, had the goal to develop a dynamic system of urban settlement that will foster sustainable economic growth, promote efficient urban and regional development and ensure improved standard of living and wellbeing of Nigerians. Other laws and policies relating to urban development were also enacted. These include among others; land use decree of 1978; infrastructure development fund (IDF) in 1985; national housing policy, 1991; Nigerian urban and regional planning law No. 88. 1992; national policy on the environment, 1999; environmental impact assessment act 1992 No. 86, and national water and sanitation policy, 2000; national environmental standards and regulations enforcement agency (establishment) act, 2007 and national transport policy, 2010 etc.

Overview of Nigeria Urban Management Approach

Historically, human settlement development and administration in Nigeria started before the Colonial era. Statutory urban management in Nigeria dated to 1863 Lagos Town Improvement Ordinance for control of poor sanitation and development. The proclamation of Ordinances to control development such as; the 1904 Cantonment Proclamation; Ordinance number 9 of 1914, Township Ordinance of 1917 (first to introduce spatial orderliness, zoning, and subdivision regulations). Town Planning Committees for the Northern and Southern provinces to vet planning schemes and initiate new one were established in 1924. The Lagos Town Planning Act of 1928 was enacted in response to an outbreak of bubonic plague. The Town Planning Ordinance of 1932 provides the basis for the Town and Country Planning Ordinance (Cap 155) of 1946 which provided for the improvement and control of development

through planning schemes (Oyesiku, 1998) cited in (Olufemi, Ayangbile, and Abiodun, 2015).

The post-colonial era witnessed the national development plans (NDP) era 1962-1985; the first NDP plan (1962-1968) had the objective to accelerate the economic growth of the different regions and Lagos the federal capital territory; the second NDP plan (1970-1974) was designed to reconstruct the Eastern parts of the country, it was allocated 7 percent of the total budget to town and country planning, housing, water and sewerage (NUDP, 2012). Third NDP Plan (1975-1980) accorded emphasis to urban and regional development. Federal ministries of housing, urban development and environment, and federal housing authority were established during this period. The Fourth NDP Plan (1981-1985) had specific objectives that defined the role of physical planning as a tool for achieving national development objectives. In 1986 the rolling plans concept was introduced by the Federal Government (NUDP, 2012). This period witnessed the structural adjustment programs (SAP), with a plan to shift from project-based to policy-based planning system, and emphasized a private-sector-led economy rather than the public sector-led philosophy of the previous plans (Ikeanyibe, 2009). SAP was succeeded by a three-tier planning system between 1990 and 1998 of; a 15-20-year perspective or long term plan. A National economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS), State economic empowerment and development strategy (SEEDS) and Local economic empowerment and development strategy (LEEDS) was introduced in 1999. These were medium-term plans that focused on wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction, and value orientation. Following the NEEDS, SEEDS and LEEDS was Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 (NV 20:2020) Economic Transformation Blueprint launched in June 2010. It is a framework for national development planning and management which has the goal, to position Nigeria as one of the world's 20 largest economies by the year 2020 (UN Habitat, 2014). The period of President Jonathan (2011-2015) witnessed the Transformation Agenda, aimed at transforming Nigerian thinking, institutional organization, and human capital to support the aspirations of the Nigerian people, through a blueprint on key policies, programs, and projects. The Buhari administration launched a comprehensive economic intervention plan tagged the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) (Solomon and

Fidelis, 2018). Most of the development agenda of the country has been focused on economic development with less emphasis on the built environment. The ineffectiveness of the ordinance could be attributed to; government stressing economic planning over physical planning; local planning authorities were subjected to excessive political interference in matters relating to development control; inadequate fund to implement local planning schemes; lack of well-trained planning workforce at all levels of governmental and little coordination between planning levels (Adeniji, (nd) in (Taylor, 2000). Nigerian government has chosen to treat urban and regional planning as an appendage of economic planning, using national expenditures for infrastructure as the means to control economic growth and hence urban development (Taylor, 2000). Solomon and Fidelis, (2018) asserted that, apart from restructuring in the banking sector, there was no significant response of NEEDS, SEEDS and LEEDS to the development challenges of the country as envisaged. The general apathy towards urban planning persists in the country today.

Federal Capital Territory Abuja, City Management Case Study

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is located in the center of Nigeria between latitudes and longitude 9°4'N 7°29'E/ 9.067°N7.483°E with land area of 8,000 square kilometers. The FCT was designated as Nigeria's capital in 1975. The relocation to Abuja in 1991 attracted the influx of population to the nation's capital and brought pressure on the infrastructure, mostly in the area of housing (Alkali, 2005). The FCT has witnessed different management arrangements since inception in 1979. This includes the;

- ❖ Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA): It has the mission to build the Abuja City and the Territory in compliance with the Abuja master plan.; the preparation of a master-plan for the Capital City and land use with respect to town and country planning within the rest of the Capital Territory; the provision of municipal services within the Federal Capital Territory; and the establishment of infrastructural services in accordance with the master
- ❖ The defunct Ministry of Federal Capital Territory (MFCT), by enabling Official Gazette Extraordinary No.55 Vol. 66 of 26th October 1979 had the functions of; planning and development within the federal capital territory; control of development within the federal capital territory; and arrangement for the provision of social services.

Table 1: Key Urban Management Institutions in the FCT.

S/No	Institution	Functions
1	FCDA,	The mission is to build the Abuja City and the Territory in compliance with the Abuja master plan
2	Abuja Metropolitan Management Council AMMC	Established as a coordinating institution for efficient running and operation of municipal services within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).
3	FCT Water Board	To control, manage, install, maintain all water works and services, ensure the supply of potable water of adequate quantity and quality for the Territory; to harness all water resources of the Territory for economic development, etc.
4	Abuja Environment Protection Board (Founded 1989)	to secure the quality of environment adequate for the health and wellbeing of the residents
5	Abuja Geographic Information System	To embark on complete computerization of the cadastral and land registry of the FCT.
6	Abuja Urban Mass Transport Company	To provide an effective and efficient Transportation System in the FCT through proactive planning, effective monitoring, safe, accident free and infrastructural development in consonance with the Abuja Transportation Master Plan to meet the expectation of the public.
7	Area Council Service Board	Provides services in establishment, training, staff welfare, discipline/open/confidential registry, and supervises stores, archives, tenders, due process etc.

8	Federal Emergency Management Agency	The aim and objectives of establishing FEMA is to coordinate all the disaster related activities within the FCT
9	Federal Housing Authority (FHA)	Prepare and submit to government from time to time, proposals for national housing programs, executive housing programs, develop and manage real estate on commercial and profitable basis Nationwide, provide site and services schemes for the benefit of all income groups etc.
10	Federal Ministry Land, Housing and Urban Development	It has an exclusive mandate to control, regulate and provide policy/guidelines for the land, housing and urban development sectors. Is also charged with the responsibility of ensuring adequate and sustainable housing delivery and maintenance for a conducive living environment that meets the needs and aspirations of Nigerian citizens.

Source: Adapted from Adah, (2014)

- ❖ The Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) was created on December 31, 2004, and is in charge of the administration of the city through the different bodies (FCTA Official Website, 2008). It has seven mandate secretariats; Education, Transport, Agriculture and Rural Development, Health and Human Services, Social development, Legal Services and Area Council. The Minister is appointed by the President and assisted by the Permanent Secretary. These Secretariats were headed by non-career civil servants in an attempt to reduce administrative bottlenecks. AMMC is the coordinating institution for efficient running and operation of municipal services within the FCT. The challenge of housing deficits, water shortage, transport, and electricity supply and land use control is an indication that the management institutions has great work to do. Poor service delivery in Nigeria cities has been attributed to poor planning implementation, though good urban planning policies become ineffective due to poor implementation, as exemplified in Abuja (Massoud, 2013).

The Challenges of Nigeria Urban Management System

The experience of the past has shown that conventional concepts of urban management based on control and sectoral infrastructure development have not yielded adequate results. As pointed out by the United Nations Development Program, (1989) the important lessons learnt from the distant and recent past is the failure of outdated models and practices of physical planning as well as of isolated projects and initiatives in providing an answer to the vast and pressing needs of urban centres in the developing world. Abuja like any other city in Nigeria is not an exception to the challenges of urban management. The following are some of the identified challenges;

i. Ineffective Urban Planning and Management Institutions: Yahaya and Ishiak, (2013) noted that the lack of a well-established structure of urban planning has resulted in ineffective and inefficient land use planning and management in many developing countries. Okpala, (2009) submitted, the most fundamental and critical challenge faced by urban areas in sub-Saharan African countries is the crippling weakness of institutions of urban development planning and management. Operational process and decision making of these institutions are interfered by political class. Synergy among urban management institutions is lacking as has led to independent operation without collaboration. Uncoordinated approach among agencies of urban management institutions is another major challenge to effective operation. The management institutions are not self-sustaining and by depending on budgetary allocation which are not forthcoming at appropriate time affect the system.

ii. Sectorial (Traditional) Urban Management Approach: The sectorial approach lack effective coordination and synergy among agencies of government resulting to duplication of responsibilities. Town development during Colonial era was through schemes and master plans. This same approach is adopted in the development of Abuja. The influx of population into the city has necessitated the development of illegal structures that led to distortion of part of the Abuja plan. Master plan implementation is capital intensive and inadequate fund to implement the master plans has been the major drawback of this model in the federal capital territory.

iii. State Centred Urban Services Provision: The operation of urban management affairs in Abuja the federal capital is state centred. The

institutional structure has little or no provision for private engagement in the operation of the city.

- iv. Lack of Commitment to Urban Policies Implementation:** Even though Nigeria adopted a robust National Urban Development Policy and enacted a comprehensive Urban and Regional Planning Act, both in 1992, there has been a generally little achievement to show in terms of their implementation (the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2012) in (UN-Habitat 2014). As noted by Shabbir, (1993) management issues become compounded when policies and programmes to control rural-to-urban migration and the diffusion of urban population are not successful. Policies and plans when not adequately implemented is a challenge in urban management process. The non-domestication of urban and regional planning act 1992 has also affected effective delivery of urban planning and management institutions.
- v. Lack of Integrated Urban Planning and Management:** Evidence abound (see Adah, 2014), the current management approach lack integration in project initiation and execution thereby leading to duplication of efforts. Ineffective interagency relation in urban service provision and management has implication on the outcome of service delivery.
- vi. Concentration on Economic Planning over Physical Development:** Nigeria development strive is in favour of economic development with less commitment to physical development. Economic development process without integration with urban development process would result in an unsustainable development. Though urban planning form critical component of urban development but adequate attention was not given to it in the first three development plan era of the country (Aluko, 2011).
- vii. Ineffective Land Use Control:** There is lack of cohesive land use control measures by institutions saddled with the responsibility. Cases of demolition shows ineffectiveness on the part of the institution to carry out statutory obligation of monitoring development. Ineffectiveness in the management system has made the urban centres to be bedevilled with myriad of socio-spatial challenges ranging from urban sprawl, unplanned and uncontrolled developments, formation of blights and the rapid emergence of slums (Ibama and Wocha, 2017).
- viii. Corruption:** Nwokorie, (2017) reported that effective management of public sector organizations in Nigeria has remained elusive since independence as a

result of systemic and institutional corruption. This manifests in different forms and it has implications on the quality and outcome of the project. This has led to inadequate monitoring of projects by coordinating agencies.

ix. Challenge of Participatory Management: Urban management within the broader governance perspective has to be more participative, broader in outlook, and less bureaucratic. The existing approach of city management has less involvement of citizen participation.

Results of Findings

- i. Ineffective Urban Planning and Management Institutions:** The existing challenge of housing deficit, transport, adequacy of water supply etc. are indication of ineffectiveness in the urban planning and management institutions.
- ii. Sectorial (Traditional) Urban Management Approach:** The institutional arrangement portray the traditional sector based operation of urban management.
- iii. State Centred Urban Services Provision** Urban management system in Abuja, the federal capital city is state centered with less involvement of the city inhabitants.
- iv. Lack of Commitment to Urban Policies Implementation** There are policies and plans for the development and management of the city, but there is implementation problem.
- v. Lack of Integrated Urban Planning and Management:** The institutions operate independently of one another. Projects are initiated in isolation with collaboration with others institutions.
- vi. Concentration on Economic Planning over Physical Development.** Available information shows that there is more emphasis on economic planning over physical planning
- vii. Ineffective land use control:** Many planning issues in the municipal area council shows ineffectiveness in land use planning and control.
- viii. Corruption:** Accountability challenge in capital investment on project and political interference in decisions making affect urban development projects.
- ix. Challenge of Participatory Management:** The study shows that there is less involvement of the Citizens in the management of the city.

Discussion on Way Forward for Effective Urban Management System

The urban management system in Nigeria do not lack policies, laws or standard regulations that would engender effective management system of cities. The major challenge relate existing structure and process of operation by the institutions. The following suggestions are proffered for improvement upon existing conditions of city management system in charting the way forward.

i. Improving upon Institution Process of Operation: Improving upon city management (Leman, 1994) submitted that systematic way of managing the cities is to borrow methods from business management and apply all urban programmes and projects to a multi-sectorial management cycle consisting of strategic planning, tactical planning and operations. The complex urban problems demand a multi-sector approach at resolving the challenges. There is need at developing adequate knowledge and skill to meet current urban development challenges by urban management stakeholders.

ii. Sectorial (Traditional) Urban Management Approach: The sectorial approach have proved ineffective in meeting complex urban challenges. The study suggest a broad base approach to handling urban problems. The lack of synergy and integration, which have affected service delivery can be improved upon. Collaborative approach among institutions of urban management is recommended for effective service delivery of the city.

iii. Participatory Approach in Urban Management: The demand of urban management calls for a participatory approach to reduce financial burden on the government. According to Wekwete, (1997) urban management within the broader governance perspective should be more participative, broader in outlook, more transparent, and less bureaucratic. Effective urban management requires the involvement of the inhabitants of the city in the decision making process of the city.

iv. Policies Implementation: There need to identify the missing link between the existing policies and its implementation as this is vital to achieving desired outcome. Regulation and enforcement of policies, laws or regulations are critical to achieving good outcomes. It is recommended that institutions of urban management take appropriate measures to adequately implement urban development policies.

v. Developing Integrated Planning and Management System: Integrated urban planning is a modern planning approach closely connected with the complex nature of the cities and necessity of creating sustainable and resilient

settlements (Ovink and Boeijenga, 2018). Integrated urban planning and management is implemented through an approach based on the spatial dimension, linking resources with collaboration of various stakeholders, and is realized through integrated urban development strategies (Ratka, 2015). An integrated approach to existing urban management systems will improve upon the effectiveness and efficiency of urban management institutions.

vi. Concentration on Economic Planning over Physical Development:

The national government needs a paradigm shift in national policy development. The neglect and the lack commitment to urban planning and management has resulted in many environmental hazards especially the recurrent flooding problem. Physical planning should be given adequate recognition with financial backing to execute projects that will improve upon the environment.

vii. Land Use Control: Urban planning plays a key role in spatial organization of the human environment. Land use control should not be ad-hoc or remedial in nature as it has lasting impact on the environment. Effective land use control mechanisms will reduce economic waste through demolition of illegal structures.

viii. Strategic Planning Approach to Urban Management: Adoption of strategic planning will enhance efficient use of resources. It is about process, institutional design, and guidelines for integrated development. Strategic urban planning sets the goals and growth principles for an area, which will in turn inform the preparation of plans. It would address issues of planning decision making, identify problems of the environment and proffer planning based solutions to address them. It is necessary because it analyses the environment, and establishes a route to achieve the organizational missions within the constraints of available resources.

ix. Sustainable Approach to Urban Development: This is development that consider interdependency of the sustainability pillars; social, economic and the environment. The concept sees urban development in a broader context of how a development action interacts with the surrounding environment, improve on social welfare of the people and what will be the economic benefits of such development. Sustainable urban development strategies would consider the relationships among the components of the city and that sustainability pillars are not static, but rather dynamic, emergent and unpredictable.

x. **Corruption:** Effective checks and balances would limit excess leakage in financial transactions in project execution. The amount of capital investment on urban development project demand careful monitoring of fund utilization. Adoption of digital technology would assist in curbing some leakages.

Conclusion

The trend of urban management in Nigeria has been the state centred approach through sectorial allocation of project funds. Effective urban management system demand integration of sectors, coordination of wide range of stakeholder in urban development; private sector, NGOs, and CBOs. The major challenges to existing practice is inadequate coordination, lack participation and lack integration in project conception and implementation. Suggestion has been made in alleviating the current challenges in urban management. When these are adopted and applied it will enhance effectiveness in urban management system.

Recommendations

A paradigm shift from the known norms and approach is essential to changing the narrative of the complex urban challenges. The urban area is over burden with varied developmental and management challenges therefore, devising a new approach and strategies that will address the multifaceted challenges is right steps in the right direction. The recommendations are as discussed under the way forward in the paper.

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