

University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Nigeria

Department of Urban and Regional Planning

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1. Introduction

Ordinarily, planning is a versatile concept which can be interpreted from diverse viewpoints. The objective of planning is to organise things properly for a more positive return beneficial to man and to society at large. In management parlance, Stoner and Freeman (1992) defined planning as the process of establishing goals and suitable courses of action for achieving these goals. Ile (2001) made the definition more comprehensive when he added that planning is a process which takes a rationalistic and decision-making approach and recognises problems, evaluates relevant information, develops alternative courses of action, assesses the possible consequences of each alternative course of action and selects the best course of action, called a 'plan'. Friedman (1987) provided a rather comprehensive view on planning. According to him, 'planning is primarily a way of thinking about socio-economic problems'. Planning is oriented predominantly towards the future, is deeply concerned with the relation of goals to collective decision-making and strives for comprehensiveness in policy and programmes.

Over the years, it can be said that planning has become more interested in the sustainability of society and the quality of the environment (Gunder 2005). The revitalisation of planning education is critical to the realisation of this quest. As it is, Nigeria has a very sound legal and institutional framework for urban and regional planning. However, there are many drawbacks: poor financing, government instability, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and lack of awareness about urban and regional planning on the part of government and politicians. Other constraints include obsolete plans, non-review of planning laws and lack of adequate planning education, among others. Consequently, planning and management of cities in the country have not corresponded with their rapid growth. Part of the reason for this is that urban planning depends not only on the planning professionals but also on the wider socio-economic and political structures. The division of the country's administration structures into federal, state and local levels or tiers results in different rates of development and implementation of urban and regional planning. For instance, some road networks in south-eastern areas of the country are left unattended to, simply because they are federal roads outside the jurisdiction of the state governments.

2. Urban areas in Nigeria

2.1 The concept of an urban area

The term 'urban area' in Nigeria is defined based on variables such as morphology, population, social-cultural indicators, economy and others. The urban areas in Nigeria are those communities with populations of over 20 000 people (NPC 2006). These areas are distinct from rural areas by virtue of their possession of certain enviable facilities such as regular and potable water supply, clear and odourless drainage channels, regularly evacuated refuse bins, socio-economic and physical facilities and sound administrative and diplomatic systems. The Land Use Decree of Nigeria (1978) empowered the governor to designate an area 'urban'. However, such designation must be based on acceptable standards of size, function, population etc. The city of Enugu has recently grown very rapidly as a result

of the commercial and administrative nature of the state (Ezeani & Elekwa 2001). The city has experienced a large influx of students because of the high concentration of the tertiary institutions there.

2.2 The general socio-economic and cultural setting in urban Nigeria

In Nigeria, as in some other third world countries, the rate of population growth and by extension urbanisation is enormous. According to Paul (2007) Nigeria has a high birth rate and relatively low death rate, resulting in a high survival rate and large population. Attention to urban development to the detriment of the rural areas has resulted in a high rate of urban growth. This is in addition to natural urban population increase. The neglect of the rural areas in terms of economic development and infrastructural growth also results in a high rate of rural-urban migration, with its attendant negative effects on both the sourcing and receiving areas. In addition, and as a consequence of rural-urban migration, more unskilled and unemployed people drift to the urban areas.

It is estimated that in 1932, less than 7% of Nigerians lived in urban centres with a population of 20 000 people and above (World Bank 2002). The proportion rose to 10% in 1952 and to 19.2% in 1963. The National Urban Development Policy for Nigeria (1992) authoritatively put the rate at 40% in 1991. Nigeria's urban areas are among the fastest growing in the world. Population data in Nigeria are yet to provide information on the proportions of urbanisation caused by natural urban population increase and by migration. But current population policies are geared towards provision of data on these vital areas.

A strong tie exists between the rural and urban areas due to socio-cultural variables. Most rural-urban migrants go to the cities to establish themselves and then welcome more relatives from the kindred family or community. Regular contacts are maintained through weekly visits and remittances (Agu 1990). In fact it may be difficult to alter this phenomenon of rural-urban migration significantly, due to the strong existing cultural and economic ties. This is because rural development in Nigeria is not pursued with the seriousness it deserves (Ibiam & Chima 1998). The trend has given impetus to the growth and development of the informal economy and settlements.

Most urban areas in Nigeria are growing without adequate planning, resulting in large-scale environmental degradation (Mba et al. 1992). Slums are created, and the low level of awareness on the part of the people and inappropriate programmes of development have worsened the problems of urban growth and design. Crime and juvenile delinquency abound due to a decline in traditional social values, and the law enforcement agencies have technological and resource limitations. Housing and associated infrastructural facilities such as water, electricity and waste disposal in urban areas are grossly inadequate as a result of the inability of the government to provide them.

The World Bank report on Nigeria of 2002 is still relevant today. It stated that a large number of people in Nigeria's urban areas did not have enough income to meet their needs. About 20% of the population was estimated to be living below the poverty line. Of these, about 1.1 million were classified as severely poor, their cash income insufficient to cover minimal standards of food, water, fuel, shelter, Medicare and schooling. The urban poor lived in areas with bad environmental conditions and the highest deficit of basic services. They suffered more than other groups from the breakdown of urban infrastructure (World Bank 2002).

Currently, about 35% of Nigerians are known to be living in abject poverty (UNCHS 2006). Independent sources put the unemployment figures in both private and public sectors in Nigeria at between 65% and 70% (Paul 2007). But the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has indicated that the unemployment rate in Nigeria in the age range 15–64 years stood at 5.3% at the end of 2006. In 2005 it was 11.9% for the age group 15–24 years; youth unemployment stood at 14% in 2006, and the under-employment rate for those younger than 15 and older than 64 years was 20.2% (Paul 2007). According to the World Bank 9 out of 10 Nigerians live on less than US\$2 per day (World Bank 2002).

The prevalence of poverty and unemployment in the country has been linked to the spread of criminal activities such as armed robbery, burglary, oil bunkering and so on. Government has responded with the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment to mitigate the high unemployment level, which puts pressure on other urban amenities including land and rent. The influx of people to the urban areas has led to rampant increase in rents over the years. A typical flat in the urban area which used to cost ₦3 000 is now in the range of ₦10 000– ₦12 000 per month, especially in the eastern part of the country. Almost all available space is being sold, especially for accommodation and commercial purposes. Though planning activities help to segregate land uses and urban land is in the control of each state government, nonetheless land ownership by the people is still very strong, especially in traditional settlements which were gradually urbanised.

2.3 The informal economy

The unemployment rate in Southeast Nigeria, where the University of Nigeria is located, was estimated to have risen from 3.9% in 1998 to 4.7% in 1999 (NPC 2006). The urban unemployment rate rose from 5.5% to 6.5% during the same period. The largest proportion of the unemployed, 35–50%, were secondary school graduates. This is as a result of the nature of the activities prevailing in the urban area; there is a high concentration of post-primary and tertiary institutions which are the major employers of labour. Thirty per cent of the urban population is poor. The income distribution shows that the urban poorest represent 19.4% of the population, while the rural poorest represent 16.3%; for the urban poor and rural poor the proportions are 6.6% and 16.6% respectively. Poverty is a major factor in the urban crime rate in Enugu State.

The land tenure system practised today in the southeast part of the country is derived from the Land Use Act of 1978 which vested all lands in the hands of the government and does not allow for the private ownership of land by individuals or corporations. Individuals and private developers must apply for certificates of occupancy that will allow them to use the land for a certain period of time for a fee. The Land Use Act makes it illegal for indigenes to allocate land without prior government approval. Because of lack of access to affordable housing, the indigenes sell land to migrants. These informal settlements are built for purposes of providing shelters. In spite of the law, many families still practise the party-liner system of ownership whereby they transfer property to their children.

2.4 Physical and environmental problems

One major environmental issue, probably a result of poor planning, is environmental pollution of air, water and land in different parts of the country. Industries discharge their wastes into the air in the form of industrial smoke and other categories of waste are discharged on land and water. Major rivers such as Ekulu River now serve as dump sites for human refuse and industrial waste. The effects of environmental pollution are devastating and are felt by humans and by animal and plant species in varying degrees.

Apart from industrial pollution, domestic waste is rife in many urban areas of Nigeria, mainly on account of poor planning and/or planning education. In our major urban areas heaps of solid waste adorn the streets, reducing the aesthetic value of the environment and causing traffic jams and air pollution. Erosion and flooding are other problems in urban and rural areas of Nigeria. Erosion problems abound in Anambra, Imo, Enugu, Oyo, Kwara and other states. These erosion activities affect traffic and agricultural land, and destroy lives and properties in extreme cases. Flooding has occurred in some urban areas like Enugu, Lagos, Ibadan and others where properties worth huge sums of money have been destroyed and there has been loss of lives. Desertification and drought are environmental issues in the northern part of Nigeria, and are now migrating to the southern parts and the middle belt. All these environmental problems generally lead to land degradation in varying degrees. Planning has incorporated certain measures to address these menaces; it can adequately address these issues,

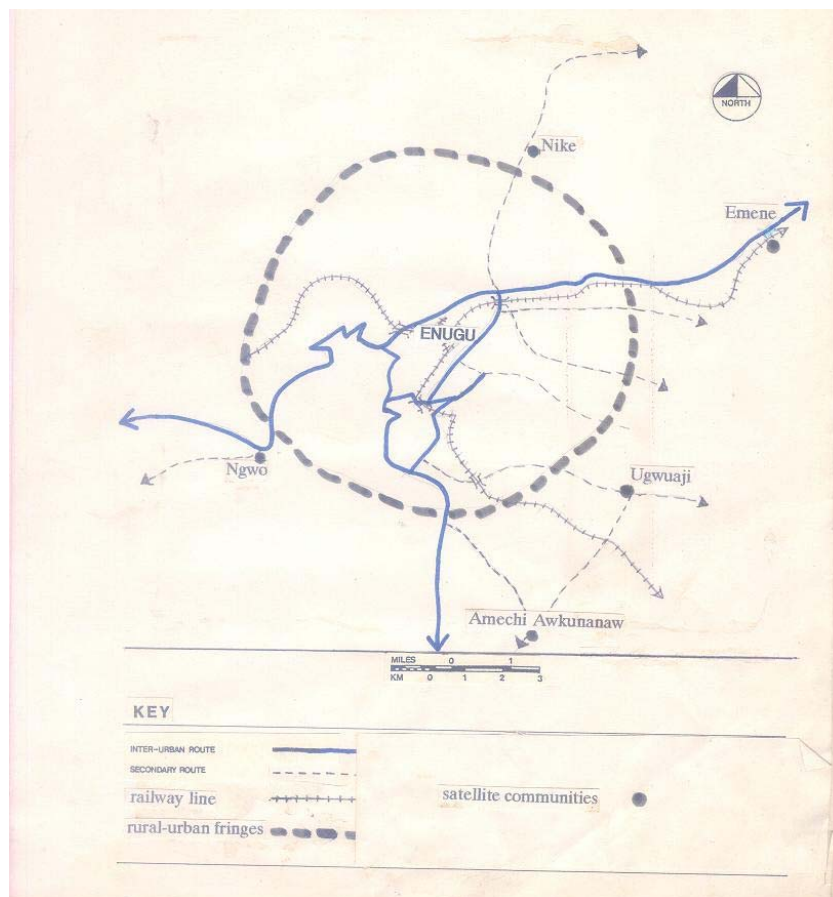
especially through planning education.

2.5 The urban context of Enugu

Enugu State was created on 27 August 1991 with the city of Enugu as its capital. The state derives its name from the capital city, which was established in 1912 as a small coal mining town, but later grew to become the capital of the former Eastern Region of Nigeria (Ministry of Information 1992).

The basic structure of Enugu consists of high-density residential development at the core, whereas lower-density neighbourhoods abound on the periphery. The University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, which constitutes our case study in this paper, is located along an institutional corridor towards the south-western periphery of Enugu. The approximate distance from the core, where the CBD is located, to the urban fringe is about an 8 km radius. Other institutions and schools along this corridor are the Institute of Management and Technology, the WTC Primary School and Urban Girls secondary schools. Adjoining this corridor is the low-density neighbourhood independence layout that is characterised by exquisite bungalows and duplexes (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Enugu and its environs

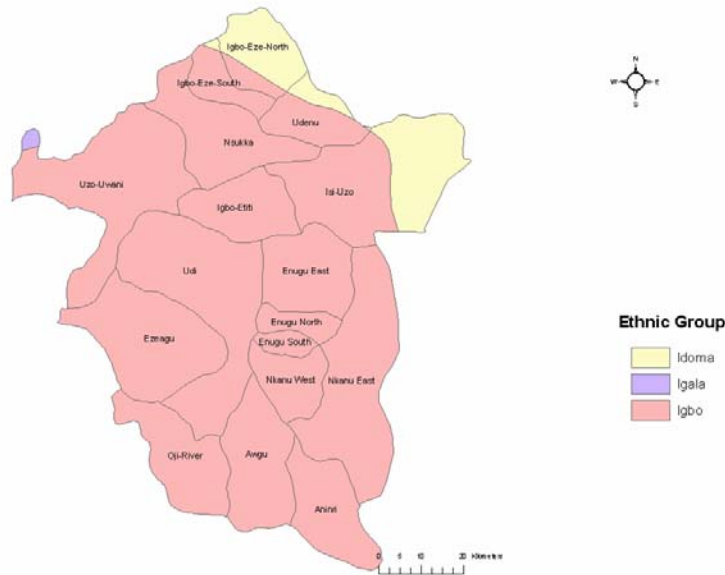


Source: Ministry of Economic Development and Planning, Enugu State Government 1979

Administrative areas

There are 17 local government areas in the state, 5 of which are largely urban. Enugu State has a population of about 2.5 million people. It is home to the Igbo (95% of the population) and the Igala people in the northern part, among other ethnic groups (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Ethnic group map of Enugu State by local government area



Source: NBS 2008

Nigeria's first indigenous university, the University of Nigeria Nsukka, is located in Enugu State. The state also hosts seven other tertiary institutions: Enugu State University of Science & Technology, the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu State College of Education (Technical) in Enugu, Caritas University, Amorji-Nike, Renaissance University, Ugbawka, Our Saviour's Institute of Science and Technology and the Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu.

3. The planning system in Nigeria

Nigeria has made some attempts at formulating legislation on planning, but the laws passed have not been adequately enforced. In the pre-colonial period, Nigerian native laws and customs guided ownership and land use and there were no written planning rules and regulations. During this period, land tenure and land development control – an aspect of local custom – formed part of the general administration of settlements. The family head and ultimately the village head and the community not only decided on where a house was to be built, but also ensured that it was erected appropriately in relation to existing structures.

3.1 The history of planning legislation in Nigeria

In the colonial era (1900–1959) planning was given impetus in the form of physical development that had planning undertones. During this era, planning in Nigeria was also part of the general administration process, in the first instance as part of a preventive health strategy. Hence the 1904 Cantonment Proclamation, the first planning legislation in Nigeria. It provided a guideline for the layout, sanitation and administration of the Government Reservation Area. This legislation, therefore, gave rise to the present-day Government Reserved Areas and African residential locations in many of our towns. Due to the peculiar nature of Lagos, Governor Thompson in 1928 set up the Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) for Lagos to deal with the serious developmental problems of

the city, which were mainly related to slum clearance. Thus the LEDB became the first planning agency in the country. Consequent upon an increase in urbanisation after World War II, the Nigeria Town and Country Planning Ordinance, Cap. 158 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria was enacted in 1946. This ordinance, which was patterned after the UK Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, formed the legislative basis of town and country planning in Nigeria. It made provision for the establishment of planning authorities as special agencies for carrying out planning activities. It also made provision for planning improvement and development of different parts of Nigeria through planning schemes. Based on this law, planning has remained a local affair with some control at the state level.

Starting from the implementation of the Town and Country Planning Ordinance in the 1950s, Nigerian planning law became a regional matter. The Constitution of the first Republic adopted and confirmed it. As a result of the 1946 ordinance's relatively comprehensive coverage of town planning functions in its provisions, most of these provisions were retained by the regions. The three regions merely adopted the ordinance with necessary modifications as Cap. 126, 1963 Laws of Eastern Nigeria; Cap. 130, 1957 Laws of Northern Nigeria and Cap. 123, 1959 Laws of Western Nigeria. These are still applicable in most states of the Nigerian federation.

3.2 The current planning system in Nigeria

This section looks at currently relevant planning laws in the context of the prevailing challenges facing Nigerian cities.

Land Use Act 1978

In 1978, the Land Use Act (Decree No. 6 of 1978) was promulgated to assign authority to the three tiers of government with regard to land ownership. This also provided a sound basis for urban and regional planning.

Nigerian Urban and Regional Law 1992

In 1992, the 1946 Town Planning Ordinance was reviewed to become the Nigerian Urban and Regional Law (Decree No. 88 of 1992). This decree provided for the execution of relevant plans at the federal, state and local levels.

The decree stipulated that at the federal level, there shall be three types of plan: a national physical development plan, an urban plan and a subject plan. Similarly at the state level, there shall be five types of plan: a regional plan, a sub-regional plan, an urban plan, a local plan and a subject plan. At the local level, there shall be three types of plans: a town plan, a rural plan and a subject plan.

The institutional arrangement for the implementation of the planning agenda stipulates that the federal level shall be responsible for the following: formulation of national policies for urban and regional planning and development; the preparation and implementation of the national physical plan and regional plans on the recommendation of the Minister, the formulation of urban and regional planning standards for Nigeria on the recommendation of the Minister; the promotion and fostering of the education and training of town planners and support staff; the promotion of cooperation and coordination among states and local governments in the preparation and implementation of urban and regional plans; the promotion and conduct of research in urban and regional planning and the making of recommendations and dissemination of research results for adoption by user organisations. The functions include the supervision and monitoring of the execution of projects in urban and regional planning, development control over federal lands, and the provision of technical and financial assistance to states in the preparation and implementation of plans.

The state government shall be responsible for: exercising its physical planning responsibilities within

the framework of national physical development plans to ensure consistency in physical development at all levels of planning in Nigeria; formulating a state policy for urban and regional planning within the framework of national policies; and the preparation and implementation of regional and sub-regional urban and subject plans within the state. It includes the promotion and conduct of research in urban and regional planning, the dissemination of research results for adoption by user organisations, and the provision of technical assistance to local government in the preparation and implementation of local, rural and subject plans.

The local government shall be responsible for the preparation and implementation of a plan for rural areas, a rural area plan, a local plan and a subject plan.

However, despite its enormous provisions, the law is deficient in one vital respect: it restricts planning to the local planning authority. In practice, this is not so. Town and country planning operates at different spatial scales, from the neighbourhood and community levels, where matters of land use, development permit and development control are prominent, through the citywide and metropolitan levels to the level at which strategic considerations are relevant.

Consequently, urban and regional planning are carried out at every level of the three tiers of government in Nigeria. There are certain functions which are best performed at the federal level (Ezuta 2002). These functions are those that relate to international protocols, setting of national minimum standards, and enhancement of the capacity of states to perform urban and regional planning functions. There are also physical planning projects that cut across states and that therefore require coordination at the national level. But again, the Act is not strictly followed and needs upgrading.

Environmental Impact Assessment Decree 1992

In 1992, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Decree (Decree No. 86 of 1992) was promulgated solely to provide legal muscle for the enforcement of the various policy provisions on the need for studies in the environmental impact of both public- and private sector projects. The environmental impact of such projects must be analysed and a report submitted before any approval is given for development.

Town Planners Registration Council

In 1988 the Town Planners Registration Council (TOPREC) was established (Decree No. 3 of 1988) and mandated to accredit town planning programmes in Nigeria's tertiary institutions. The decree empowered TOPREC to regulate and control the practice of town planning in Nigeria in collaboration with the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP), which was established in 1966 without federal government backing. TOPREC also determines the standard of planning education and sets the criteria for registration as a town planner in Nigeria. The accreditation process is normally based on standards approved by the TOPREC Board, having considered related standards such as those set by the National Board for Technical Education, the National University Commission (NUC) and the NITP. This process ensures uniform standards as well as the maintenance of high-quality planning education across different institutions.

3.3 Prevailing planning challenges in Nigerian cities

The Nigerian planner faces the challenges of an urban environment characterised by an informal economy with its serious implications for physical planning (Ijelili & Adedibu 2006; Okeke 2000; Onyebueke 2000). One such implication is the development of illegal structures. Okeke (2000) describes the informal sector as liberal professional practice. Ijelili and Adedibu (2006) say that the incidence of informal-sector enterprises is related to land use type and intensity as well as to transportation. Today's planning practice has not been able to proffer solutions on how to tackle these problems, which are inextricably tied to the employment situation in the region.

Most of the graduates in urban and regional planning from the University of Nigeria working within the region are employed by either the local government sector, urban development boards or the state planning authority, or in banks, oil and petroleum marketing companies and the private sector, where they could obtain better pay. A good number of them have gone into politics where they think they can make easy money.

Since urban planning is teamwork it requires proper coordination among the three tiers of government in Nigeria, which is lacking, and this affects proper urban planning and development. The states in Nigeria are made up of local governments; at the local level responsibilities include planning, implementation and monitoring of various features of the urban system such as transportation, waste management, housing control, open spaces etc., while at the federal level, such tasks as development of urban master plans and sub-regional plans, subdivision schemes, fiscal and feasibility reports are carried out. The apparently poor coordination across these three tiers of government often affects urban planning actions.

In fact, planning goes beyond just physical aspects to also include managing urban economic resources, particularly land and the assets of the built environment, creating employment and attracting investment in order to improve the quality and quantity of goods and services available.

The agencies of urban and regional planning duplicate functions and in some instances, responsibilities are not clearly spelt out or are misinterpreted. In view of the above analysis, the planning system in Nigeria does not manage urban growth in a sustainable manner in the nation's urban centres. Even as much attention is focused on urban growth and urban planning, little advancement and progress are being made. This means that the broader rural areas are almost neglected.

4. The context of planning education in Nigeria

In view of the prevailing urban problems in the country, it is necessary that planning should refocus its strategies. According to Dakaica (2002), education for sustainable development is a life-wide and life-long endeavour which challenges individual institutions and societies to view tomorrow as a day that belongs to all of us, or it will not belong to anyone. Education and planning are central to improving the quality of life and the sustenance of the environment. Graduates of our secondary and tertiary institutions with a planning education bias have a crucial role to play in making urban policies with a practical orientation that could help in solving the current urban problems, such as unwholesome land uses, environmental degradation, housing and transportation problems, etc.

Planning education is the integration of planning issues, concepts, etc. in the curriculum for imparting to the students, both for those intending to become urban and regional planners and for the general public. Dakaica (2002) has noted that planning education should include issues such as the content of planning courses, the delivery of planning education, planning as a profession and intellectual discipline, knowledge and skills, practice, contemporary challenges and policy changes.

For effective education, planning issues ought to be included in the general educational curricula. The curriculum consists of all the learning experiences that the learner undergoes under the guidance of a school, directed towards acquiring certain skills or competences (Wassagu 2002). The main overall objectives of the planning curriculum in Nigeria include providing functional education; being an educational system that is dynamic and flexible, capable of adapting to changing times; offering educational content that is relevant to the needs of Nigerians; and operating as an educational system that can be evaluated in both theoretical and practical terms (Wassagu 2002).

In Nigeria, many of the curricula in use are of the subject-centred type where experience or knowledge is imparted based on subject content. In this case, subjects are collected and arranged separately or in

relation to each other e.g. Biology, Geography, Chemistry etc., and mastery of the subject is the keyword. Thus for a particular profession or vocation, a combination of related subjects is required.

There are many universities and polytechnics offering degrees and professional diplomas in urban and regional planning (see Appendix). However, not all have been given professional accreditation by the professional body TOPREC or the NITP. A student can, upon graduation, become a member of the NITP and undergo tutelage under the supervision of a qualified town planner for a period of two years before being eligible to take the professional examination that will enable him/her to be a registered town planner.

5. The planning education system at the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus

The University of Nigeria Nsukka, as a premier university in Nigeria, was the first to establish an Urban Planning programme in the southeast of the country. Most of the planners other than those trained abroad received their initial training at the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, which is one of the campuses of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, located in the state capital. The Department of Urban and Regional Planning started officially in September 1982 (Umeh 2002). In its early stages of development, the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow (UK) helped to midwife the fledgling department. The linkage programme that existed then enabled lecturers from the University of Strathclyde's Department of Urban and Regional Planning to visit Enugu Campus and partake in teaching, research and curriculum development.

The department grew steadily in staff strength, student population and repute within the university and beyond. By the 1986/87 academic session, when it was ready to turn out its first set of graduates, it had a total student population of about 200, a very encouraging academic staff strength of 13, and 5 support or non-academic staff members. It was in the 1987/88 academic year that the department secured the accreditation of its programme from the NITP, which accredited the undergraduate programme of the department for the first four-year cycle. Since then it has continued to live up to the professional rating and standards of the NITP and TOPREC in its undergraduate programme and, recently, in the postgraduate programmes (which took off in September 1992).

Over the years, the mobility of a number of academic staff resulting from the economic downturn in the country had its adverse impacts; but the department managed to stay afloat by recruiting some of its own graduates. It has also been able to train qualified urban planners who are engaged in diverse public- and private sector employment in the state and beyond.

5.1 Overall objectives

Urban and regional planning education at the University of Nigeria is aimed at inculcating a professional discipline which embraces management of the physical space and the general environment. It is manifested in spatial ordering and management of land uses at the local, urban and regional levels. This is accomplished within the framework of micro-economic resource allocation and political decision-making. Urban and regional planning, therefore, requires comprehensive theoretical and practical education and training in the planning, design and management of the total environment. It also requires an understanding of societal needs, goals and objectives.

The programme is aimed at providing the students with a sound and broad-based education in urban and regional planning with particular reference to the Nigerian situation. This is with a view to equipping the students adequately for careers in professional practice, not only as generalist planners but also as experts in specific areas of planning. The programme is also aimed at preparing students

for careers in planning research and in other planning-related activities. Consequently, they are first introduced to the multidisciplinary perspectives of urban and regional planning and thereafter are exposed to areas of specialisation and research towards the penultimate and final years. Practical training in professional planning firms and government departments is an essential prerequisite for graduation.

5.2 Programme design

The department offers a standard five-year programme leading to a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning (BURP) degree, a Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) degree and a PhD degree in Urban and Regional Planning.

5.3 Teaching methods

Significantly, the planning education curriculum is broad-based. This is because the multifarious tendency of town planning requires the acquisition of multiple skills. The curriculum equips students both theoretically and practically, using such teaching methods as studio projects, lectures, community-based activities, field work and focus group discussion activities, among others. Practical experience is gained by making provision for students to take part in the industrial training scheme in the curriculum.

5.4 Admission requirements

In addition to the general university entrance requirements, applicants for admission into undergraduate programmes through University Matriculation Examination (UME) examination must have credit-level passes in at least five subjects at the Senior Secondary School Certificate level or its equivalent. The subjects should include English Language, Mathematics, and any three subjects selected from the following: Economics, Government, Fine Art, Geography, Technical Drawing, Physics, Chemistry, Agricultural Science and Biology. In the area of town planning, the pre-qualification subjects are Mathematics, English Language, Geography, and any other subjects

For admission by direct entry, candidates must have one of the following qualifications:

1. Upper credit-level passes in the Ordinary National Diploma (OND) examination in Town Planning or its equivalent, in addition to five credit-level passes in GCE O Level subjects as for UME candidates.
2. GCE Advanced Level passes in Mathematics, Geography and one subject from the following: Economics, Government, Fine Arts, Technical Drawing, Physics, Chemistry and Biology, in addition to two other subjects passed at credit level in the West African School Certificate/GCE (O Level) or National Examinations Council..

The two GCE O Level subjects must include English Language and one of the above subjects not already passed at the GCE Advanced Level.

Direct-entry candidates who are admitted into the second year of the programme are required to make up for any deficiency in their background. Transfer students from other universities are treated on their own merit and in line with the university regulations. However, such transfer from universities and polytechnics must be among TOPREC-recognised and accredited institutions as contained in sub-section 3.02 of TOPREC Decree No. 3 of 1988.

The graduate programmes, on the other hand, encompass the MURP and PhD, and admit the following calibre of candidates:

1. graduates of the University of Nigeria and other approved universities who hold degrees from accredited programmes in Urban and Regional Planning with at least Second Class Honours or equivalent qualifications;
2. graduates of the University of Nigeria and other approved universities who hold degrees in related disciplines with at least Second Class Honours;
3. candidates who hold bachelor's degrees in Urban and Regional Planning with at least Second Class Honours from accredited programmes of approved universities, and who will proceed to the second year of the MURP programme.

The entry requirements for the doctoral programme are as follows:

1. a MURP degree by research work from an accredited university;
2. a MSc degree in Urban and Regional Planning by research work from an accredited university.

Candidates who hold MSc or MURP degrees in Urban and Regional Planning by course work/project option will be admitted at the MURP/PhD level in the first instance and will be eligible to proceed to a PhD proper after one year of successful research work. All candidates must have obtained a grade average of at least 3.75 at the master's degree level.

5.5 Mode of assessment

Assessment in the Urban and Regional Planning Department of the University of Nigeria is in the form of tests, assignments, designs, term papers, seminar presentations and semester examinations. Tests or assignments are normally written in every course, and they carry not less than 30% of the total marks (100%). Designs are in the form of studio work, which is a course of its own. These are carried out every semester, and the students present finished design projects and are awarded marks. Seminars come as part of the main project or dissertation carried out by final-year or postgraduate students. Apart from studio work and the thesis done by postgraduate students, examinations carry the greatest weight. A student is only allowed to sit an examination if he/she has reached 75% class attendance in a course. It is also compulsory for a student to have written the tests or assignments before taking the examination. There are also external examiners who assess the final-year designs, dissertations and thesis. They also moderate the examination questions before the examinations and forward any comments on them to the Head of Department. All examinations are graded using a grading scale.

5.6 Class numbers and staff-student ratio

The planning programme has an inadequate number of staff for imparting the required planning education. Accordingly, it has been noted that there is a poor staff student ratio of 13 : 1. Improper orientation of lecturers by way of seminar sponsorship has repercussions for planning and environmental education which may result in poor student enrolment in planning institutions.

5.7 Library and IT resources

The students in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning are groomed in the knowledge of contemporary issues in urban and regional planning through various means. However, the unavailability of foreign books is sometimes an impediment to learning and teaching in the university. Although the university administration encourages lecturers from other universities to come to the University of Nigeria on sabbatical leave for the purpose of cross-fertilisation of ideas, only a few academics accept the offer, possibly because of the existing poor remuneration here. Although internet facilities are available at a cost, not all the students can afford them for access to the

online library. The library sometimes lacks current journals, and students may be stuck with outdated and obsolete journals.

5.8 Curriculum revision

The programme in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Nigeria has gone through various revisions in order to improve it. The first revision was done in 1988 when the former four-year programme was changed to five years. Since then, there have been revisions in 1992 and 2004. The last revision was done in 2007 and obtained approval from the University Senate in 2008 when two different programmes were introduced for the master's degree: a two-year programme for students coming from outside the discipline with a project option, and a one-year master's programme for graduates of urban planning from the University of Nigeria or an equivalent degree from another accredited university, with a dissertation option.

5.9 Professional accreditation

The University of Nigeria undergoes professional accreditation exercises to check the adequacy of programmes and structures. The accreditation bodies are the NUC, TOPREC and the NITP. Such accreditations emphasise and evaluate staff strength, student strength, adequacy of the book stock of the library and IT resources, structures and adequacy of accommodation (lecture rooms, staff offices, studios and workshops), as well as samples of students' studio designs and written examination scripts, and the currency of the library stock of relevant journals.

5.10 The planning curriculum and challenges of the 21st century

Over the years, environmental issues ranging from poverty, unemployment and informality to climate change, among others, have formed the pivot of global environmental concerns and discussions. The 21st century is witnessing massive urbanisation and sprawl, sharp increases in food prices and food insecurity, as well as physical and socio-cultural decay in the urban milieu. One approach to addressing these seemingly insurmountable problems will be informed and systematic intervention. Environmental experts, urban policy-makers and practitioners as well as other professionals need to close ranks. The critical question, then, is how can urban planning contribute to this dialogue? How can course curricula in African planning schools be revitalised to give students and future practitioners a greater role in the unfolding of these developments?

The University of Nigeria Enugu Campus considered some of these divergent issues in the design of its planning school curriculum with a generalist perspective in view. However, considering the time of the initial design, with the traditional 'ivory tower' rigidity and aversion to frequent reviews, points can be made about both the weaknesses and the strengths of the curriculum. First we turn to the strengths. Since the planning programme embraces courses in quantitative research methods, project evaluation, traffic and transportation planning, urban renewal, environmental impact assessment and information technology, the relevance of the curriculum to major urban trends in the 21st century can be confirmed. However, certain limitations have hampered students' compliance with ICT requirements, including specifically the low level of student access to computers and specialised programmes. On this score, the university authorities and the department are making serious efforts, through public-private ventures and the help of the University Alumni Association, to address this issue.

Another concern is that bridging the gap between theory and practice has been a difficult challenge despite the six-month industrial attachment programme in which students participate.

On the side of weaknesses, the persistence of knowledge and technical gaps in our tertiary institutions in Nigeria as a whole has been noted. The planning schools are no exception. Shortages of

up-to-date books, lack of access to current journals, and the cost of exposure to international conferences and workshops, among other things, have unfortunately priced timely transfer of up-to-date knowledge out of the reach of both lecturers and their students.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

Planning agencies and institutions have suffered neglect in Nigeria. This has occasioned a massive brain drain from the planning sector to other fields, because the sector lacks government support. Though the government has contributed in setting up the institutional frameworks, planning jobs are not readily available to the qualified graduates, thus leading to disincentives for potential planning students. In some cases, students think that planning education is irrelevant since the actual implementations of plans is often dictated by the politicians rather than by qualified urban planners. As a result, many planning graduates find little or no space to practise the profession. It has also been argued that '[local] planning authorities are afraid to employ qualified planners with better qualifications because they are unable to pay them' (Uchegbu 2005).

So, government should employ planners in their relevant fields and allow them to uphold professional practices. This will help to encourage younger planners to take on planning as a vocation so as to enhance the future management of the urban environment. Some universities or other tertiary institutions with town planning programmes do not attract large number of students and do not have enough academic staff. Government and even old-time planners should stop politicising the work of town planners. It is my belief that in this era of globalisation, town planning has never been as fully recognised as central to delivering economic success, environmental protection and social justice as it is today. Nigerian town planning must seize the opportunity provided by the challenges of sustainable human settlement development and be proactive in making changes happen in the country. This cannot be done without adequate and successfully implemented urban and regional planning education in Nigeria. Hence the government, the NITP, TOPREC and other organisations that are related to town planning should promote comprehensive training, education and human resources development policies and programmes, as well as adequate academic research programmes that will give planning education a new impetus in this millennium. Finally, the planning curriculum should be reviewed often and made to integrate recent and relevant issues on planning education.

Appendix

Table 1: Approved planning schools in Nigeria

Planning school	Qualifications offered
Abia State University Uturu	BURP
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi	BURP, MURP
Ahmedu Bello University	BURP, MSc URP
Ambrose Ali University Ekpoma Benin	BSc, MSc
Cross River University of Technology, Calabar	BTech, MTech
Enugu State University, Enugu	BURP, MURP
Federal University of Technology Minna	BURP, MURP, PhD
Federal University of Technology Yola	BTech, MTech
Federal University of Technology, Akure	BTech
Federal University of Technology Akure Ondo	BURP, MURP, PhD

Imo State University Owerri	BURP, MURP, PhD
Ladoke Akintola University of Science and Technology	BTech
Lagos State University	MURP
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	BSc, MSc
Rivers State University of Science and Technology, P / Harcourt	BTech
University of Lagos	BURP, MURP, PhD
University of Benin	MURP
University of Ibadan	MURP, MSc
University of Jos	BURP, MURP
University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus	BURP, MURP
University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State	BURP, MURP, PhD

Source: NUC 2008

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