Negligence of Town Planning Consultancy in National Development Planning Approach of Government: The Bane of Ineffective Laws and Insecurity in Nigeria

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Abstract
Town planning is very essential for any meaningful national development and security of human settlements yet, it is seemingly relegated to the background. Prevalence of insecurity and haphazard physical development besieging towns and cities hinges on the neglect of town planning expertise. As such, the impacts result in serious threat to the existence and welfare of humanity. In others words, global insecurity from ineffective laws, unplanned, haphazard and uncontrolled development issues are escalating but are seemingly paid leap services in national politics of developing countries like Nigeria. Poor national developments have culminated into insecurity evolving from petty thievery to intercontinental criminality and developing to what could be termed "crime-community". The need for Town Planning approach in dealing with insecurity and other national development issues cannot be overemphasized. This paper therefore argues that insecurity resulting from ineffective laws has a significant relationship with the negligence of physical development planning in the country. Thus, the assertion that the more unplanned and uncontrolled growth of settlements, the more insecurity in the country. The goal of the study is therefore, to examine the relationship between the insecurity and negligence of physical development planning in Nigeria with a view to determining the implications for national development. Mixed research method was adopted. Secondary and primary data were collected and analyzed. Findings indicated that physical development planning in Nigeria is poor while governance was found to be preoccupied with fiscal without commensurate physical development planning. The study observed the existence of haphazard development projects, myriads of uncompleted and moribund projects, bogus and white elephant projects that are inconsequential to the yearnings and aspirations of the people. Furthermore, employment generating projects were infinitesimal and the study determined an inverse relationship between insecurity and physical development planning. Crime was found to be metamorphosing from common stealing/thievery/burglary to looting, armed robbery, kidnapping, ritual killing, cyber-crime (yahoo boys activities), banditry, terrorism and unknown-gun-men attacks. Aggressive physical development planning and its consistent sustainable implementation were therefore recommended among others towards facilitating security through properly planned physical development and good governance in Nigeria and beyond.

Keywords: Security; Insecurity; Physical development planning; Fiscal development planning; and Town Planning.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Essentially, Town Planning Consultancy should resonate with national development planning. Thus, the Project delivery mandates of political gladiators and should be intone with town planning, as both are critical for the growth and overall socioeconomic development of any human settlement. Town planning consultancy is a

key to effective project delivery and proper land uses including provision of public utilities and services for the welfare of the people. Project delivery simply means putting in place the required public utilities and services including infrastructures, facilities, amenities and other public goods necessary for individual and collective wellbeing of the populace within a defined geographical space. This is in conformity to the tenets of the town planning profession as it begins with project needs identification and progresses to project policy formulation, design, execution, utilization, maintenance and review. The essence of project delivery is to make available the required public utilities and services for the welfare of the people. It follows therefore that an overall development of any area, region, state or nation should be in tandem with town planning standards of public utilities and services. Thus, project delivery of utilities and services is part of the core constitutional mandate of public office holders otherwise tagged "Political Gladiators". As those put in trust of controlling public fund and other resources for general good; political gladiators have a constitutional duty of project delivery to the people just as the “Town Planners” also have professional and constitutional duty of ordering of land uses for the various projects for public welfare.

However, observations have shown that the project delivery mandate of political gladiators is suffering and the people are suffering too. In consequence, our society is meted with haphazard project formulation and implementation, besieged by uncompleted and moribund projects, bogus and white elephant projects that are inconsequential to the yearnings and aspirations of the people. Given these prevalent circumstances, the individuals, families, communities and entire society are plunged into condition of comatose, dilapidation, retrogression, poverty, squalor and general decay. Yet, there are professionals in the society; particularly the Town Planners, whose ethics revolves around public welfares through, ordering of various land uses, plans and designs for the provisions of public goods and services. Incidentally, public goods and services are visible in the form of "Projects delivery" hence; the Town Planners therefore have a role to play including sensitization of political gladiators towards abatement of failures in their project delivery mandate.

In view of these prevailing situations, this paper argues that the neglect of the relevance of sensitization by town planning consultancy is the bane of project delivery mandate of political gladiators. The paper therefore postulates that, sensitization by town planning consultancies has inverse relationship with the rate of failures of political gladiators on project delivery mandate. This is because checks and balances lie in sincere-self-accountability and the key is sensitization both of self and others. There are assertions even from the Holy Bible that there is time for everything (Eccl. Chapter 3) and of course a time to sensitize especially when knowledge and awareness of physical development planning are lacking and people are suffering (Hosea Chapter 4:6) as is obvious in our society today. In view of indications of God being the first Town Planning Consultant (Genesis Chapters 1-2); town planning is welfare oriented and the profession therefore has a divine mandate. It can thus be said that sensitization is one of the most relevant things that town planning consultancy can offer to political gladiators towards effective actualization of their project delivery mandate so as to redeem the society from unsavory living conditions since in giving lies satisfaction, not in taking.

Moreover, Part B Section 2 & Part C Section 5 of the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law, 1992; stipulated that the National, State and Local Physical Development Plans shall be initiated, prepared and implemented by the National Urban and Regional Planning Commission at the national level, the State Urban and Regional Planning Boards at the state levels and the Local Urban and Regional Planning Authorities at the local government levels (NITP, 2010; TOPREC, 1988 & ATOPCON, 2008). This is a consolidation of the fact of the relevance of town planning consultancy in project delivery which are also the visible forms of executed physical development plans for improvement of human settlements.

In dealing with these issues therefore, there are some underlined questions that this paper intends to explore. These include the following research questions:

1. Who is a Town Planner?
2. What is Town Planning Consultancy?
3. Who is a Consultant Town Planner?
4. Who are the Political Gladiators?
5. What is the Project Delivery Mandate?

6. Of what relevance is the sensitization by Town Planning Consultancy?
7. What nature of sensitization is required from Town Planning Consultancy?

2.0. Town Planning Consultancy and Project Delivery for National Development in Nigeria

In dealing with these questions, it is believed that all the issues on this all important topic will be addressed through the ensuing research questions.

2.1. Who is a Town Planner?

A Town Planner is a qualified professional in the art and science of ordering of land uses for safety, health, comfort, convenience, aesthetics and functionality of the environment. The concern is for public welfare and the product are physical development plans for public goods, utilities and services (NITP, 2010; TOPREC, 1988 and ATOPCON, 2008). Incidentally, these products are often more visible in the form of project delivery such as housing, roads and transportation, educational, recreational, health, commercial, industrial, Information & Communication Technology (ICT) among other public utilities and services. The Town Planner could be in public or private sector (i.e. Government employment such as Federal/State ministries and Local Authorities or the private practitioner like all those in companies and firms as all members of (ATOPCON).

To qualify as a Town Planner, one must have been registered and inducted by the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP) and the Town Planners Registration Council (TOPREC); and after being in private practice for 2-years, then register the firm with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), TOPREC and with the Association of Town Planning Consultants of Nigeria (ATOPCON) (NITP, 2010, TOPREC, 1988 & ATOPCON, 2008). It is therefore a general notion that "Town Planning" rests on a tripod stand of NITP (the trade union), TOPREC (Government institution for the professional registration) and ATOPCON (Private practitioners/consultants only in private sector).

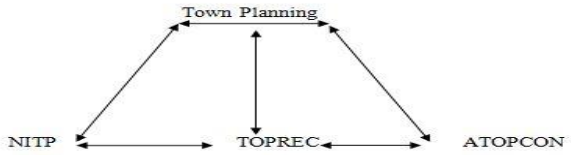


Figure 1: A Schematic Presentation of the Tripod Stand of the Town Planning Profession.
Source: Anierobi, 2022.

2.2. Who is a Consultant Town Planner?

A Consultant Town Planner is a Registered Town Planner (RTP) who has been in professional practice with a registered

firm/company for a minimum of 5-years (TOPREC, 1988). In other words, a consultant is the custodian of the environment, the land uses and land use activities in the environment.

2.3.What is Town Planning Consultancy?

Town Planning Consultancy is a registered body or organization for Town Planning services. It is a formally recognized outfit or registered firm/company for Town Planning services delivery (ATOPCON, 2008). These services are public welfare oriented. The products can be for individuals/group/community, private/corporate groups or public/government goods and utility. A Town Planning Consultancy can also be in the form of a Consortium i.e. a combination of firms/companies working together.

2.4. Who are the Political Gladiators?

Political gladiators are the influential actors who determine who gets what, when and how in a political system. They are the dictators of the tune of event in the political activities of an administration including budget formulation and resource allocation and control as well as on project delivery. The political gladiators could come from any professional background or could be illiterates or semi-literates as obtains in most developing countries like Nigeria. They may or may not be public office holders, occupying political leadership positions but influence political decisions. Such includes political positions as the Executive President and Vice President; State Governors and Deputy, Local Government Chairmen and Vice as well as Members of the various Executive Councils; the Members of the National and State Houses of Assembly and the Local Government Executives and Ward Councilors; Party Leaders among other power brokers including those that play the political god-father. These are all involved in controlling and allocating political positions of authority, public funds and resources as well as dictating the course of political events and activities including project delivery.

2.5. What is the Project Delivery Mandate for National Development in Nigeria?

Project Delivery Mandate is one of the primary obligations of leadership. It is the basic requirements of the people for infrastructure, facilities, amenities and services provision in its entire ramification for the wellbeing of the populace. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of

Nigeria made provisions for the Chief Executives and Presiding Officers of Executive or Legislative arm of the various tiers of government to ensure project delivery in their areas of jurisdiction.

It follows therefore that by the 1999 constitution, political gladiators have the mandate and the responsibility to provide services, determine and implement projects in the Local, State and Federal Governments levels respectively and to also ensure the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions such that local initiatives and responses to aspirations, needs and conditions of the people are maximized (Edet, 2020). There were also provisions for checks and balances in project delivery. In these regards, the role of Consultant Town Planners towards actualizing the project delivery mandate becomes very eminent.

2.6. Sensitization required from Town Planning Consultancy

The nature of services required from Town Planning Consultancy could come in the form of **(a). Solicited i.e.** when consulted and engaged by the client. **(b). Unsolicited i.e.** when it is voluntarily initiated and undertaken. However, for sensitization on project delivery mandate of political gladiators, the later could be more applicable. This means that unsolicited sensitization services from Town Planning Consultancy will suffice for improved project delivery mandate of political gladiators. This is more of but not limited to Professional sensitization capable of driving objective thoughts, actions, judgment and implementation of the projects for public utilization and public welfare.

Sensitizations should therefore enable the engagement of target participants i.e. the political gladiators and community for effective project implementation and roles in the project delivery. Such sensitization should also enhance awareness on the project identification, location and delivery strategy, goal and objectives, duration of implementation, costs and expected benefits. In so doing, technical sessions of the sensitization could afford opportunities for stakeholders and participants to share experiences and fears as well as implementation challenges and determine suitable way forward for delivery of the project.

In order to determine the relevance of sensitization by Town Planning Consultancy

to project delivery mandate of political gladiators, a survey was carried out on a randomly selected Town Planner cum political gladiators in Nigeria and findings were made.

3.0. Findings:

The Findings showed that sensitization by Town Planning Consultancy is significantly relevant in project delivery mandate of political gladiators.

3.1. Town Planning and the Project Delivery Mandate in Nigeria: Housing and other Public Utilities and Services

Right from colonial era to independence, post-independence civilian and military regimes till date; history has shown that Town Planning have been sensitizing project delivery both solicited and unsolicited. These were often in the form of policy formulation and enforcement or direct project construction as well as site and services schemes. This is practically in all sectors of the national economy such as housing project delivery for example. The Town Planners have play roles in housing financing for urban public housing delivery in the country. Most early planned settlements were in accordance to the Ebenezer Howard garden city Town Planning concept as agreed by Olayiwola, Adeleye and Ogunshakin (2005). This explains the emergence of the Government Reservation Areas (GRAs) from colonial era and further development of the housing units for the government workers. The aim was to reflect the English nostalgia for the "garden city" Town Planning ideology.

The Town Planning profession is said to be relatively new in Nigeria say 1988, compared to some other earlier professions. This is because of the institution of an indigenous National Town Planning Legislation in terms of Legal Framework in Nigeria which started with the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP) in 1966 as a trade union; then later emerged the government registration body called the Town Planners Registration Council (TOPREC) in 1988 and then the Association of Town Planning Consultants of Nigeria (ATOPCON) in 2008.

However, the Town Planning Consultancy has been in place courtesy of colonialists and expatriates and the few Nigerians that studied the course abroad. Operating with the colonial 1932, 1946 and 1947 Town and Country Planning Laws; physical development planning legislation for

national development were administered using the fiscal and sectoral plans. In 1962, National Development plans were introduced into the budgeting system of Nigeria to replace the previously used fiscal and sectoral plans. The government housing policy for low, medium and high income groups were also introduced. The first National Development Plan (1962-68) therefore mentioned housing as part of industrial estates as well as Land Acquisition and Town Planning. This first national development plan indicated that government housing projects aimed at delivering 24,000 housing units during the plan period (1962-68). Unfortunately, only 500 housing units were built by the Federal Government before the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war in 1967.

This was followed by the second National Development Plan (1970-74) which was deemed to be unique as government accepted housing project delivery as part of its social and political responsibilities. This fostered housing provision for all social groups whether displaced or not from the competitive housing market (Olayiwola et al, 2005). Emanating from this, 54,000 housing units were then proposed for immediate construction between 1972 and 1973 with 10,000 units for Lagos and 4000 units in each of the then eleven State capitals. In this period, the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) was established for the purpose of direct construction and distribution of the housing units among the low-income (60%), the middle-income (25%) and the high-income groups (15%) (Olayiwola et al, 2005).

The 1975-1980 National Development Plan witnessed oil boom thereby facilitated massive housing projects delivery in the country. The 1972 era marked the decentralization of the FHA to the State levels and the creation of the Federal Ministry of Housing, National Development and Environment, thus separated from the Ministry of works and thus increased quality housing project delivery including housing estates in various cities of the country. With the cancellation of the special housing program by the Federal Government, the Lagos State Government announced a State housing program of 50,000 units to be constructed between 1979 and 1983. In the 1981-1985 Development Plan periods, government embarked on the provision of 2000 housing units yearly in each of the

then 19-States of the federation regardless of differentials in housing demand. The 1984 military takeover of government as well as the associated Military Coups that followed hampered the housing project delivery in the country hence the reappraisals, reviews and adjustments in the policy and designs to the point that Housing ownership was left for private developers.

Despite the hard times of military regime, the Town Planning Profession was still able to break new grounds and in 1988, it ensured the establishment of the Town Planners Registration Council, TOPREC thereby gaining a legal frame work for greater consultancy. In 1991, the National Housing Policy was established as a comprehensive document aimed at ensuring that all Nigerians own or have access to decent housing accommodation at affordable cost by the year-2000 in line with United Nations resolution of Housing for all by the year 2000. The policy encouraged and promoted active participation in housing delivery by all tiers of government. In 1992, the National Housing Fund was established for proper execution of the housing programmes; but all these have not yielded the desired results (Onibokun, 1985; Kwanshie, 2003; Olayiwola et al, 2005; FMH&UD, 2014; Anierobi & Efobi, 2014 and FMH&UD, 1991). By the year 1992, the new Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law, 1992 was promulgated thereby strengthening the Town Planning profession in the country. These further enhanced town planning activities and facilitated project delivery for public welfare in Nigeria. In the 1994-1995 National Housing Programme, a total of 121,000 housing were to be constructed for low, medium and high income groups across the States with priority given to newly created States in the country.

In 2002, a new Ministry of Housing and Urban Development was established by the Federal Government to deal with housing and urban development issues in the country. In all these, urban population have continued to increase as a result of urbanization and migration thereby increasing the housing and other utility problems while Town Planning continues to evolve ways of enhancing the project delivery mandate of government as entrusted on the political gladiators in the society. This progress underscores the relevance of town planning consultancy in sensitizing political gladiato**rs** in project delivery mandate including urban, rural and sub-urban development projects such as road construction and linkages, water and sanitation, power, energy and communication, commercial, recreational

and all other land use activities in the country. At such, Town Planning had continued to thrive in the country and by 2008, the Town Planning Consultants of Nigeria (ATOPCON) was instituted (NITP, 2010, TOPREC, 1988 & ATOPCON, 2008).

Presently, Town Planning has advanced in academic institutions, professional practice and consultancy. There are many more Town Planning institutions, agencies, inter-agencies and parastatals, ministries and inter-ministerial agencies as well as many Town Planning Authorities and Boards among others. All these are poised to ensuring proper physical development planning in the country so as to ensure effective project delivery for the welfare of the people. Table 1 shows the standard facility requirements for some infrastructural projects and the national census population figure of the country. Infrastructural facility projects delivery should be in accordance to the stipulated Town Planning standards as indicated below.

Table 1: Standard Facility Requirements for some Infrastructural Projects

S/n	Standard Facility Requirements	Facility population threshold	Hectares/ facility	National Census Population, 2006
1	Primary School	5 500	2.8	140,431,790
2	Primary Health Clinic	30 000	0.5	140,431,790
3	Health Centre & ARV	60 000	1.5	140,431,790
4	Secondary School	12 500	4.8	140,431,790
5	Post Office	10 000	0.02	140,431,790
6	Park Space	1 000	0.5	140,431,790
7	Police Station	60 000	0.5	140,431,790
8	Fire Station	100 000	0.3	140,431,790
9	Local Library	40 000	0.05	140,431,790
10	Religious Centre	3 000	0.1	140,431,790
11	Municipal Office	100 000	0.3	140,431,790
12	Cemetery	50 000	8	140,431,790
13	Hospital	450 000	5	140,431,790
14	University	1, 000, 000	8	140,431,790
15	Tertiary Hospital	4 500 000	35	140,431,790
16	Sports Stadia	300 000	3	140,431,790
17	Water facilities	50-100 Liter/person/day	Walk able distance	140,431,790
18	Housing	1-1.5 persons/room	Walk able distance	140,431,790
19	Roads	Minimum of 2.5-3.25 meters for a lane of access road.	Walk able distance	140,431,790

Source: Green and Argue, 2010 in Anierobi et al. (2016), Compiled and Updated by the Researchers (2024).

3.2. Contemporary Issues of Covid-19 Pandemic and other Diseases Control Project Delivery

In the trying times of global pandemic like covid-19 and others distress conditions like wars, conflicts and hazards as well as the associated displacements. The measures to curtail these issues are actually hinged on Town Planning including the social/physical distancing, stay-at-home, health and hygiene, housing etc. In all these, the Town Planning Legislation promotes delivery of physical development projects in the country including schools and other educational facilities, health facilities, road and transportation facilities among others; Hence, the need for greater sensitization of political gladiators on effective project delivery.

3.3. Human Capacity Development and Planners in Politics

The role of Town Planning in National Development cannot be overemphasized. Besides the human resource enhancements, as at 2021 the NITP has a membership registration of over six thousand seven hundred (6,700), while the TOPREC registration is over five thousand two hundred (5,200) and ATOPCON has a membership registration of about five hundred (500) registered Town Planning Consultancy firms/companies. These portrays that the sensitization capacity of Town Planning consultancy for project delivery in the country has also increased over time.

Moreover, some Town Planners have further venture from professionalism into politicking thus a trajectory to the assertion that "Town Planning is 70% politics".

The paper identified Town Planners cum political gladiators comprising of State Governors, Ministers, and Commissioners, members of any State or Federal Executive Council, and Member of the State or National Assembly and affiliates. Analytically; it could therefore be inferred that by the devised rating by regions, the ranking was highest for the North at 14(47%); followed by the West at 9(30%) and then the East at 7(23%) respectively. This indicates the level of relevance of Town Planning Consultancy in sensitizing political gladiators in project delivery mandate. Moreover, among the States in Nigeria, this paper inferred that by the devised rating the highest were for Lagos State 17% and Bauchi State 17%, and then followed by Abuja 13%. However, only

Taraba State had produced a Town Planner Executive Governor of a State in Nigeria, only Ondo State has produced a Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and only 2-State Chapters i.e. Abuja and Niger have produced Ministers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Incidentally, most of the Town-Planner-Political-Gladiators were majorly Commissioners of the Ministry for Physical Planning & Urban Development at 11(37%) which many States lack, then is Members of the National House of Representative that were at 4(13%) respectively among other various offices. All these are geared towards determining and advancing the relevance of Town Planning Consultancy in sensitizing political gladiators in project delivery mandate to the people for effective national development planning and crime elimination in Nigeria.

At such, the Town Planners that have occupied political positions were identified and observed to have made a mark in the society. These were basically in view of observed professional background, administration's project execution including identification, monitoring, evaluation and review towards efficient project delivery mandate in the country.

3.4. Town Planning and Insecurity in National Development in Nigeria

Observations showed that the negligence of Town Planning Consultancy in national development planning approach of government has led to the recorded prevalence of insecurity across the country hence, the bane of ineffective laws and insecurity in Nigeria.

Security reports from police records, 2022 in Table 2 shows the prevalence of terrorism/ secessionist attacks mostly in Borno state of the northeast and Anambra state of southeast Nigeria. This is followed by murder cases, then kidnappings, armed robbery cases, armed banditry and other heinous crimes preventable by proper application of physical development planning in national development.

It is evident that proper application of the Town planning standards and consultancy ensures an evenly developed environment in human settlements thereby providing safety, comfort, convenience, health, aesthetic quality and functionality of the built environment in National development as indicated in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 2. Some Incidences of Insecurity in Nigeria

MINISTRY OF POLICE AFFAIRS

PLANNING RESEARCH AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT

CRIME STATISTICS ACROSS THE NATION FROM NIGERIA POLICE FORCE

SUMMARY ON MAJOR CRIMES RECORDED ACROSS THE NATION FROM 1ST JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2022

			CRIMES							
			TERRORRISM/ SECESSIONISTS ATTACK	ARMED BANDITRY	MURDER CASES	ARMED ROBBERY CASES	KIDNAPPING CASES	OTHERS	TOTAL	REMARK
			JAN - DEC	JAN - DEC	JAN - DEC	JAN - DEC	JAN - DEC	JAN - DEC		
S/NO.	GEO-POLITICAL ZONES	STATE								NO CRIME RECORDED FROM BAUCHI AND YOBE STATES FROM JANUARY TO DCEMBER, 2022
1	NORTH CENTRAL	KOGI	5	5	38	6	78	17	149	
		BENUE		2	63	7	22	12	106	
		KWARA		2	36	18	10	4	70	
		NASARAWA	3	1	20	8	20	10	62	
		PLATEAU		5	21	9	73	18	126	SOME DAILY NATIONAL CRIME REPORTS WERE NOT SENT TO PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT
		FCT	1	6	35	29	67	98	236	
		NIGER	6	109	102	38	117	6	378	
2	NORTH EAST	BORNO	79	1	83	19	31	25	238	
		ADAMAWA		1	2	3	4	3	13	
		GOMBE			11	3	3	2	19	
		TARABA	2	2	40	7	53	32	136	
3	NORTH WEST	KADUNA	10	347	257	44	370	41	1069	
		JIGAWA		2	7	2	8	3	22	
		KEBBI	4	32	46	8	59	22	171	
		KATSINA	29	124	101	36	168	23	481	
		SOKOTO	2	109	75	19	208	13	426	
		ZAMFARA	7	206	80	41	109	17	460	
		KANO		1	6	7	12	9	35	
4	SOUTH EAST	EBONYI	11		11		3	2	27	
		IMO	29	4	39	15	19	10	116	
		ENUGU	43	3	117	58	73	45	339	
		ABIA	8		18	25	21	5	77	
		ANAMBRA	64	1	11	30	35	15	156	
5	SOUTH SOUTH	CROSS-RIVER	2		8	3	13	9	35	
		AKWA-IBOM			25	15	14	12	66	
		DELTA	8	1	1	16	31	20	77	
		RIVERS	1	2	28	17	46	20	114	
		BAYELSA			25	17	17	8	67	
		EDO		4	99	43	131	39	316	
6	SOUTH WEST	OYO	3		122	74	46	49	294	
		OGUN		1	10	4	17	5	37	
		ONDO			7	7	27	17	58	
		OSUN	1		53	14	8	16	92	
		LAGOS	2	3	120	36	6	103	270	
		EKITI			5	1	6	9	21	

Source: *Ministry of Police Affairs Planning Research and Statistics Department, Crime Statistics across the Nation from Nigeria Police Force (2022)*

	TERRORRISM/ SECESSIONISTS ATTACK	ARMED BANDITRY	MURDER CASES	ARMED ROBBERY CASES	KIDNAPPING CASES	OTHERS	TOTAL
TOTAL	320	974	1722	679	1925	739	6359

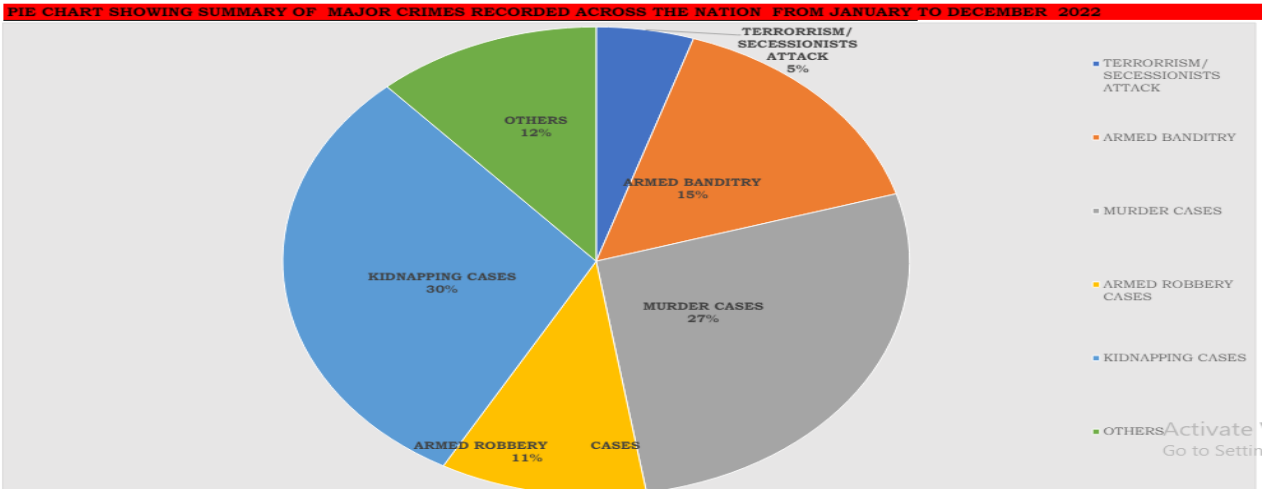


Figure 1. Some Incidences of Insecurity in Nigeria

Source: *Ministry of Police Affairs Planning Research and Statistics Department, Crime Statistics across the Nation from Nigeria Police Force (2022)*

4.0. Challenges and Opportunities of Town Planning Consultancy in National Development Planning Approach of Government and in curbing insecurity in Nigeria

There are some challenges facing Town Planning Consultancy in their role of physical development planning as well as sensitization of political gladiators on their project delivery mandate in the country. Such impediments include but not limited to the following:

1. Neglect of Town Planning Consultancy by the Political Gladiators: This often plays out in appointments even in required fields. Town planning is often misunderstood and relegated to the background generally by the Nigerian society as it appears that less premium is placed on planned environment yet, people are quick to admire those of planned countries like USA, Britain etc. In her little physical development planning efforts, Nigeria rather offer Town Planning jobs to none professionals thereby placing Square pegs in round holes. The neglect of Town Planning therefore is to the peril of the society as public welfare is also neglected. This is because the Town Planner is the doctor of the environment hence the care giver that sees to the well being of any settlement and its people. Poor investment on Town Planning Consultancy simply means poor welfare of the environment and its people hence, the need for agressive sensitization for awareness and knowledge of the people and government.

These offer the opportunity for an **"Unsolicited radical sensitization"** of political gladiators by Town Planning Consultancies. Such could be the simplest way out of such unbecoming cases unplanned physical development of the environment. It will also showcase the relevance of Town Planners whose roles are so glaring in the society and yet, so elusive to undiscerning minds. Such sensitization should be aimed to promote the public welfare products of the Town Planning Profession so as to grant town planning its rightful place of pride that are wrongfully claimed by impostors while also inculcating the attitude of effective projects delivery among political gladiators in the country.

2. Corruption among Political Gladiators: The flagrancy exhibited in project selection, abandonment and incomplete delivery are indications of the lack of sincerity and intent for Public Welfarism in project delivery mandate of political gladiators. It was observed that most public procurements are seemingly shrouded in secrecy, not readily in public domain and not open to common knowledge of the Town Planners, Communities and the people who are actually the greatest stakeholders. Corruption among Political Gladiators hampers project delivery mandate as the process are often embedded in corrupt practices right from project identification and selection which are often top-down in approach as well as publicity, project biding and awarding which are often

granted to expatriates and procurement, costing, expenditure, execution, material inputs, labour among others which are often substandard and non-durable, often with poor location and sitting, poor finishing and poor functionality.

In the light of these anomaly to the society, the Town Planning Consultants are the "Opium of public welfare" including suitable project delivery. Consultants should therefore radically rise to the occasion and get to their rightful position of ensuring public welfare through effective sensitization even by way of unsolicited physical development planning services comprising of specific project plans, urban plans, sub-urban plans, regional and sub-regional development plans, rural development plans as well as new towns, satellite towns and community development plans among others. All these should be aimed to showcase and promote the public welfare products of the Town Planning Profession in the country.

3. Weakening of Town Planning Legislation: The state of planlessness and physical development planning in Nigeria coupled with the wrong notion about planning and preferences for foreign contractors as well as lack of domestication of the NURP Law, 1992 in all the States of the country is nothing to write home about. This is because town planning legislation in Nigeria is meted with weakening concerns such as inadequate manpower for Professional Town Planning service delivery as well as poor funding, inadequate enactment and enforcement of suitable town planning laws for the country. These go a long way to hampering project delivery mandate of political gladiators. It therefore calls for radical sensitization in order to instill the importance of town planning legislation in actualizing the project delivery mandate of political gladiators in the society.

4. Incidence of Quackery against the Town Planning Profession: This is chiefly due to the wrong notion of political gladiators, touts, and some sister professionals who see town planning as a revenue generation venture. Such are encouraged by the lack of broad based professional practice and consultancy measures as well as professional ethics capable of eliminating quackery in the profession. Political gladiators should therefore be sensitized so as to avoid patronizing quacks in project delivery as such could be counterproductive to public welfare as evidenced in building collapses, project failure among others.

5. Professional Sabotage and Rivalry: These are often bred by hypocrisy and greed which creates room for aiding and abetting corrupt political gladiators to override town planning and renege on their project delivery mandate as well as creating professional rivalry within and from sister professions. At this point, unsolicited but desirable awareness for general good of Town Planning Consultancy is pertinently required more than ever and beyond individual job seeking. This is very important

giving the "Public Welfare" watch word of town planning profession in term of comfort, safety, security, health, convenience, aesthetics and functionality of the environment for the well being of the people. In order words, Town Planning Consultancy is the **"Watch Dog"** of project delivery mandate of political gladiators. Therefore, solicited and unsolicited sensitization programmes should be rendered in order to guide politicians and the populace towards public welfare by which general well being of the country can be actualized rather than embezzlement and personal engradizement.

6. Political Apathy by most Town Planners: All Town Planners should eschew apathy towards politics. This is very important to achieve the mantra that "Planning is 70% Politics". It follows that Town Planning Consultancy can be regarded as the **"Welfare-destiny"** of the nation toward general wellbeing and as epitome of effective project delivery by the political gladiators at all levels of government. Town Planners should therefore get into mainstream politics for professionalism in public utilities including project delivery. This calls for political awakening and political consciousness of Town Planners towards national and international politics; as such will position them better as the "Watch Dog" of project delivery mandate of political gladiators.

5.0. Recommendations and Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has established the relevance of sensitization of political gladiators by Town Planning Consultancy on effective project delivery mandate. It is imperative to note that the Global Climate Change phenomenon, the COVID-19 pandemic at and the current Russia-Ukrain war that is arching to World War II among other global crises challenging the world are enough indications of the dare need for more actions on Town Planning Consultancy especially in Nigeria. This should be geared towards sensitizing the political gladiators on the felt needs of the people for efficient and suitable project delivery including land uses.

At such, sustainable environment such as forest and green area reserves, proper waste management facilities, schools, hospitals and health centers among other institutions, roads, water, housing and other infrastructural facilities and many more other projects for public welfare and standards. Town Planners should therefore wake up to this occasion, show the light and take the lead for better living condition, security for the people and overall national physical development.

Training the Town Planning Consultants toward understanding of politics and government activities, policies, blue-prints, budgeting and public procurements as well as language of government is therefore vital so as to empower them to engage government and sensitize political gladiators on effective project delivery for the people. This will also enable proper discernment of issues and getting more involved in governance, following up and sensitizing the political gladiators towards actualizing project delivery mandate and people - oriented interest of the general public.

Whether unsolicited or solicited services, understanding of the State budgets is crucial to the sensitization of political gladiators towards achieving effective project delivery mandate. This is because Town Planning Consultants can

hold on to government mantra on project delivery statements of the State budget e.g. Budget of Hope, Budget of Reconstruction, Budget of Consolidation, Budget of Partnership etc. Voluntary ideas from consultants helps government as good and professional ideas are not easy to come by let alone professional ideas especially as it concerns public welfare which is the stance of Town Planning. These are pertinent as Ayinde (2015) observed that many town planners are not familiar with procurement processes hence, the need for opportunities to learn more and ensure due diligence needed in order to have access to various projects. Such are the importance of the opportunities as provided by the Town Planning Consultants of Nigeria (ATOPCON) for equipment of members with relevant skills in project procurement across the country for sustainable practice with involvement in projects. At such, this paper calls for radical unsolicited and or solicited sensitization in order to instill the importance of town planning legislation in actualizing the project delivery mandate of political gladiators for national security and equitable physical development of the counry.

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