

A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS (CAP), WEST AFRICA REGION, AT THE END OF A TWO-DAY WORKSHOP HOSTED BY THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF TOWN PLANNERS (NITP) HELD IN LAGOS, NIGERIA, NOVEMBER 3-4, 2009.

A 2-day West Africa Workshop on Planning for Liveable Human Settlements organized by the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP) in association with the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) was held at the Ocean View Restaurant of the Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos Nigeria from November 3-4, 2009.

The workshop brought together Planners from Scotland, France, Ghana, Benin Republic, Togo and the host country Nigeria. Workshop participants were a mix of academics, consultants, administrators and officials from the Federal and State Ministries as well as Local authorities. Representatives of Nigerian Society for Engineers, Nigerian Institute of Building, Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveying, and the Nigerian Institute of Estate Surveyors and Valuers also attended the workshop.

The Deputy Governor of Lagos State, Her Excellency, Princess Sarah Sosan represented by the Honourable Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Tpl. Bolaji Aboosedo presented a Key note address. A goodwill message from CAP President, Christine Platt was delivered by Prof. Cliff Hague (Secretary-General of CAP). Other goodwill messages were delivered by Dr. C.L. Odimuko (CAP Vice-President, West Africa), Nicolas Detrie (France), Mr. Frank Tackie (President, Ghana Institute of Planners), and Tpl. Grema Ndirbulla (President, Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria).

Participants were informed of the efforts of the Lagos State Government to accommodate the urbanization challenges facing Lagos as Nigeria's first Mega-city with an area of 3,577 square kilometers and current population of over 18 million which is expected to rise to 24.5 in 2015. Lagos has 2,000 industries (65% of Nigeria's total), three major sea ports, 224 vehicles/kilometer, generates 10,000 metric tons of wastes per day and requires 10,000 MW of power supply per day.

In order to improve on the liveability index of the people of Lagos mega-city, the state government spent over 20 billion naira on the Lagos Island Central Business District Infrastructure upgrade in 2005, embarked on the redevelopment of parts of Lagos Island under Public and Private Partnership Programme, redevelopment of Oluwole Central area, Oyingbo, Balogun, Tejuosho and Ikorodu regional markets. Bus Rapid System has been introduced, water transportation system has been improved, more road infrastructure facilities are built and aggressive greening of the mega-city is being undertaken while efforts are on to make use of natural assets to address climate change issues. All of these are creating jobs for and improving the livelihoods of the residents and visitors in the city while making the mega-city liveable.

Five technical papers were presented on the workshop theme: “Planning for Liveable Human Settlements: The West African Challenges”. The papers examined: City Liveability indices, implications and challenges; Planning for climate change and Eco-city Design; Land Reform and Management in West Africa; CAP’s Commonwealth Human Settlements Agenda, and Partnering for a more Sustainable Future.

The participants at the 2-day workshop:

Noting that: the Commonwealth urban population increases by 65,000 people every day and the trend will continue into the future;

Noting also that almost half of this increase is in slums;

Alarmed that uncontrolled urbanization is creating problems such as settlements of the low income people in marginal areas vulnerable to natural disasters, poor land administration, urban and rural poverty, inadequate and ailing infrastructure;

Acknowledging that climate change and natural disasters already impacted on millions of Commonwealth citizens;

Concerned that waste, traffic congestion and air pollution blight our cities;

Aware that time is short: planning is needed now or it will be too late;

Gravely concerned that all these acute challenges are rampant today in West Africa;

Recognising that there can be no meaningful economic integration in the Commonwealth region without adequate physical planning and liveable human settlements;

Accepting that there is no sustainable land administration that recognises traditional land tenure system which can provide access to land for the poor and vulnerable groups;

Hereby made the following recommendations:

- (i) There should be cooperation, collaboration and networking between planners in the Anglophone and Francophone countries in the West Africa Region through (ECOWAS) West Africa Planning Association.
- (ii) Members of the Association should renew their commitment to developing and using their skills to deliver sustainable human settlements.
- (iii) Our professional institutes to work together in West Africa to raise awareness of human settlements challenges at all levels of government.
- (iv) Professional institutes (especially in the built environment) should be encouraged to work with us on the West Africa Planners' agenda.
- (v) National governments to ensure that legislation for land use is fit for purpose today (including issues of tenure and climate change).
- (vi) Governments at all levels should invest in improving the liveability of rural and urban settlements through the provision and maintenance of adequate infrastructure, efficient town/city management and delivery of public services, and increased accessibility to employment;
- (vii) Governments, NGOs and Planning institutes should invest in capacity building through training and re-training of personnel for job efficiency, increased productivity, and relevance;
- (viii) Planning schools in the Commonwealth should promote knowledge sharing and exchange programmes and expand their curricula to include contemporary human settlement and planning issues such as Climate Change, Community Planning and Design, Urban and Rural Governance, Local Economic Development, Information and Communication System for urban planning and management, Sustainable Land Management, Eco-sanitation and waste management.

- (ix) ECOWAS to create a territorial development strategy for West Africa that focuses on climate change, key infrastructure gaps and the role of human settlements in building competitive economies.
- (x) The Commonwealth to endorse the findings of the Scoping Study on the State of Commonwealth Cities and to recognise the need for proper monitoring of urban change benchmarking of cities across the Commonwealth, and exchange of practices through action research.
- (xi) Inclusive community participation and public-private partnership in the provision and management of infrastructural facilities and services should be encouraged and sustained.
- (xii) Commonwealth Planners of West Africa to partner intensively within the region and with those in other regions of the world, the UN-HABITAT, other international organizations and Development Partners for a more equitable, sustainable and liveable future human settlements.
- (xiii) The workshop concluded that with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in place to guide the operations of the West Africa Planners Association (WAPA) the first agenda-setting meeting of the Anglophone and Francophone member institutes would hold in Togo in 2010.
- (xiv) Finally, the workshop sent the following messages to the next meeting of Commonwealth Head of states holding in Trinidad and Tobago:
- more issues of human settlements should feature on their agenda;
 - Commonwealth Foundation should be empowered to assist CAP organise capacity building platform for member institutes on issues of climate change, local economic development, poverty reduction, improved land management, and eco-city development, and
 - Head of Governments to show political will and commitment to implement all decisions and resolutions passed at the meeting that concern human settlements.