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Perspectives on Urban Renewal and Transportation Development in Lagos: Implications for Urban Development in Nigeria (Pp 273-287)

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Abstract.

Lagos city has emerged a growing Primate city, at least, growing faster than any other city in sub-Sahara Africa in terms of population, urban renewal, roads and infrastructural development. The problems of urban development and transportation in Lagos can be summarized into the following: the problem of old narrow streets in most of the unplanned areas of the city and the emerging incursion of transport infrastructural facilities into the residential areas as a result of growing traffic volumes on Lagos roads. Similarly, the problems of haphazard development and slum expansion due to increased population pressure have necessitated the state Government to initiate massive renewal programmes. These are implemented through Public Private Partnership Initiatives. This has given rise to the building of the Atlantic City' and the Bus Rapid Transit. What happens in Lagos if extended to other states is being envisaged to be the panacea to urban development in Nigeria.

Introduction

It has been widely reported that Nigeria's settlement development is undergoing rapid change right from the pre-colonial days through the 21st century. Ayeni (1978), and Olawepo, (2008) indicated that Nigeria possesses a

pattern of urban development that is almost unique in Africa, south of the Sahara, with Lagos taking a domineering role.

Lagos State, though one of the smallest states in Nigeria by land mass, is by far the largest and most complex urban area in Nigeria. With an expanding population of 15 million people, Lagos is the largest city in Nigeria, the second largest in Africa, and the sixth largest in the world. It is expected that by 2015, the population of the state will be 25 million (Lagos State Government, 2008). The poor condition of the road network and public transportation system affects severely the development of the city and living conditions of the population. A lack of adequate infrastructural expansion over the years to cope with the increasing population has resulted in heavy traffic congestion and housing inadequacy within the city.

To address these and other problems, past governments have been executing different urban renewal programmes as well as in developing infrastructure facilities and transportation development. As at today, the current civilian administration is involved in massive urban renewal in the Metropolis and gradually turning Lagos to the real 'Center of Excellence'. Development and renewal projects are on going in all the 57 Local Government and Development Area Councils.

The Meaning of Urban Renewal and Transportation Development

In the past few decades in Nigeria, there had been massive movement of people from the hinterland and rural areas to the core urban centres. This has led to spurious increase in the population of our urban centres, without increase in the economic development and infrastructures. This has also given rise to slum development and ageing status of our urban centers, in which Lagos is not an exemption. In an attempt to bring modernization and new development, urban centers brought about the issue of urban renewal.

According to Weaver (1970), urban renewal refers to an aggregate of public and private activities which retard or terminate urban obsolescence, prevent decay, clear areas which have bad and upgrade buildings, facilities and environment in others that still have some useful life. Wood (1967) defined it as a system of preventing the premature obsolescence of urban neighbourhood, facilities for the restoration of declining areas as well as the recreation of worn-out areas. Agbola (1987) on the other hand defined urban renewal as a relatively comprehensive community redevelopment programme through which a particular city seeks to re-fashion and rebuild the physical

structures of a particular segment of the city in order to enable it to cope more successfully with the problems confronting it.

Put differently, urban renewal could be seen as a process of upgrading the status and structure of a particular section of a settlement, with a view of making them 'a new' through modernization. It is a process of replacing the various degrees of old, decayed and congested buildings and infrastructures which are characteristics of old cities. The components of urban renewal may include among others, city expansion and redevelopment, comprehensive road development and redesigning, and beautification and settlement layout. Others include, upgrading of facilities and public goods and services, repair, construction and silting of drainage system within an urban center, and enforcing slum upgrading and city development.

In order to achieve the objectives of various urban renewal policies and programmes, the doctrine of urban renewal pursues a wide range of goals and attainment options, which are basically the main objective. It is to strengthen the economic base of urban areas and to create optimum use of natural resources. Similarly, it will sustain the habitability of the urban environment through efficient city expansion and management. This will help to produce future orderly development that will eventually enhance conducive living in a favourable environment. In the same vein, it is to eliminate blight and slum in the urban environment through injection of modernization and improvement into housing and infrastructural development. In an attempt to achieve these goals and others which might have been set by specific programmes, various techniques are often adopted in urban renewal strategies. They include city expansion, city redevelopment, urban rehabilitation and renovation, beautification of monuments and structures, and city conservation among others.

Despite all these urban renewal processes have negative effects on the residents of the urban areas. Such effects include among others, drastic use of public power to effect forceful ejection and movement, loss of properties and financial loss, urban housing shortages through demolition, and cost intensive through compensation during resettlement period.

Transportation development on the other hand, and most of the time is a part of urban renewal processes and a means of infrastructural improvement. As a city develop, more people and vehicular expansion would be necessary. Transportation development therefore refers to every activity and changes that are carried on in the transport sector of the economy in order to improve

on the utilization of transportation related infrastructures. This mostly would involve;

- (a) development and improvement of mass and public transportation as affecting road, rail air and water transportation facilities.
- (b) rehabilitation and expansion of existing roads to reduce traffic hold ups and city congestion.
- (c) construction of highways, ‘fly overs’, and pedestrian bridges as well as bus station and bus stations.
- (d) development and establishment of different urban mass transit schemes through the development of water transport, bus services, rail services within the city environment.
- (e) provision of infrastructure facilities for motorized and non motorized transport within the metropolitan area.

Having looked at the issue of urban renewal and transportation development, it is essential to note that any renewal and development that would involve the magnitude of development described, a huge amount of funding, proper management and investment would be needed. This will allow for continuity and sustainability.

Urban Renewal in Lagos

The first attempt on urban renewal during colonial period was in 1906 under the Hausa lands Ordinance enacted in that year. The purpose of that programme was total clearance of a large portion of the Crown land located within the core city center. After this various urban renewal programmes have taken place. For example, in 1951, the defunct Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) was mandated to execute some extensive development programmes to give facelift to some areas in Lagos Island, covering areas bounded by Victoria street (now Nnamdi Azikwe street), Broad street and Palm Church street . This was a sort of slum redevelopment and modernization to enhance conducive living. The affected inhabitants were resettled at ‘New Lagos’ now called Surulere (Onibokun, et al, 1987). Furthermore, The Lagos Central Planning Scheme was put into effect in 1955. It was to involve the re-housing of about 200,000 persons over a period of five to seven years. The scope of the scheme comprised of clearance and redevelopment of 70 acres of built up land within central Lagos. Using the method of resettlement and redevelopment, streets were widened to meet the

increased traffic demand at the same time rear access service roads were redesigned. New layouts, infrastructure facilities and housing units were provided in Ikoyi area through a loan repayable within forty years. Built up lands, plots of lands and houses were leased out to people from central Lagos while a large proportion of houses were allocated to high income civil servants who came from outside Lagos.

During the Military regimes, there were no less than five urban renewal projects especially between 1972 and 1975. These were the era of construction of 'fly-overs' and overhead bridges to make ways for new roads and transportation development. The process of slum clearance continued till 1979. Also the Olaleye-Iponri scheme was unique with the involvement of collaborative efforts between the Lagos State Government and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The scheme also introduced new methods of consultation and community participation. Its approach was basically that of rehabilitation. It was also prepared as part of the Lagos Master Plan in 1980 with an implementation phase commencing between 1982-84. As at 1990, the clearance of Maroko was effected and the inhabitants were resettled at Ilasan and Epe locations.

Apart from these, various urban development programmes and infrastructure development were introduced in various locations in Lagos especially during the civilian administrations in the late 70s and 80s. These were effected directly by the Government agencies and private developers. The establishment of Urban Renewal Board in the 1990s has also added new dimension to renewal and physical development in Lagos metropolis. Lagos city has emerged a growing Primate city, at least growing faster than any other city in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of population, urban renewal, roads and infrastructural development. However, in furtherance of the dividends of democracy, the current civilian administration in Lagos (under Governor Babatunde Fashola) has taken a giant stride to address the problems in a new dimension that has never been done by any government in Nigeria and probably Africa, to move the city forward. Such programmes include:

- (a) Private partnership initiatives to develop an Urban Renewal and Mega City Programme in a twenty year rolling plan.
- (b) Urban Renewal and drainage channelization/Canal silting Project in all 57 LGAs.
- (c) Urban beautification and Road maintenance/development Programme.

- (d) Lagos city Atlantic Project.
- (e) Parallel Light Railway system construction and Road Expansion Programme.
- (f) Development and Reactivation of Inland Water Ways and Ferry services.
- (g) World Bank Assisted Pilot Bus Franchise Scheme.
- (h) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Urban Mass Transportation Partnership.
- (i) Pilot Bus Franchise scheme involving the World Bank, some Nigerian Commercial Banks and Non governmental organizations.
- (j) Pedestrian Safety and Foot bridge Development initiatives.

One aspect of urban renewal strategy in Lagos that is worthy of citing is that of management options. In Lagos, most of the urban renewal programmes and transportation development are either carried out by public or private agencies on behalf of the government in the past. As at today, apart from various government agencies, Ministries, the Federal Government and the Local Government through Budgetary allocations, the bulk of the renewal programmes and transportation development are being done through private public participation especially financing that would last over a long period of years. The purpose of public participation in urban renewal is to enhance the acceptability and sustainability of the programme. In order to appraise the importance of the management options in Lagos, it is essential to look into details, two related projects currently undertaken by the Lagos State Government. These are, the Lagos city Atlantic Project (Mega City Development Project) and the Public Transportation Projects.

The Lagos City on the Atlantic Project (Lagos Mega City Development Project)

The dream of new, modern Lagos State came alive when the Babatunde Fashola's administration decided to have a massive urban development and city expansion that worth Billions of Naira tagged Eko Mega City, encompassing "Lagos city Atlantic Project". This project has been described as the Dubai of Africa when completed. The new City on the Atlantic is part of the Mega City Project which would be a master piece that will have a city landscape that will rival that of anywhere in the world.

The Lagos State Government through a private partnership support plans to reclaim over 820 hectares from the Atlantic Ocean. The multi-billion naira development to be known as “Eko Atlantic City” will combine residential, commercial, financial and tourist accommodation in a location to be serviced by a state-of-art, high-tech infrastructure. It is a form of city expansion that will involve:

- (i) Reclamation of Ocean front for city development.
- (ii) Construction of down town Avenues and Financial Districts.
- (iii) Provision of Harbour light and city beautification.
- (iv) Construction of Eko Red line light railways to link different locations.
- (v) Development of Eko green line, Eko Ferry and Marina line.

The project, which will be bigger than the current size of Victoria Island, is to be developed by the Chagoury Group, one of West Africa’s leading construction firms under the public-private-partnership (PPP), an initiative that is fast gaining ground in this part of the world. The construction work is also to be handled by China Communication Construction Company Limited. The development would also incorporate central waterway of 30- metre wide to provide water transport facilities connecting the marinas. The land for the Eko Atlantic project, according to one of the developers, South Energyx Nigeria Limited, will be reclaimed, up to 820 hectares, by dredging from the waters of the Atlantic Ocean in an environmental friendly process without leaving an impact on the marine life.. Other facilities will include an international standard road network, surface drainage, dedicated electrical power generation plant with underground distribution, water supply, treatment and distribution mains, and sewage collection mains.

The development, targets over 250,000 residents, and 200,000 commuters flowing daily to the Island to work. The overall area to be reclaimed is 820 hectares or 8,200,000 square metres. The total length of the development is 6,500 metres and on average 1,260 metres wide. To the western boundary of the development is existing east mole constructed between 1905 and 1908 to protect the Lagos harbour entrance. To the east boundary is a revetment of 920 metres in length and incorporates a large Marina with access to the sea. As at 28th April 2008, the Lagos State government has commissioned the redevelopment of the \$3 billion Eko Atlantic city project, signaling the

beginning of a journey into the next generation of property development not only in Nigeria, but also in Africa. Eko Atlantic city, targeted to be completed by 2015. According to the government, with its offering of premium corporate, retail and financial space and its potential as a high-end hospitality resort with a prime seaside location, Eko Atlantic would be a magnet for multinationals and foreign/local investors.

Apart from the above the following development are being added as part of the Mega city Project.

(a) Lagos Energy City in Badagry

This is another Public Private Participation Venture. It is proposed to be the first fully integrated business hub for the oil and gas industry in the Africa continent but will also open to related businesses. Also launched in the plan is the expansion of the current Lagos Badagry highway to a 10 lane conduit that also comes with a light rail. It will be powered by an off grid 130 mega watts electricity plant. The city is a proposed 763 hectare development strategically located in Badagry Town, on the western axis of Lagos. The project will cost \$1.8 billion USD. The City when fully developed will comprise of two zones.

Zone 1 is the convention / tourist zone. It comes with exhibition tourist market, convention facility and convention hotels. Zone 2 will house multinational and national companies belonging to the Oil and Gas Industry, including industries in its value chain such as financial institutions, airline companies, government agencies and commissions and IT companies among others.

Lagos Energy City is a PPP including Lagos state government, World Energetic Holdings Limited of Hong Kong, Elite Max Asia Limited of Hong Kong, Royal Orchid Holdings Limited of Hong Kong, and Transglobal Energy Funds pte Limited of Singapore. Zenith Bank Plc of Nigeria is the lead banker. Supra Energy and Power City Limited of Thailand, the promoters of the project have since raised about \$200 million USD.

(b) Beautification of Lagos

Lagos State Government has earmarked the sum of N1 billion for the execution of the various ongoing beautifications and landscaping projects across the state. The projects include the loops, medians along highways, setbacks and development of recreational parks in some identified locations within the metropolis. As at now various beautification of the City has commenced and various locations have been upgraded with modern

infrastructure facilities. This could be noticed at bus stops like Oshodi, Boundary, Igando and Anthony to mention a few.

(c) Lagos Safe City Project

As part of the on going development in Lagos, the State Government is planning to install 10,000 Solar powered Closed circuit cameras especially at 'Bus stops', substations, foot bridges, flyovers' subways and highways. This project is funded by the private public sector generated Lagos security Trust fund. This project hopes to address safety problems via a central security command unit, where the cameras will be managed through remote controlled devices. It would be used to co-ordinate security, emergency responses and traffic needs of the Metropolis.

Public Transportation Projects

The development of public transportation in Lagos has been an ongoing project in the last few decades resulting from the increasing population influx to the city, increased vehicular fleets and in adequacy of transport facilities within the Metropolis. Various Governments (States, Local and Federal) and Private partners have been investing and financing the development of facilities. Presently, the problems of transportation development in Lagos can be summarized into the following:

- (i) the problem of old narrow streets in most of the unplanned areas of the city and the emerging incursion of transport infrastructural facilities into the residential areas as a result of growing traffic volumes on Lagos roads.
- (ii) the problems of haphazard city development and slum expansion due to increased population pressure, thus affecting traffic flow and movement.
- (iii) traffic congestion on Lagos roads resulting from in-adequate transportation infrastructures to meet the growing population.
- (iv) traffic congestion resulting from increased vehicular volumes, human and commodity movement across the city.
- (v) the incessant traffic hold ups and delays resulting from human problems, behaviour and mistakes as well as road bottlenecks on Lagos roads.

- (vi) increased in population, problem of mass movement of people and 'pedestrian risks' across major roads.
- (vii) infrastructure facilities for non motorized transport are limited throughout the Metropolitan area, while sidewalks, pedestrian bridges and crossing facilities are in short supply.
- (viii) In many cases, residential quarters have eaten into transportation land use, sub standard houses and slum development as well as unguided waste management are on the increase, all these directly or indirectly have negative effects .

In solving these and other related urban development and transportation problems, successive governments in Lagos State in the last three decades have been involved in various programmes, some of which have yielded positive results. The current civilian Administration under Governor Babatunde Fashola as part of the development of Lagos Mega City Project has undertaken various projects to improve public transportation. The first step in effecting improved management is the extension of partnership to public private partnership to World Bank, Commercial Banks Non Governmental organizations and the establishment of the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA). The attention of the government and its agencies are presently focused on the development of water transportation, rail transportation and Bus Services through the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

(a) Water Transportation Development

Lagos Metropolis is blessed with a vast water based resources as it is surrounded by large water bodies in form of the ocean and lagoon. The use of waterways in Lagos is regulated by the National Inland Waterway Authority, a federal agency. Both the Federal and Lagos State Governments provide ferry services and have built a number of jetties along the waterways of Lagos. The potential of water transport remain largely untapped as it carries less than one percent of overall traffic in Lagos As part of the ongoing development efforts, the state government has therefore made its policy to develop, very rapidly, commuter water transportation routes in the state to arrest the decline in the quality of life in Lagos and to sustain economic development in the state and ultimately the country (LAMATA, 2009).

Just like other development policies, the government is currently developing water routes and investing heavily on water transportation through the Private Public Partnership delivery strategy, whereby the public sector

(LAMATA) on behalf of the state finances infrastructure provision (jetties, and landings, car parks, access roads etc). The private sector on the other hand, provides and operates ferry services to specifications to be provided by LAMATA.

Presently, seven main routes have been identified for development but only three are operational. These are Ikorodu to Marina, Ebute Ojo to Marina via Satellite Town and from Ijede-Badore to Marina via Lekki and Falomo area. Similarly, there is also a plan to develop Osborne and develop a major terminal there. Presently again LAMATA has completed the rehabilitation of two other jetties in the state, while works are on going in other locations in the state.

(b) Rail Transportation

Existing rail corridors are very few and grossly underutilized. The Nigerian Railway Corporation is currently operating only one rail route from Agege to Iddo. This is grossly inadequate compared to other means of transportation. In view of this the state government is embarking on the development of light railways line in the on going 'Atlantic City' project as well as light rail lines parallel to existing roads in some locations in Lagos. The construction of the Light Rail Transit Scheme is to start before the end of 2009 and it will introduce a light rail transit system from Iddo in Lagos state to Ijoko in Ogun State. It has been proposed that when in operation, over 500,000 passengers would be transported conveniently daily along this route. Another parallel line is to run from Apapa to Badagry. The Lagos Mega City Development Authority is undertaking the Light Rail Transit System as a priority project for implementation within the mega city. The scheme is co-financed by the Federal Government and the Lagos State government.

(c) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

The public transportation in Lagos is characterized by large fleet of small privately owned buses, poorly maintained, unsafe buses which have not been meeting the rapidly increasing demand of the emerging urban population. Over the years, the successive administrations over the years have been investing on various urban mass transit programmes. Initiated by the Bola Tinubu Administration with the assistance of the World Bank and successfully completed by the Fashola's government, the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) became operational on 17th March 2008.

The BRT project is also a public private initiative regulated by the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA). A Fleet of high capacity buses were provided comprising of 126 buses to ply designated routes. The buses are classified into two groups; the red and blue buses. The red buses which are operated by Lagos Asset Investment Limited run direct non stop trips from Mile 12 to CMS while the blue buses under the operation of the National Union of Road Transport workers (are operated by BRT/NURTW), also running the Mile 12 to CMS axis will stop for about four minutes until they get to final destination. The BRT buses run on segregated lines of about 22kilometers, bilateral configuration, with 3 terminals (one using under bridge), 26 stops (unique center design) depot. An estimate 7000 passengers are expected to be transited per direction every hour. As at now, various evaluations has shown that about 195,000 trips per day which also carries not less than 10,000 passengers have been achieved. Similarly, BRT carries about 25% of all trips along the corridor (with 4% of the vehicles)

Properly managed, the BRT scheme is capable of reducing the Lagos traffic menace significantly .More people will not only be transported across during business hours, but also capable of reducing the number of vehicles on the road with their attendant environmental pollution. Also, it will reduce traffic congestion, meet mobility needs and reduces time wastage on Lagos city roads. BRT is also a roadway-based system that looks and behaves like a subway, offering high capacity rapid transit services but on dedicated lanes or city streets (LAMATA, 2009).

Iwuagwu, (2008) indicated that the introduction of BRT in Lagos has tremendously checked the chaotic transport situation in the Metropolis. Not only has it eased the numerous traffic bottlenecks, it has further reduced the alarming crime rate on the highways and generally made life easier for commuters.

Despite all these achievements, there are some challenges facing the BRT scheme, mostly on operation and management. For instance, having access to the buses still remains a daunting challenge for commuters who have to wait on long queue. There have also been cases of scarcity of tickets particularly on weekends and public holidays. Most of the BRT corridors is either very poorly constructed or in terrible state of disrepair forcing its drivers to abandon the routes for the service lanes or even major highways.

Implications of the Lagos Example for Urban Development in Nigeria

The issue of the current urban renewal and transportation development in Lagos has come to stay and the whole idea can be of effective importance to the development of new city system in Nigeria. The programme is laudable, in fact if the Lagos case is used as a measure of dividends of democracy, then it is a success. If constructively implemented as being done in Lagos in other urban centers in Nigeria, this could uplift the status of our cities and promote sustainable urban development as well as upliftment of standards of living of the urban rural poor. Others implications include among others;

- (a) It will lead to beautification and modernization of Lagos city and other cities that embark on massive renewal of such magnitude. The case of Lagos could be a National pride as the city is gradually being turned into a modern city that would be comparable to other cities in the world.
- (b) The scheme in Lagos will definitely improve accessibility to public goods and services and consequently promote social and economic development, not only of the city but that of Nigeria in general. This is because apart from promoting tourism, developers and investors will be better off, while more employment opportunities will be opened up when the new Atlantic City takes off.
- (c) The BRT lite will enforce safety on roads and increase urban mass transportation of human and commodity flow. Traffic congestion and delayed could be drastically reduced on urban roads, especially with the introduction of segregated lanes and guided traffic management as being done in Lagos.
- (d) The urban renewal programme involving the "Lagos Safe City Project will definitely allow for safety of life and properties. Improved security will be affected and this will encourage spatial interaction and better investment options in the metropolis.
- (e) The inclusion of Public Private Participation in funding, management and supervision in Lagos would allow for sustainability, reliability and continuity of urban development programmes in our urban centers.

Conclusion

The Lagos State Government in the last five years has been embarking on massive urban renewal and transportation development in all the 57 Local Councils in the state through Public Private Partnership. The main emphasis

of the government is to improve accessibility to public goods and services through huge investment on infrastructure, transportation and city expansion. The building of a 'Mega City' out of Lagos is gradually turning Lagos City into a modern environment that would be comparable with any other cities in the world. Similarly, the management of the transport sector in Lagos by the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA) through the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit is gradually improving urban mass transportation as more than 25% of passengers in the designated route are being handled by the BRT buses with less than 5% of vehicular movement. What is happening in Lagos could be an eye opener to urban development in Nigeria and could be a panacea to lifting the standards of living in Nigerian cities. The projects if successfully implemented will benefit Nigeria's economic growth since Lagos city is the economic hub of Nigeria. However, the Government should enforce sustainability and continuity of the programmes to incoming government and extend participation to the states and Federal Government.

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