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To cite this article: Bolanle Wahab & Babatunde Agbola (2017) The place of informality and illegality in planning education in Nigeria, *Planning Practice & Research*, 32:2, 212-225, DOI: [10.1080/02697459.2016.1198565](https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2016.1198565)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2016.1198565>



Published online: 28 Jun 2016.



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PLANNING EDUCATION

The place of informality and illegality in planning education in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the extent to which topical planning issues of informality and illegality are incorporated into the educational curricula in Nigerian planning schools. Given the scale and enormity of informal and illegal settlements in Nigeria and other African cities, these issues should be emphasized in the education and training of planning professionals. Yet, few curricula in Nigerian planning schools, including the Nigerian Town Planners Registration Council's professional curriculum, incorporate informal urban issues. The paper recommends an educational interventionist approach based on recognition of the potential of indigenous knowledge as a means of producing critical and reflective planning graduates who possess the competencies to deal with contemporary settlement challenges. It presents the institutional landscape for planning education and the processes of planning curricular reform and accreditation with a view to revitalizing planning education in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS

Informality; planning education; curricula; indigenous knowledge; Nigeria

1. Introduction

The prevalence and magnitude of informal settlement in African cities presents enormous challenges to planning practitioners. In the Nigerian cities of Ibadan, Lagos, Kano, Benin, Abeokuta, Akure, Port Harcourt and Ilorin, among others, illegal developments on government acquisitions, wetlands and public infrastructure setbacks (including high tension power lines, petroleum pipelines, road and railway routes) present challenges of life-threatening proportions. However, these issues are not well accommodated by planning policy, legislation, administration, plan-making or implementation. Media publicity, public sensitization and participation are very poor and scanty just as they are in planning education curricula.

This situation has arisen and is sustained because all the necessary actors involved in the practice of physical planning have different orientations, goals and expectations and, consequently, they seldom relate, cooperate and collaborate with one another. Unfortunately, this scenario has been allowed to continue for too long and admittedly, this is part of the colonial heritage of modern planning in many African cities. It is now over five decades

since political independence and there is yet no respite in the horizon for these informal and so-called illegal settlements. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the non-frontal attack of these problems in the training of successive planners, as the older Euro-American trained planners seem to have failed to recognize the enormity of these problems and amend the curricula of their various schools accordingly.

The various human settlement problems confronting the world today, including intensive and explosive city growth, climate change, biodiversity loss, cultural extinction, waste management, insecure tenure, depleting recreational and green spaces and urban agriculture, call for urgent action on the part of settlement planners in Nigeria and elsewhere. There is a dearth of physical planners in Nigeria. As at September 2010, only 2058 registered planners were practising in a country with a population of about 170 million people (NITP, 2010). However, this has increased to 3671 in 2015. Yet, only a few of these professionals have adequate information and skills to respond to informal settlement growth and development. This is the rationale for this paper and the call for an urgent review of planning curricula to enhance and enrich the practice of professional planning.

The paper is arranged in six parts. The first part after this introduction presents a conceptual overview of informality and illegality, while the third part is a contextual adaptation of these concepts to Nigeria. The observed coping mechanisms with informality are the content of the fourth section. Section five discusses the application of the indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) to the acquisition and knowledge dissemination of informality, while section six is the conclusion.

2. Informality and illegality: some conceptualizations

The debate on housing policy insistently refers to the question of ‘informality’ and ‘illegality’ of human settlements (Durand-Lasserve, 2006). Durand-Lasserve observes that the term ‘informality’ raises the same definitional problems for human settlements as when it is applied to economic activities and to employment. It is often *defined negatively*. Its main characteristics are known but, in many situations, the borderline between formal and informal remains blurred. A settlement with the same characteristics regarding land, urban planning and housing, depending on the contexts and public authority interpretations, can thus be considered either as formal or informal (Durand-Lasserve, 2006).

The definition of informal settlements is context-specific and many have been proposed (United Nations, 1997; Hasan, 1998; Huchzermeyer, 2001; UN-HABITAT, 2003; Ogunidiji, 2006). The United Nations (1997) defined informal settlements (IS) as: residential areas where a group of housing units has been constructed on land to which the occupants have no legal claim, or which they occupy illegally or as unplanned settlements and areas where housing is not in compliance with current planning and building regulations (unauthorized housing).

In this paper, the term ‘informality’ refers primarily to settlements where groups of people live on land to which they have no legal claim or where home construction and land subdivision procedures are performed without the consent of the proper planning authorities and hence do not follow prescribed codes and regulations (Hasan, 1998). Thus, some, but not all, informal settlement processes are illegal. For example, informality can arise when land is occupied or developed before the area is planned (that is, when development precedes the preparation and approval of layout/development plans or the provision

of infrastructure). Pre-colonial settlements and many post-colonial small towns and rural settlements fall within this category of informality. The lands and buildings are occupied legally, but there is an absence of development (master) plans to inform the growth and development of the settlements. Such buildings are not formalized because they do not have building and related plans and are thus considered as ‘illegal developments,’ or ‘contraventions’ (the official and popular term of description or classification in Nigeria since the term ‘informal development’ is uncommon).

The illegal occupation of public or privately registered land may also lead to the creation of informal settlements as in the case of Maroko in Lagos and some areas of Abuja (the Nigerian capital). When structures on such lands are demolished, they do not attract any compensation. Within the planning agencies in Nigeria, and based on the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law and allied regulations they operate, such settlement activities are considered ‘contraventions’ (as indicated in Table 1 for the city of Ibadan). A ‘contravention’ is defined in the Lagos State Urban and Regional Planning and Development Law 2005 as any structure or act of construction put up in violation of the extant regulation without approved building plan/development permit (Lagos State Government, 2005).

There are contentions as to whether or not informality and illegality are not the same in meaning. The continuum of legality and illegality is a complex one (Roy, 2005). A squatter settlement created through land invasion can exist alongside an informal subdivision created through legal ownership and market transaction but in violation of land use regulations. Both are informal developments but with a different degree of legitimacy or legality (Roy, 2005). Economic activities and urban enterprises that fail to comply with legal requirements are regarded as illegal. As observed by UN-Habitat (2009), ‘urban informality has generally been regarded as illegal’. Informal economic activities were previously described as the result of limited compliance with legal and procedural requirements, going from complete illegality to full compliance (Tokman, 1992; Tokman & Klein, 1996). While noting the heterogeneity of relationships of informal activities to the regulation system, Tokman (2007) observes that informality cannot be defined solely by this variable. He, however, concludes that informal activities result in a certain degree of illegality. Based on the foregoing, it may be assumed that informality connotes illegality and so can be used synonymously. This paper,

Table 1. Contravention cases in urban and rural local government areas of Ibadan region (2008–2010).

S/No	Local government	Number of contraventions		
		2008	2009	2010
	<i>Urban local governments</i>			
1	Ibadan North	190	81	35
2	Ibadan North-west	214	–	71
3	Ibadan South-west	–	–	57
4	Ibadan South-east	162	101	41
5	Ibadan North-east	40	266	75
	<i>Sub-total</i>	606	448	279
	<i>Rural local governments</i>			
6	Iddo	95	62	57
7	Akinyele	96	69	32
8	Lagelu	88	48	52
9	Egbeda	73	80	45
10	Oluyole	109	70	49
11	Ona-Ara	45	49	34
	<i>Sub-total</i>	506	378	269
	<i>Total</i>	1112	826	548

Source: Adapted from Adelowokan (2011)

therefore, adopts a broad definition of ‘informality’ to include activities (such as land and housing development, and economic enterprises) that are strictly illegal, as well as practices which blur the apparently neat lines of legality and illegality.

It should be pointed out that informality, which Guevara (2014) explains as all that happens outside of formal regulatory procedure, is not confined to informal housing, land or property development alone. The term is also applied to describe informal, small-scale economic activities, unincorporated enterprises, (focused on non-formal labour and unregulated employment types). Urban informality is well pronounced in informal business sector activities and spaces in many African cities. The official concept of informal sector in Nigeria is based on enterprise relationship to regulation by the state (Onyebueke & Geyer, 2011). Nigeria is believed to have the largest informal sector in Africa covering 57.9% of its gross national product (GNP) or an equivalent of US\$212.6 billion as estimated in the year 2000 by Schneider (2002). Onyebueke (2000), Onyebueke and Geyer (2011), Okeke (2000), Jelili and Adedibu (2006), Abolade and Adeboyejo (2013), delved extensively on the proliferation of several activities and services, including formal and informal enterprises like banking, insurance, educational, street trading, cottage industries and petroleum stations, in Nigerian cities such as Ogbomoso, Aba, Ibadan, Kano, Lagos, Nnewi and Suleija. These informal enterprises occupy varying sizes of space and locate just anywhere within the urban landscape (Abolade & Adeboyejo, 2013). The development and proliferation of urban informal enterprises (UIEs), especially along major roads of cities such as Ogbomoso, results in the unwieldy expansion of urban centres and pose serious threat to land use classification and planning (Jelili & Adedibu, 2006). A clear separation between informal housing or property development and informal enterprises seems difficult as they both occur within the same area.

3. Informal and illegal development: the Nigerian context

Informal and illegal developments are caused by a number of factors (Onibokun *et al.*, 1987; Agbola, 2001; Huchzermeyer, 2001; UN-HABITAT, 2007, 2009). Some of the forces causing informal settlement developments are identified by UN-HABITAT (2007) as: rapid rural-to-urban migration; increasing urban poverty and inequality; insecure land tenure; and globalization.

Rapid urbanization and inadequate capability to cope with the housing needs of people have contributed to the development of informal settlements. Onibokun *et al.* (1987) observe that informal and illegal dwellings in Nigeria are the result of extraordinary rural–urban migration and high rate of natural increase, poverty and inadequate housing infrastructure. Agbola (2001 quoted in Ogundiji, 2006) noted that building regulations in Nigeria are, to a large extent, irrelevant to the needs of the urban poor—being far beyond what the poor can achieve with available resources—and this essentially forces them to contravene the regulations both regularly and flagrantly.

Additional causal factors include: lack of development (master) plans for rural and urban settlements; politics; corruption; imperfect land market; ever-increasing land and housing prices and service costs; over-commercialization of housing development process, lack of access to credit; neglected and undeveloped government acquisitions. Others are: weak,

ineffective, non-proactive planning policy; weak enforcement of planning and building regulations; non-adoption of and total disregard for inclusive and people-centred urban planning and development, and inadequate planning personnel to control and police developments (Adeniji, 1986; Wahab, 1991; Kadiri, 1995; Oyesiku, 1998). As in September 2010 in Oyo state, Nigeria, there were only 509 personnel working in the State Urban and Regional Planning Board and the 33 Local Planning Authorities (LPAs). In the 11 LPAs in Ibadan region, there were only 65 professional planners and 97 technical staff giving an average of 6 and 9 professional planners and technical staff per LGA, respectively, to perform the entire planning functions. Such scarcity of personnel has encouraged the continued development of informal settlements in ecologically dangerous areas which are prone to flooding and landslides, waste lands and old quarries.

Informal settlement, including the many illegal land development or subdivision practices involved in the process, involves different categories of actors. Family and individual landowners, especially land speculators, are key actors in the informal and illegal developments. Often, they may sell a parcel of land to multiple buyers, who, in turn, embark on development without planning approval in order to outwit co-buyers to secure the land. Sometimes, a family whose land is acquired by government, with or sometimes without compensation, will secretly sell the same parcel to innocent buyers illegally. Individual house developers are also known to exceed the approved plot coverage in an attempt to construct more lettable rooms. Building artisans and contractors also influence structure owners and profit-seeking developers to over-build their plots or build illegally without approval or build against what were approved. This is done to increase the construction fees to be collected from such developers.

The government is another actor. When parcels of land are acquired by government and left unused and undeveloped for several years, some individuals and groups encroach on the land in areas where development activities would not be easily noticed, as in the case of Ajoda New Town and various teak tree plantations in Ibadan metropolis. Since governments do not police or monitor their land banks, full-blown informal settlements often take place before any official knowledge. Non-payment of compensations on acquisitions also encourages landowners to enter the acquired land as their own compensations. Unscrupulous planning officials are known to have aided some developers to embark on developments prior to approval, while at other times, they grant approval to substandard building applications by falsifying site inspection reports and shield such developments from receiving contravention notices.

Some practitioners in the built environment are contributors to the growing incidents of illegal developments. In Oyo state, cases abound of surveyors and survey technicians falsifying the dimensions of plots of land on the survey plans they prepared by making the depth and breadth of a plot appear more than adequate to contain proposed structures on a development application. Sub-standard and inaccurate architectural drawings and site plans are submitted for planning approval by some fraudulent draughtsmen and architects.

Political office holders constitute the most critical of the actors contributing to the occurrence and prevalence of informal and illegal developments. They often refuse to grant approval for the demolition of harmful developments (along rail tracks, under high voltage power lines, urban stream/river setbacks and pedestrian walkways along major roads).

Finally, the 'middlemen' are perhaps the greatest culprit in the creation of informal settlements and developments. As Hasan (1998) observes, it is the middlemen who usually

'recruit' low-income residents as renters on private land, who arrange for the subdivision and sale of state and private land by establishing an informal understanding with corrupt government officials.

In response to the challenges outlined above, a wide range of formal planning strategies have been adopted in different parts of the world. The predominant strategies presented in the literature include: land regularization and legalization of land ownership through formal titling of individual plots; promoting security of land tenure; slum upgrading regeneration/improvement through community involvement; physical upgrading of housing; social development through improved education; enhancement of governance through participatory processes, as well as infrastructure provision and upgrading (Tibaijuka, 2003; UN-HABITAT, 2003; Fernandes & Smolka, 2004).

In Nigeria, government ministries, agencies, corporations, commissions and departments are the implementers of any of the listed strategies. In Oyo State, Nigeria, such agencies include the State Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, Oyo State Urban and Regional Planning Board, Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, Oyo State Property Development Corporation and Local Planning Authorities. At the National level is the Federal Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

4. Coping with informal development: the responses of formal planning schools in Nigeria

In Nigeria, there are two main categories of formal academic institutions offering urban and regional planning education at different levels. These are the Polytechnics/Colleges of Technology and Universities. Successful graduates of these institutions are eligible to practice urban and regional planning in Nigeria. In addition, there is the professional institute, the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (NITP) and the Town Planners Registration Council (TOPREC) which conduct professional examinations to enable successful candidates practice in Nigeria. The NITP was established in April 1966 as an umbrella organization for those who trained in town planning to come together for the purpose of: 'advancing the town and country planning in Nigeria through education, training, research and practice; disseminating town and country planning information through conferences, seminars, meetings, exhibitions and publications; and enforcing a code of professional practice and conduct for town and country planning practitioners in Nigeria' (NITP, 1993, pp. 20–21).

The NITP ran the affairs of physical planning practice in Nigeria until 1988 when, through the efforts of the NITP, the Federal government of Nigeria established TOPREC through Decree No. 3 of 1988 (FRN, 1988). The TOPREC regulates and controls the town planning profession in all its aspects and ramifications; determines who are town planners; conducts the registration of town planners and the accreditation and certification of relevant training institutions and their courses in the country. It determines what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become urban and regional planners and reviews those standards regularly, as and when due, and supervise instruction and examinations leading to professional qualifications (FRN, 1988).

NITP and TOPREC enjoy a very cordial and healthy relationship. Based on this relationship, NITP and TOPREC jointly organize an annual Mandatory Continuing Professional Development Programme (MCPDP); prepare curricula; conduct professional examinations; oversee the election of new members; organize annual conferences, and pursue issues of

planning concern with various government entities and stakeholders. In 2009, NITP and TOPREC jointly prepared a revised edition of the syllabus for the profession which is to be adopted and enriched with local contents by all academic institutions and private students to ensure uniformity in Urban and Regional Planning Programmes in the country (TOPREC, 2009).

4.1. Types of Nigerian planning schools

The Polytechnics or Colleges of Technology generally offer National Diploma (ND); Higher National Diploma (HND), and Post-HND (formerly called full professional town planning (FTP diploma)) programmes, each of which run for a period of four semesters. A holder of the post-HND certificate is eligible to practice as a full-fledged planner after taking and passing the professional examinations of the TOPREC. As of October 2010, there were 31 accredited Polytechnics/Colleges of Technology offering ND Urban and Regional Planning, 23 offering HND and six (6) offering the post-HND programmes.

In the case of Universities, most offer varying levels of Urban and Regional Planning programmes, ranging from Bachelor of Science (BSc)/BTech; Master of Science (MSc) M.Tech; professional Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP), to MPhil and PhD programmes. A holder of either BSc/BTech or MURP/MSc/MTech from any of the accredited universities is eligible to practice as a full-fledged planner after taking and passing the TOPREC professional examinations. As of October 2015, there were 12 Federal, 12 State and 3 Private Universities offering accredited academic and professional training and research in urban and regional planning in Nigeria.

In addition to the Polytechnics/Colleges of Technology and Universities producing Urban and Regional Planners in Nigeria, the NITP and TOPREC jointly conduct professional examinations for candidates from 100 to 900 levels. The professional examination is in three parts (TOPREC, 2009). The professional examinations are based on the approved curricula that the formal planning schools use to teach their students. A successful candidate at the 900 level is eligible to practice in Nigeria.

4.2. Planning curricula and the review process

The curricula used by the Polytechnics/Colleges of Technology for ND, HND and Post-HND are those approved for accreditation by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and TOPREC in the case of post-HND programme only. The two bodies are set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria to ensure quality control of planning programmes. However, both the NBTE and TOPREC curricula are usually the minimum guide which individual institutions are free to enhance with additional relevant courses or subjects, especially with local content and peculiarities. Programme accreditation is carried out every five academic years.

At the University level, quality control and accreditation of B.Sc. or BTech programmes and curricula are undertaken separately by both the National University Commission (NUC) and TOPREC. While the NUC emphasizes the academic content of the curriculum, TOPREC focuses more on the professional aspects. However, the composition of accreditation teams for each of NUC and TOPREC usually include experienced and registered planners from both academia and practice. In the case of M.Sc. or MTech, it is only

the TOPREC that undertakes the accreditation. In most cases, programme accreditation is carried out every five academic sessions (years). However, a three-year interim accreditation may be granted to a planning programme in which case another accreditation would take place after three years.

The process of review of planning curricula in the universities starts with the Planning Department which prepares the draft contents of either a new curriculum or an amendment to an existing curriculum. This is then considered by the Faculty Postgraduate Committee followed by the Faculty Board, the Senate Curriculum Committee and finally, by the University Senate for approval and implementation. In the Polytechnics, the Programme Department presents the draft curriculum to the Faculty Board from where it goes to the Board of Studies for final approval.

The TOPREC also reviews the curriculum in use in each planning school through its Education/Accreditation Committee which works on the course contents approved by the TOPREC Board for implementation by planning schools. In 2009, TOPREC reviewed the Urban and Regional Planning curricula for its Professional Examinations as well as Universities and Polytechnics in Nigeria. The review focused on the inclusion of themes and topics relating to the Millennium Development Goals; gender mainstreaming; poverty alleviation; urban security; vision 2020; employment generation and income enhancement; disaster management; industrial pollution management; climate change, and planning for border or coastal regions.

4.3. Informality in the TOPREC curriculum

A look at the curricula in use in planning schools using the 2009 edition of TOPREC Syllabus for Professional Urban and Regional Planning in Nigeria reveals a gross under-representation of the issue of informality in settlement development. Not only is there no specific course or subject devoted to it, they are also not found as statements in the course contents. In this 2009 curriculum edition alluded to above, the closest courses to informality and illegality are: urban/housing renewal under URP 206 Housing 1, and URP 604 Planning Studio V. Others are: URP 304 Planning Administration (requirements for implementing planning schemes and development plans); URP 303 Land Law (land tenure systems in Nigeria); URP 401 Land Economics; URP 404 Urbanization and Population Studies; URP 601 Planning Law; URP 602 Urban Management; URP 707 Population and Urbanization Studies II; URP 902 Planning Law and Administration; URP 805 Resettlement Planning; and URP 906 Contemporary Issues in Planning. Most of these supposedly related courses are largely silent on the causes, content and contexts of informality and illegality.

It must be noted that the curricula in use for MURP and MSc programmes in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, has the same deficiency. The issue of informality in housing and economic land use activities are not provided for in the curricula although illegality is reflected under development control. Some consequences of this are that 'students are not formally introduced to the subject'; do not perceive it as an important settlement planning and development issue; hardly conduct research into it and; therefore, when confronted with it on the field, they are helpless. Planners in planning agencies are also bereft of effective strategies of tackling the issues largely due to the lack of theoretical and practical exposure to the subject experienced during their education and training. The Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law,

CAP N138 LFN 2004 (Decree Nos. 88 of 1992 and 18 of 1999) gives a wide coverage to the issue of illegal developments and how to address them. Part II of the Law, covering Sections 27 to 63, is devoted to the control of development on all land, how to obtain development permit, functions of the development control Department, penalty for non-compliance to planning permit granted or for developments lacking permits and enforcement of planning provisions (FRN, 1999). While the law specifically provides for these, the curricula are very deficient in their content on them.

The consequences of these are very obvious. Hasan (1998), writing on Asian cities, notes that informal settlement planning processes rarely, if ever, involve the representative or members of the local communities. Hence, the latter's points of view and interests are not considered, and thus the immense local or endogenous knowledge of how the city actually functions is left unutilized. Consequently, most urban physical, social or economic planning in such contexts, is based on inaccurate assumptions and purely exogenous ideas, most of which are drawn from first world planning experiences. This process is aided by the fact that most planners and administrators operating in these contexts are conventionally trained and do not have an understanding of or links with the informal settlement and the inhabitants who create, understand and survive in the settlement.

Regularization, revitalization and integration of the informal within the formal are some of the methods often adopted in addressing problems of informal areas. Each of these options requires the active collaboration of planners with the informal settlers and a multitude of other actors. The indigenous knowledge and skills of the local community, in combination with the mainstream knowledge of the government officials and development partners, are required to achieve meaningful and sustainable solutions to the challenges of informal settlements and these are discussed in the next section.

5. Inclusion of indigenous knowledge in planning education

One other contemporary issue which is relevant to human settlement planning and development, especially the issue of informal settlement, and which should be included in planning curricula, is the concept of the 'indigenous knowledge systems' (IKS). Indigenous knowledge (IK) is essentially the local knowledge that is unique to a particular culture or society (Warren & Rajasekaran, 1993; Warren *et al.*, 1996; Wahab, 1996, 2010). IK evolves through the accumulation of experience, informal experiments and an intimate understanding of local socio-ecological environments, and, as such, is specifically adapted to the requirements of local people and local conditions. Indigenous communities are known for their self-reliant strategies in food production; affordable and functional housing; efficient planning and management of human settlement, as well as biodiversity and protection of forest and fragile ecosystems. Indigenous knowledge is the social capital of the poor, their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter or to achieve control of their own lives (World Bank, 1997).

The argument here is that, education, which emphasizes IK can have a beneficial impact specifically on the promotion of inter-actor collaboration during planning processes, increasing cultural sensitivity on the part of the planning student, as well as their capacity to promote the sustainable management of urban informality. Educating planners with an awareness and respect for IK will enable them empathize with and develop social capital among those living in informal conditions. This will enhance their efforts at accommodating

informal developments through inclusive or participatory development which is essentially an IK strategy. Exposing planners to IK education can also trigger self-reflectiveness on the side of student and professional planners so that they may recognize the contextual limits of their own beliefs and values and thereby appreciate the value of IK and its relevance to contemporary urban planning.

IK is receiving increasing attention in academia as well as in national and international development institutions owing largely to the realization of its tremendous potential in delivering sustainable development outcomes and the fact that local people are highly knowledgeable about their environment (Wahab, 2011). The knowledge systems in any community provide an invaluable resource for understanding how the community reacts to changing sets of problems and challenges in a bid to maintain appropriate levels of quality of life. What this signifies is that instead of relying only on technologies and solutions from outside the community, researchers and development practitioners should first look for what knowledge and practices are available in the community. Such knowledge and practice would enhance their understanding of the attending problems.

However, a cursory look at the current curricula of Polytechnics and Universities offering Urban and Regional Planning in Nigeria shows that they do not include IK topics in their course content. In a spirited effort to fill this gap, Box 1 provides a proposal on some IKS components which could be included in different components/courses in Urban and Regional Planning curriculum.

Box 1. Possible IKS Components of an Urban and Regional Planning Curriculum

- Introduction to IKS (origin, principles, strength, limitations);
- Foundations of indigenous learning;
- Traditional human settlements (history, growth and decline);
- Patterns and forms of traditional settlements, their planning and management;
- Traditional architecture and building technology, indigenous housing cooperatives;
- Settlement administration;
- Indigenous knowledge and ecological issues;
- Indigenous community environmental planning and management;
- Indigenous community economic development;
- Traditional open-space systems;
- Infrastructure planning and management;
- Indigenous knowledge research methodologies;
- Indigenous knowledge approach to addressing human settlement problems (urbanization, informality and illegality in development, climate change, disaster management, local economic development, poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihood, biodiversity loss and sustainable water management, among other issues).
- Research and dissertations with IK components should be encouraged among URP students.

As if to lend credence to the suggestions in Box 1, in August 2010, the University of Ibadan, formally established the postgraduate programmes in Indigenous Knowledge and Development (IKAD) to bring a fresh perspective to bear on Nigeria's development efforts. IKAD's vision is to be a global documentation centre of excellence engaged in

multidisciplinary training and research on IK issues, geared towards better informing development policy and practice. One of the starting convictions for this initiative is that the teaching of IKS to Urban and Regional Planners will enhance both their knowledge of, and capacity to, mobilize urban and rural communities as a means of promoting sustainable community-based management of their settlements. Indeed, it is often observed within policy discourses that the most sustainable developments are those rooted in the core values of the local people. By teaching IK to planners, the beliefs, attitudes, social organizations, governance and leadership styles, as well as survival strategies of local communities will be better understood and appreciated. Student planners, as well as their teachers and those in planning practice, will understand the benefits, strengths and weaknesses of IKS and how these can be incorporated into mainstream knowledge and development practices for healthy, harmonious, prosperous and sustainable towns and cities.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

This paper has noted the non-inclusion of informal land use, but a good coverage of illegality as practised under development control and enforcement of planning and building laws and regulations in the curricula of planning schools approved by TOPREC. In view of the fact that the issue of informality is neither listed as a course, (whether compulsory or required or elective), nor included as a part of the contents of any of the listed courses, the chance is great that a lecturer may not discuss informality in settlement development throughout the years of training of a planning student. At best, they may skirt around such issues within courses dealing with Development Control, Planning Administration, Planning Law and Administration, Urban Management or Urban Renewal. However, it is imperative that informality and illegality be accorded a stand-alone course status and be included as line statements in the course outlines of the following courses in the TOPREC curriculum: URP 601 Planning Law; URP 602 Urban Management; URP 802 Urban Economics, and URP 902 Planning Law and Administration.

Going by the seriousness, currency and high prospects of the future intensification of informal housing developments, especially in Nigeria's urban, peri-urban and rural settlements, it is proposed that 'Informal Land Use and Development' or 'Informal Housing and Economic Development Studies' or 'Informality and Settlement Planning' be introduced into Nigerian (and other African) planning curricula as a required course. The contents of the course should be developed through shared learning processes among relevant stakeholders. The role of the Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS) is pivotal here as a rallying point and synthesizing such efforts with a view to coming up with a unified African Planning Schools' approach to the teaching of informality in settlement planning and development.

The potential of an educational approach rooted in the value of indigenous knowledge for understanding and intervening in urban and regional development processes have also been amplified in this paper. The integration of IK in planning curricula of higher education and research in Africa is capable of sensitizing all stakeholders and actors in the built environment to the value of local knowledge and ingenuity. Integrating IK into their modes of teaching, learning and practising will enable planning educators to work with local knowledge-holders, to promote the recognition of their expertise and reinforce their contributions to a more equitable and sustainable governance policy for settlement planning and development.

The methodology recommended for teaching informality-related courses should include formal lectures, tutorials, case studies, seminar presentation, guest lectures and dissertation writing. The findings of any research conducted on any aspects of the course should, as much as possible, be published for wide dissemination and knowledge sharing. The teaching of the issues should not be limited to those in planning schools (lecturers and students); it must be taken to the practising planners and members of the public through seminars, conferences, as well as radio and television programmes. In this way, education and practice will have a healthy, beneficial meeting point based on mutual learning.

Acknowledgement

The authors acknowledge the travel support from the secretariat of the Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS) to the workshop on planning education held in October 2010 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where an earlier version of this article was first presented.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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