Forum: The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat)

Issue: Improving Urban planning and Design on National Frameworks

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Introduction

The heavy increase in urbanization challenges the allocation of resources, which includes people as well as land. Some cases of inefficient use of land is where land develops at a much faster rate compared to the urban population. Most regions will find it difficult to deal with rapidly increasing urban populations which bring up many problems. These problems have long term effects that are caused by varying negative externalities, such as, congestion, pollution and social disaggregation. Urban areas with many of these problems are hence not sustainable in the long term. These problems arise mainly due to lack of planning and preparation. Population growth in cities causes many residents to have no choice but reside in areas outside of the urban centre, many of which lacks the basic facilities and infrastructure. This puts pressure on the country's resources, which has a negative effect on the efficiency and productivity of the urban economy.

Strategic planning of these urban cities are essential for key components of human wellbeing. Preparation for urban design on the city's overall atmosphere and appearance has a huge effect on social wellbeing and development which can further affect the economy of the entire nation. Attractive spaces will attract innovative workforces as well as investors which are both essential to drive up the urban economy. However, many nations will not prioritize urban design due to other developments needed to be made such as the provision of basic facilities and services. This is the case for many nations, especially developing countries due to a higher lack of finance and capacity.

Unplanned urban cities throw away chances for further social, economic or environmental progression. One of the main difficulties to a well-thought-out urban plan is the lack of frameworks or legislations. Good urban cities must accommodate for development in all aspects, eg. socially, economically and environmentally, in order to progress sustainably and efficiently.

Definition of Key Terms

Urbanization

Urbanization is where people move from country sides to reside in cities. The population relocates and people transfer from rural to urban areas. Urbanization also reflects on how society adapts to the changes of the process. People tend to migrate due to factors which appeals to them, such as, career opportunities, services and facilities, entertainment and convenience.

Intermediate Cities

Intermediate cities are also known as i-cities. They generally have a population between one hundred thousand and five hundred thousand people. I-cities usually play dominant parts in bridging rural to urban areas with fundamental facilities and services. However, they are often forsaken by the government and regional or national authorities. They have lack of financial influence from larger cities, hence lacking of funding and support for effective planning to be taken out. Neglecting intermediate cities might seem cost-free at first, but it will end up being a much bigger problem which will be a lot more costly to solve in the future.

National Frameworks

National frameworks are structures in countries to help support and maintain standards or to set qualifications in the countries. They help to set out the different requirements as well as varying preparations for different acts. Different countries have different frameworks to help support their system and ensure that their country is running efficiently.

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) helps countries to prioritize and develop their frameworks. Up to 35 counties have submitted their national qualifications framework to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which helps make the frameworks more understandable.

National Planning Frameworks

These are a set of frameworks in the US that consists of five frameworks. It shows how communities work together in order to achieve the National Preparedness goal, which is to ensure all communities are ready and prepared for any emergencies, disasters or outbreaks of diseases.

The first framework is the National Prevention Framework. It is responsible for the planning for any possible terrorist attacks. It prepares and guides the prevention and avoidance of acts of terrorism, as well as is responsible for information distribution to prepare for time-sensitive cases.

The second framework is the National Protection Framework. It informs about the procedures needed to be taken by varying members of the community in order to safeguard against threats, disasters, terrorism or any other hazardous acts. It prepares and plans for public warning and

information as well as assigns key roles for organizing the coordination and synchronization of the public.

The third framework is the National Mitigation Framework. It coordinates procedures implemented when threats arise, plans for long-term reduction in vulnerability and identifies any hazards faced.

The fourth framework is the National Response Framework. It provides adaptable guides that can be implemented at all times. It is also responsible for flexible structures for responding to areas such as health, safety and the environment.

The fifth framework is the National Disaster Recovery Framework. It guides the responsibility for recovery coordinators on the core responsibilities and procedures for recovery and plans for health and social services to accommodate for pre and post disaster recovery.

National Service Framework (NSF)

These are set standards, such as quality standards, for service and care groups or any other interventions. It provides recommendations to how different organizations can maintain quality requirements for services to provide for patients. In the UK, it is set by the National Health Service (NHS), which is a public health service in the UK

National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

It is a set of qualifications set out for education and a training system as well as how they cross over. In Ireland, it is used for describing and setting out the different levels of education as well as their qualifications.

Background Information

Development of Intermediate cities

Intermediate cities, or i-cities are cities with population of about one hundred thousand to five hundred thousand people. These cities are vital in the process of people moving from rural areas and relocating to urban areas. They are usually neglected by the government and do not have the funds and support required. They often lack planning and preparation to be working and functioning effectively and efficiently. Urban planning and design is essential in order for these intermediate cities to function properly. With lack of planning, these cities will become a much larger problem requiring much more time, money and attention in order to solve. This is often the case in many LEDCs, as they lack the

funds to carry out proper planning. They often do not have the right frameworks that match local needs, and the inefficient planning often leads to unsustainability.

Urban planning

Urban planning is a process which involves organization, arrangement of the use of space and land to enhance physical, economic as well as social impacts. It investigates on how to build the most efficient and effective atmosphere for further growth with the given space. It helps to conduct and guide organized development for urban, suburban and rural areas. Urban planning also strategizes how to efficiently use the different areas for varying uses of settlements and the community. It involves different planning of land-use such as distribution, environmental, economical, social, transportational aspects. Urban planners involve different fields of planning as well as organizing achievable, sustainable policy goals. It ensures orderly advancement of the community and analyses, researches and strategizes how to implement different policies. When urban planning, it is important to keep in mind about the sustainability of the city. The development must ensure long-term usage and not just short-term solutions. The city must the sustainable and stable economically, environmentally and socially.

Urban design

Urban design involves different aspects of designing, such as the arrangement of different spaces which includes public spaces, transportation, facilities and services. Good urban design helps to elevate the link between people and the city spaces. It improves a city's look and feel as importance of an atmosphere's infrastructure is often overlooked. Good urban design entices innovative workforces which is essential in improving urban economy. Uncoordinated cities will give up on many social, economic and environmental opportunities. The design process is to be incorporated within the planning process for maximum effectiveness. Urban design is essential as a city's ambience and surrounding correlates to quality of life and social, economic, environmental development as well as other key constituents to human life and wellbeing.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Burundi

Burundi is a LEDC that is ranked to have the fastest rate of urbanization. Burundi is suffering for political and economical instability due to years of internal conflict. Ethnic conflicts in rural areas provoked citizens to migrate to urban areas as it was considered to be safer due to their association with the United Nations. Many refugee camps had also been established in these urban areas in order to

support these people. Intercession of the international community has led to peace being restored for a while, however negation from President Pierre Nkurunziza to resign stimulated Burundi back into conflict hence people are once again migrating from areas which are heavily affected by the conflict. Large shifts of population to the city has sparked urbanization in those areas however not much action has been taken to organize urban planning and design, which is essential to ensure the sustainability and wellbeing of these urban areas.

Liberia

The capital city of Liberia, Monrovia, was once under the control of peacekeeping forces due to outbreak of civil wars. Liberia was also governed by interim governments, hence many Liberians living in rural areas fled away to Monrovia for safety. Even after the wars ended, most of the internally displaced people chose to stay in Monrovia due to more opportunities in the city. Just like many developing countries in Africa, many people in Liberia are moving from rural to urban areas to seek for a better life in hope of finding a better career. This huge intake of people in Monrovia caused overcrowding and has led to many people not having proper households. Most of these people end up living in slums. Due to growing population, the development of slums has also been rapidly increasing. Many youths move into the city in order to seek for better education and jobs, however in many cases jobs are not found and they are not able to afford for a proper housing or facilities. The lack of urban planning and design in this area has caused severe overcrowding to be a huge issue and the development of slums is a costly problem to be fixed.

Laos

Laos is the world's most heavily bombed country, having US dropped about 270 million bombs which caused a massive displacement of people. Many people migrated from rural areas to urban areas due to the lack of facilities and services in rural areas, as well as the increased safety in urban areas. Many people also moved to the urban areas in hope to find better living conditions, as well as preferable ingress to facilities, services and jobs. Urban planning and design is vital to prevent overpopulation and further crowding of urban areas which will cause lack of development and progress within the country as well as towards its economy.

Japan

Japan is known for being one of the best urbanized country with Nagoya ranked within top 10 by UNESCO as being "beautifully designed". Japan has undergone huge economic developments and lots of environmental progression. It has effective transportation programs and sustainable energy agendas which were shown to be relatively successful in the reduction of the emission of carbon dioxide.

Singapore

Singapore is a country that is known to be one hundred percent urban. It has a smart transport system and a road toll system which helped reduce traffic in these urban areas. Rapid urbanization incorporated with urban planning and design helped to boost Singapore's economy and improve living conditions. The effective organization of planning and design led to the country having successful growth and progression socially, environmentally and economically.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO seeks to fabricate peace through international collaboration in education, science and culture. The UNESCO programs further promotes the Sustainable Development Goals, which can be more easily achieved through good urban planning and design. UNESCO helps develop educational tools to help nurture the idea of peace and equal respect to all cultures.

National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA)

INTA helps with the adaptation to technology as well as researches on how to promote sustainable agriculture, which is essential for a sustainable environment as agriculture is vital to provide for the country's citizens. It helps in improving and diversifying crops as well as ensuring sanity of products. It ensures that the procedures of agro-industrial activities in order to promote a clean environment. In order to put forward acts for sustainable agriculture, good urban planning and design must be developed.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1893 - 1910	City Beautiful movement sought to build larger infrastructure which would attract tourists as well as to deal with rising problems in sanity and overpopulation
1905 - 1940	Garden City movement was a method of urban planning which aimed to have self-contained communities that had areas of residence, agriculture and industry
1907	First city planning commission was established
1909	First national conference on city planning held in Washington DC

| 1940 - 1970 | Ville Radieuse project which portrayed a vision for an ideal city which incorporated citizens with a well-planned and designed environment for efficient development and progression |

Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

- New Urban Agenda, 25 January 2017 (**A/RES/71/256**)

- Housing, building and planning, 15 December 1970 (**A/RES/25/2718**)

- Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 25 January 2018 (**A/RES/72/226**)

- Guiding principles on access to basic services, 20 April 2007 (**HSP/GC/21/4**)

- Global campaigns for secure tenure and urban governance, 16 February 2001 (**HSP/GC/18/3**)

Possible Solutions

Promote the study of urban planning. Urban planning is essential in building the framework of a sustainable city. Urban planning is not a very well-known field of study and could be promoted by schools or educational programs. Advocating for this field could catch interest in many students hence causing more people in this industry and profession. This would lead to higher quality and more efficient urban planning. A disadvantage of this could be that if the promotion of this field were to be successful, it may cause disinterest in other important fields which would result in insufficient workforce for that area.

Funding for LEDCs to perform better urban planning and design, as well as donation of resources to carry it out. This would involve organizations such as NGOs, MNCs, IGOs or different member states. However, a disadvantage of this is that the funding might be chosen to be used in different areas, such as to provide subsidies or to be invested in other areas. Many of the organizations and states would also be unwilling to fund and donate for these countries to improve their urban areas through better urban planning and design.

Taking feedback from the local community on how to best use public spaces. This could be implemented by having online surveys, or have a random pool of people from the community take part in an annual meeting to partake in feeding ideas on how to use the spaces as well as what infrastructure to

build. The disadvantage to this is that not everyone will be satisfied with the final decision as every person has different opinions and wants. Also, the different age groups and people in the community will cause varying responses hence making it difficult to choose which amenity or infrastructure to construct.

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