

for the country must be seen as part of a global supply chain network.

In my view, the time has come for a serious consideration of an overarching and holistic national freight logistics strategy for Nigeria for the next few decades.

It would bring together all tiers of government and industry to provide a coordinated, national multi-modal approach to freight planning. And it would address Nigeria's freight challenges, while supporting its long-term international competitiveness.

As an experienced logistics analyst, consultant, scholar and educator in the developing and developed worlds, I have come across a range of relatively effective national freight logistics strategies such as those of South Africa, Panama, Vietnam and Thailand.

They provide useful benchmarks for what is possible.

Why plans haven't worked

Firstly, transport traditionally gets constant attention from public authorities. But logistics and supply

chain management is often considered to be a private business-oriented activity.

Public authorities should be paying much closer attention to it, especially in relation to its integration with trade, and the economy.

Secondly, decision makers still take a piecemeal view and approach. This is clear from the fact that there are a number of disparate plans that touch on transport. These include the Nigeria Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan which was put in place in March 2015 by the National Planning Commission. And then there's the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan which was approved by the government in 2016 for execution in the period 2017 to 2020.

Similarly, there are several oversight agencies. For example, air transport alone has three – the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency, Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority and the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria but none has a freight focus.

A piecemeal approach results in insufficient integration of trade and