

# Constraints to Implementation of Urban Planning in Nigeria: The Yenagoa Capital City, Planning Process in Perspective

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**Abstract:** For experts and professionals into urban planning, city planning is a difficult undertaking. The challenges that result from it do not stem from a lack of expertise. Rather, there are limitations that work against traditional urban planning and they are primarily caused by cultural, social, economic, and political constraints. This paper examines the limitations of urban planning in the Yenagoa Capital City Area, Bayelsa State. The study used longitudinal and descriptive research designs, which enabled uninterrupted observation of phenomena. The questionnaire instrument was used to collect data while working with this design. A chi-square analysis was also performed on the questionnaire instrument, which was dependent on the research questions. The study finds, among other things, that the involvement of the public in the Yenagoa Capital City planning process is appallingly low; and planning authorities in the Yenagoa Capital City Area are limited by obstacles that are frequently disregarded, such as strong community attachment to land, emotional attachment to game reserve areas, politicisation of governance in built infrastructure, etc., to regulations as contained in the master plan of the city. The study concludes that for the Yenagoa Capital City blueprint to be fully implemented, the autonomy of planning authorities and pertinent laws must be strengthened. Among other things, the paper suggests encouraging public participation in the planning process and avoidance of needless politicisation of the Yenagoa Capital City planning process.

**Keywords:** Area, Bayelsa State, Capital City, Constraints, Planning, Yenagoa.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Why is that achieving the master plan of the Yenagoa Capital City Area remained a tall dream since 1996 when Bayelsa State was created? It is not oblivious that city transformation depends critically on urban land use decisions, especially environmental quality (Amaefuna et al, 2024; Ogunbode et al, 2025). Distortions in urban land planning and ineffective land management policies and practices in developing countries have resulted in air pollution, degradation of environmentally fragile lands (wetlands and coastal resources), occupation of hazard prone areas (steep slopes, flood plains, and vacant land adjacent to waste disposal sites), and the loss of cultural resources, open space, and prime agricultural land (Bartone et al, 1994; Keles, 2012; Nuisl & Siedentop, 2021). In fact, a more effective collaboration with other policies in other sections that leads to integrated objectives and joined-up policy is most appropriate (Nadin, 2006).

The mission of urban city planning and transformation is to fulfil the interest of society in assuring conditions in which people can live in good health, and that the activities that fall within the purview of urban planning include land use and transportation planning; waste treatment, recycling and reuse; water and sewage operations; energy saving measures for public and residential buildings and urban greening among others (Williams, 1997; Afrane, 2006). Thus, the basic rationale for undertaking city planning and transformation is to achieve convenience and harmony in the use of space for all land uses; economy and efficiency in the use of resources and space, enhanced safety and adequate health standards in the space economy, and enhanced aesthetics and serenity in the built environment (Afrane, 2006). However, it has been revealed that urban planning has failed in practice, especially among developing countries because planning has mostly been over-ambitious, considering the capabilities of the administrative system to enforce their implementation (UN-HABITAT, 1996).

The reasons for this include the lack of a proper legal and administrative framework, inadequate technical skills and financial resources, ethnic, cultural, religious constraints, unrealistic assumptions emanating from the foreign base of the plans, lack of participation by the population, etc (UN-HABITAT, 1996; Oladunjoye, 2016).

It has also been suggested that traditional land-use systems generally do not adequately control the quality, pace or distributional effects of land development and that, even when a plan exists, development activity is too often disorganised. This is mostly because the stated goals are unrealistic, and because there is lack of co-ordination between planning and financing agencies, or because there is a shortage of trained personnel (UN-HABITAT, 1996; Oladunjoye, 2016). In most countries, the established procedure for overseeing city planning involves the regulation and control of physical development and management as well as ensuring compliance with public health and sanitation requirements/standards

through an approved development scheme, development permit, building permit, occupancy permit and user-conversion permit.

The outcome of urban planning and transformation in most cases has been a reversed development process whereas the approved process is land acquisition, planning, services, building and occupation. The process now is land acquisition, building, occupation, services and planning hence a reversal of the approved process (Oladunjoye, 2016). Another problem of urban development is unauthorised/unapproved developments resulting from the lack of effective planning and inadequate monitoring systems which have promoted the development of unapproved and unauthorised structures.

This has led to the prevalence of slums, blight development, poor aesthetics and poor environmental sanitation (Afrane, 2006). These, coupled with the slow development of infrastructure resulting from poor planning practices and lack of adequate resources have combined to contribute immensely to relatively low development of social and economic infrastructure in most urban areas. The high population growth rates and the slow development of infrastructure lead to intense pressure on the existing services and facilities and this causes rapid deterioration, daunting management and maintenance problems and adverse environmental and social consequences (Oladunjoye, 2016). These problems of development control results in environmental issues such as poor sanitation and sewage problems, water pollution, and municipal solid waste within the urban setting. This also leads to environmental resource losses evident in ground water contamination and depletion due to unsustainable extraction linked to unclear property rights and treatment as free resource (Bartone et al, 1994; Alhamoudi & Nahrin, 2025).

The environmental hazards are from natural hazards resulting from poorly functioning land markets; ineffective land policies and poor construction practices. These hazards results in inadequate regulation and enforcement, low-income settlements alongside hazardous activities. The position is now to find ways of incorporating such environmental considerations into policy decision making (Bartone et al, 1994).

The natural environment provides cities with countless ecosystem services. Some of these are so fundamental to urban liveability that they may seem invisible to urban managers such as air, water, open space, parks and greenbelts, biodiversity, forest and wetlands. Environmental resources are frequently taken for granted, rather than being utilised, enhanced, and invested in (Cities Alliance, 2007). Urban Planning has been a major force protecting the environment and had provided an increasingly effective protection for the most valued features of the environment. In the recent past, however, it has become evidently clear that the quality of the environment is deteriorating in many respects due to severe pressures on the

environment and sustainable ways of managing them must be explored (Alhamoudi & Nahrin, 2025).

These pressures include dramatic changes in land use in the urban area, increased volumes of waste produced and the need to find more efficient ways of using natural resources such as water and as well protecting the existing water bodies, open spaces and greenbelts (Alhamoudi & Nahrin, 2025). Where planning is only seen in the zoning of land without the provision of conditions that will preserve the natural environment constitutes a major lapse in the planning process. This is evident in the lack of storm and flood control systems. These, coupled with the deliberate degradation of the natural environment are all issues that need to be taken seriously in the planning of the Yenagoa Capital City Area by the authorities.

The Yenagoa Capital City Area, Bayelsa State, since its creation in 1996 had continued to increase due to migration and natural increase over space and time (UN-HABITAT, 2010/2011). Thus, the task of designing and implementing a master plan in any urban area is a normal procedure embarked by any consulting planning firm, whether indigenous or foreign. Most of these plans end up on shelves with dust settling on them because they are not implemented. Therefore, it is a wasted effort and the physical planning problem remains because the planning authorities required to use them are unable to do so.

The process of the preparation of these plans should not be left to the planning consulting firms and government alone; instead, other stakeholders such as planners in the built environment, representatives of communities; non-governmental organisation (NGOs), Community Based Organisation (CBOs), interest groups and ward heads, amongst others, should be involved (Oyesiku, 2004).

The master planning approach in Nigeria in general and Yenagoa metropolis to be specific cannot adequately address the urban problems of urbanisation and its physical characteristics (Oyesiku, 2004; Agbola, 2004); especially as the era of and the legacy of failed master plans that are rigid and fixed have left cities, urban areas, residents and the surrounding environment poorly equipped to cope with the exploding urbanisation levels (Jiriko, 2008). Thus, the use of master planning as an approach in Nigeria has not addressed the physical planning problems of most urban and rural areas, due to its rigidity and long-range nature of development for cities and regions (Oyesiku, 2004).

However, for a planning approach to make any effective contribution in any system it must have the following characteristics:

- “A more dynamic and timelier plan and decision-making process that enables planning to positively modify rather than report on consequences;
- A more inclusive and effective process of participation and consultation that lends confidence to plans and decisions;

- A more effective collaboration with other policies in other sections that leads to integrated objectives and joined-up policy;
- A more positive, evidence-based reasoning in the formulation of strategies and policies, and in managing change; and,
- A focus on the delivery of wider priority outcomes defined at federal, state and local levels, so as to make a difference” (Nadin, 2006, p. 5-6).

Spatial planning as an approach is geared towards identifying and targeting development, conservation priorities, risk and opportunities in both urban and rural areas. It is not a static blueprint plan, as it attempts to coordinate the social, economic and environmental resources within different jurisdictions. It, also, provides linkages within and between urban and regional areas and provides infrastructure to bridge the dichotomy that exists between rural and urban areas (Healey, 2007; Jiriko, 2008).

Tentatively, to the extent that master plan approach in city development has received criticisms (Hameed & Nadeem, 2008), the Yenagoa Capital City Master Plan is not an exemption. However, these constraints that have not been taken seriously include the non-participation of the people in the planning process that bedevil planning in the form of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious divides; inadequate solid waste management and disposal; development in flood prone areas and catchment areas of water bodies; inadequate storm water and flood control mechanism; and, unauthorised developments and degradation of the natural environment (Yenagoa City Development Strategy, 2007; Bayelsa State Government (2004, 2007). Thus, this paper seeks to examine these constraints and determine their impact on the implementation process of the Yenagoa Capital City Area Plan.

In an attempt to achieve this feat, this paper has identified that planning processes has been bedevilled by a conscious and deliberate exclusion of critical stakeholders in communities and their sacrosanct cultural values; and master plan approach often used by planners has equally been frustrated by a top-down syndrome rather than bottom-up approaches like communicative planning that is communities/people oriented. This paper, therefore, fills these research gaps in planning knowledge.

Specifically, in view of the afore-stated problems the paper seeks to examine the extent of land-use pattern/change in Yenagoa city pre and post Bayelsa State creation (i.e., what is the extent of land use pattern/change); ascertain the extent of participation of citizens in Yenagoa Capital City planning process (i.e., what is the extent of citizen participation); determine the level of involvement of city planners in the planning process and plan production/implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City Area Plan (i.e., what is the level of involvement of city planners); examine the challenges in the

implementation process of the Yenagoa Capital City Area plan (i.e., what are the factors militating against effective implementation); and, ascertain the extent of implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City Area plan (i.e., what is the extent of implementation). Following this introduction, the rest of the paper is structured thus. While Section II examines the main thrust of the paper. i.e., constraints to effective implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City Planning process, Section IV concludes the paper.

**II. CONSTRAINTS TO EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YENAGOA CAPITAL CITY PLANNING PROCESS**

This paper which seeks to determine the implementation debacles to effective planning process of the Yenagoa Capital City Area was preceded on the premises that; first, the research population of the paper was mainly made up of the staff of the Ministries of Lands and Survey, Housing and Urban Development, Environment, and the Capital City Development Authority (CCDA). These ministries/agencies enabled the

paper to gather information on population, gender characteristics, age, marital status, religion and educational qualifications of the staff of these ministries as indicated in Table 3.1; and second, it relied on a questionnaire instrument that elicited the needed data. The information gotten from the four government ministries connected to capital city planning include the information contained in Table 3.2. However, the ensuing questionnaire administration to the four government ministries shows (as indicated in Table 3.1) that out of the 450 copies of questionnaire distributed, a total of 366 copies of questionnaire were returned; whereas 84 copies of the questionnaire were not returned (i.e. 16% not returned), which represent a fair attrition rate of 81%.

However, it discovers that 16% of the respondents in the sampled ministries did not return their respective sets of questionnaires on reasons ranging from not favourably disposed towards the exercise, lack of requisite knowledge, misplacement, to giving lame excuses in forgetting the questionnaire at home.

Table 1 Sample of Questionnaire Administration

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No. of questionnaire administered	450	100
No. of questionnaire returned.	366	74
No. of questionnaire not returned	84 (invalid)	26
<b>Attrition rate</b>		<b>81%</b>

Table 2 Distribution of Respondents in the Yenagoa Capital City Area

Institution/Ministry	No. of Respondents	Data Information Collected
Ministry of Lands & Survey (MLS)	41	-Urban planning & management process and practice, integration of environmental issues, -Land management and administration
Ministry of Environment (ME)	306	-Development control, environmental issues -Development planning, role in urban planning, environmental issues
Capital City Development Authority (CCDA)	41	-Environmental issues and standards -Housing planning
Ministry of Housing & Urban Development (MHUD)	48	-Data on the various ethnic nationalities -Data on the specific cultural values of ethnic groups
<b>Total</b>	<b>436</b>	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

From the foregoing, this section, therefore, investigates the constraints to the implementation of the urban development plan of the Yenagoa capital city area. Table 3 below illustrates human induced factors especially within the government circle in hindering the implementation of the capital city master plan.

Table 3 Human-Induced Factors Affecting the Implementation of the Yenagoa Master Plan

Impediments	MLS	ME	MHUD	CCDA	Total
Lack of Interests	2	18	2	1	<b>23</b>
Poor knowledge	2	19	3	3	<b>27</b>
Lack of political will	4	19	3	3	<b>39</b>
Perceived developmental difficulties	4	26	6	5	<b>41</b>
Lack of finance	6	18	8	6	<b>38</b>

Inconsistencies in government policies	12	152	14	20	<b>198</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>366</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2025 (Key: **MLS: Min. of Lands & Housing; ME: Min. of Environment; MHUD: Min. of Housing & Urban Dev; & CCDA: Capital City Dev. Authority**)

From Table 3, it is deducible that Yenagoa capital city development has been bedevilled by a number of constraints. While lack of interest attracts a 23 frequency counts, poor knowledge attracts an abysmal 27 counts, lack of political will and terrain concerns attracted 39 and 41 frequency counts respectively. However, inconsistencies in government policies on capital city development framework attracted the highest frequency counts of 198 respondents.

However, while all of these constraints frustrate the implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City area, respondents were particularly worried by mostly government inconsistencies but they were quick to posit that government inconsistencies are not government domain alone but may be traceable to other factors. Table 4 investigates possible factors constraining government capital city implementation efforts.

Table 4. Land Related Constraints to Capital City Planning in Yenagoa

Items	MLS	ME	MHUD	CCDA	Total
Government land acquisition	1	12	2	4	<b>19</b>
Private individual lands	1	19	1	2	<b>23</b>
Local community lands	2	18	4	4	<b>28</b>
Individual family lands	4	23	7	6	<b>40</b>
Land acquisition through inheritance	12	85	22	31	<b>150</b>
Sacred land areas for game reserve/worship	10	68	16	12	<b>106</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>366</b>

Source Fieldwork, 2025 (Key: **MLS: Min. of Lands & Housing; ME: Min. of Environment; MHUD: Min. of Housing & Urban Dev; & CCDA: Capital City Dev. Authority**)

Table 4 is indicative of impediments which primarily serve as the major constraints to the Yenagoa Capital City Development in Bayelsa State. First, government acquisition of land through the Federal Government’s Land Use Act, upon creation of Yenagoa as the capital city area of Bayelsa State, is perceived as an encroachment on the land rights of the original land owners. On this subject, 19 of our respondents argue that land acquisition by government from the original owners is a key impediment as these land owners constantly constrain the government in intractable litigations demanding for a fair and adequate compensation for lands acquired by government.

Second, it is indicative that land within the Yenagoa Capital area is considered more of an inheritance which attracted a huge 150 of our respondents arguing in favour of the family inheritance status attached to land among the aborigines of the Yenagoa Capital City area. More so, 22% of our respondents while arguing for the inheritance of land within the capital city area posit that the land government acquired for capital city development are erstwhile sacred areas exclusively reserved for game reserves and traditional worship as a medium of transmitting their cultural values to their future generations. Thus, government acquisition of land for capital city purposes is seen as threats to their cultural exclusivity, loss of land which is a harbinger to hunger, poverty and starvation, etc.

Despite determining the salience of the above factors as constraints to city planning in Yenagoa, the paper further inquired into other likely factors that may have constrained the implementation of the Yenagoa master plan as an instrument of urban planning as seen from Table 5

Table 5 Constraints to Urban Planning in Yenagoa Capital City

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Elite (bigman) factors-sand filling of natural water ways	152 (41%)	80 (22%)	46 (13%)	65 (18%)	23 (6%)
Poor funding	212 (58%)	92 (25%)	6 (2%)	41(11%)	15 (4%)
Perceived developmental/ Accessibility difficulties	88 (24%)	98 (27%)	40 (11%)	62 (17%)	78 (21%)
Community resistance	182 (50%)	82 (22%)	9 (2%)	32 (9%)	61 (17%)
Customary barriers	168 (46%)	104 (28%)	10 (3%)	66 (18%)	18 (5%)
Politicisation of urban development planning	198 (54%)	112 (30%)	28 (8%)	10 (3%)	18 (5%)
Public Participation	202 (56%)	104 (28%)	8 (2%)	16 (4%)	36 (10%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 5 shows an interesting sequence of events from the respondents. The respondents reacted in unison to indicate that all the items subjected to their scrutiny are truly constraints that had acted adversely towards transforming Yenagoa as a befitting capital city. Statistically, it is therefore deducible from Table 3.5 that 41% of our respondents say elite (big-man) actions such as deliberate sand filling of natural drainages to build their houses a major handicap to urban development in Yenagoa, 22% of our respondents also concur to this argument, 13% were undecided, 18% simply disagreed, whereas 6% strongly disagreed. The response of our respondents is not different in the case of poor funding where 58% respondents say capital city master plan has never received the requisite financial muscle to transform Yenagoa from an erstwhile local government capital to an enviable state capital.

Contrary to this assertion, 4% of our respondents strongly disagreed arguing instead that poor funding is not a strong factor but should be looked else for explanations. Furthermore, community resistance, customary barriers and party politics domains also attracted a positive response rate from our respondents whose ‘strongly agreed’ positions in their corresponding percentages in 50%, 46% and 54% respectively argue that urban development is constrained by these factors.

From Table 5, public participation as a constraint also attracted positive response from our respondents; as a whopping 56% of the respondents say public participation is a key element in bringing about and sustaining an existing urban development framework. However, 10% of our respondents argue strongly to the contrary that public participation is vital to sustainable urban development strategy.

Table 5 also made an interesting statement with respect to terrain problems as a constraint to urban development planning, where 24% of our respondents strongly agree that terrain problems stand as militating factors in stifling urban development in Yenagoa, an almost equal percentage response rate of 21% strongly disagreed that terrain is so much of a constraint to urban development in Yenagoa; instead they point to other factors such as absence of the needed political will among successive administrations in the state to undertake massive urban development in Yenagoa Capital City Area.

In concluding the assessment of hypothesis two (2), the researcher equally sought the opinion of the sampled ministries and the CCDA to determine the enormity of human and nature induced constraints militating against the successful implementation of a Yenagoa Capital City Master Plan regime in Bayelsa State, as presented in Table 3.6.

Table 6 Environmental Constraints in the Yenagoa Master Plan Regime

Agency	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Total
MLS	42	7	6	12	67
ME	115	36	41	28	220
MHUD	20	12	3	5	40
CCDA	18	7	8	6	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>366</b>

*Key: VGE-Very Great Extent, GE-Great Extent, LE-Low Extent, VLE-Very Low Extent*

Table 6 indicates, amongst others, that respondents in the Ministry of Environment concur with 220 respondents to the fact that indeed there are human and nature induced constraints to capital city development in Yenagoa. However, other ministries not excluding the CCDA with their corresponding 67, 40, and 39 respectively argue otherwise. This, therefore, is in agreement with our research question that a number of constraints hinder the Yenagoa Master Plan from being an adequate instrument for development control and urban development planning of Yenagoa.

Thus far, it is established that elements in human and nature forms affect the Yenagoa Master Plan from being an appropriate tool in development control and urban planning processes. However, for purposes of empiricism, the hypothesis hereunder is subjected to chi-square analysis. To do this, responses in Table 3.6 are collapsed into one with VGE/VG and VLE/LE forming two main subgroups as shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Summation of Sub-groups (VGE+GE & VLE+LE) for Chi-square Analysis

Agency	VGE+GE	LE+VLE	Total
	Null Hypothesis (H <sub>0</sub> )	Alternative Hypothesis (H <sub>1</sub> )	
MLS	49(A)	18(B)	67
ME	151(C)	69(D)	220
MHUD	32(E)	8(F)	40
CCDA	25(G)	14(H)	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>366</b>

Table 7 represents summation of responses from the different ministries which make-up the sampled ministries for the study; a summation undertaken to enable chi-square analysis of this study. To compute the expected frequencies for each cell (in parenthesis) the following formula is used:

$$fe = \frac{(\text{row total}) (\text{column total})}{n}$$

Where  $\sum$  = sigma (summation of)  
fo = observed frequencies  
fe = expected frequencies

Fo	Fe	fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(\text{fo-fe})^2}{fe}$
49	47.0	2.0	4.0	0.08
18	19.9	-1.9	3.61	0.18
151	154.5	-3.5	12.25	0.08
69	65.5	3.5	12.25	0.19
32	28.1	3.9	15.21	0.54
8	11.9	-3.9	15.21	1.28
25	27.4	-2.4	5.76	0.21
14	11.6	2.4	5.76	0.50
<b><math>\chi^2 = 3.06</math></b>				

df= (r-1) (c-1), where r is number of rows

c is number of columns. Thus, in a 4x2 table as above, df = (4-1) (2-1) = 3

From the chi-square table, the  $\chi^2$  value with 3 degrees of freedom at .05 is **7.81**. The computed value of  $\chi^2 = 3.06$  is lesser than the critical value of **7.81 at .05 level**. The null hypothesis is accepted. This in effect implies that there is *there is no adequate public participation in the urban development of Yenagoa as a capital city*.

### III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Examining the limitations on urban planning in the Yenagoa Capital City Area appears simple on the surface. That was not the case, though, as the following section shows that significant information was found after the data gathered during the fieldwork was analysed:

- This paper discovers that public participation plays a significant role in urban capital city planning initiatives. It found that there is not enough public involvement in the Yenagoa Capital City Master Plan to have the intended effect. This lack of public involvement in the urban planning and development process is the reason for this conclusion. As a result, the implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City Master Plan has been severely hampered by the limited participation of the general public. This can take many different forms. First, the indigenous people of Yenagoa view land as a gift from their ancestors and are reluctant to give up their beloved territories.

According to Rongwiryaphanich (2014), there appeared to be a close bond between the people and their ancestral land. Second, the indigenous population views their land as a resource for game reserves, cultural preservation, and the exercise of their traditional religious rights (Othengrafen, 2012; Reimer, 2013). However, government capital city development initiatives conflict with these traditional understandings or attachments (Sanyal, 2005; Sopper, 2014). Despite the government's claim to the Nigerian state's alienating Land Use Act, there are never-ending lawsuits between the aborigines of these lands and the government due to these irreconcilable differences. For instance, the decision of Bayelsa State Government to use the same land for grazing is the subject of a lawsuit against the owners of the Bayelsa Palm Industrial Estate. The landowners went to court with the state government on the grounds that the original agreement that led to the lease of the land in question for the Bayelsa Palm industrial Estate did not include grazing purposes. To the extent of this inconsistency, the landowners are to reclaim their land or the government will cease with the plan to simultaneously use their land for cattle grazing and palm oil production. This situation is the result of the lack of public participation and consultation on the side of government.

In order to overcome these limitations, government urban development initiatives in Yenagoa must be viewed as all-encompassing, involving all pertinent stakeholders through neighbourhood meetings, sensitisation campaigns, regular and frequent meetings with community elders, chiefs, youths, and women, as well as the involvement of non-governmental organisations, which are frequently the closest to the public, a quick link to the government, and influential to the public in a positive or negative way;

- An unhealthy competition for dominance among urban development planners in Yenagoa is another significant limitation the paper noted. When creating an urban development programme for the Yenagoa Capital City Area, the Ministries of Lands and Survey, Housing and Urban Development, Environment, and the Capital City Development Authority (CCDA) each see themselves as the most pertinent ministry to carry out urban development planning, strategies, and efforts as embodied in the master plan. However, they view one another as an unnecessary rival and a distraction. The magnitude of this struggle for supremacy is demonstrated by the fact that, upon taking office, successive governments in Bayelsa State are observed to depend on an authority such as the CCDA, rather than on all pertinent ministries working together to carry out the current master plan;
- The lack of goodwill demonstrated by successive governments in Bayelsa State in carrying out urban development is closely tied to the aforementioned. This can take many different forms. First, the government is hesitant to release the budgetary funds required to carry out the master plan, or even when they do, they are insufficient to complete the enormous task of converting the former local government headquarters into a suitable state capital. Second, the designated ministries and authorities do not have the necessary tools to oversee, manage, and implement development initiatives in the research area. For instance, it was discovered that staff of the CCDA faced unusual difficulties in carrying out their official assignments. In order to properly monitor and carry out the Yenagoa Capital City Master Plan, a number of missing materials and equipment, including operational vehicles, bulldozers, pale loaders, etc., were mentioned by the operational head of the CCDA, who wished to remain anonymous. Citing the current political-economic term "economic meltdown," it was found that even proposals for the purchase of necessary equipment for carrying out urban development planning are frequently put on hold;
- The urban development of the Yenagoa Capital City Area is linked to complaints of corrupt practices and the use of force by the Mobile Police force unit, which supports development planners in their oversight duties. It was found that a number of private land developers had complained that the CCDA officials and the ministries in charge of processing and approving private land developers were taking too long. When these delays become intolerable, private land developers attempt to develop their properties without the necessary approval documents. However, these attempts are not only mocked but also met with the brutality of the Mobile Police Force, where private work tools like wheelbarrows, shovels, and spades are carted away to the office only to be reclaimed by paying hefty fines that are not transferred to government coffers. In other situations, buildings are either marked with stop work paintings or, in extreme situations, they are demolished. Demolitions are frequently successfully carried out without opposition from

the private land developer out of fear of Mobile Police Force retaliatory attack; and,

- Lastly, the paper found that planning institutions in Yenagoa employ people who lack the necessary planning credentials. It was discovered that, only five urban planners are registered members of the Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria. In a similar vein, just six employees are officially registered members of the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners. This staff configuration is enormous because the remaining employees are technical and administrative staff, who may not be as skilled in their roles after all.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

For the Yenagoa urban development regime to be hitch-free, the needed elbow room must be created for public participation in the planning process (Wapwera et al, 2015). This assertion is hinged on the fact need that urban planning process need not be top-down, fixated, straight-jacketed, but instead be bottom-up, people oriented, etc. Also, planning institutions must not only collaborate but endeavour to depoliticise the Yenagoa Capital City planning process to achieve the needed goals. In an attempt to achieve this feat, government encouragement and patronage is fundamentally needed in a number of areas such as training and registration of qualified staff to designated institutions, in-service training, organising regular workshops, mandatory attendance at seminars, conferences, purchase of requisite machinery to ease the monitoring and execution of town planning efforts, etc.

Stressing the frontiers of the need for collaboration, this paper assert that to the extent that a strong attachment between communities and their land exist, government, urban planning institutions, etc, need to work with the envioning communities to attain a conformity between policy content and local cultures for enhancing achievement of policy implementation (Othengrafen & Reimer, 2013).

Arising from the foregoing constraints to city planning, the paper recommends thus:

- The inspection process of private land developers by designated authorities has not only received wide condemnations, but are accused of being corrupt and often aided in the process by the Nigeria Mobile Police unit that accompany them in their field operations. It is recommended that deliberate financial encouragements such as field allowances, clothe allowance, etc, be built into their salaries and such salaries be split into two to be paid twice every month. The motive here is that scarcity of money which makes workers to indulge in nefarious activities would be avoided;
- Mobile Police security units accompanying field inspection teams must not be avoided forth with or if at all they are necessary, they must not be seen with AK 47 rifles which the ordinary civilian see as a threat;

- The unnecessary bureaucratic networks that cause delays in building plan approval be avoided. The enormity of this point is that Yenagoa as a developing capital city with house rents skyrocketing by the day, delays in building plan approvals frustrates private land developers and when there is a proliferation in this regard unchecked development becomes commonplace. It is, therefore, recommended that minimum timeframe be set for approval of building plan to avoid unplanned capital city development (Gupta, 2001); and,
- Government budgetary allocations to ministries and authorities related to town planning should be made substantially high and be released on time in other not to stifle the efforts of city planners in securing vehicles, equipment, checkmating private land developers from arbitrary or lopsided developments.

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**APPENDIX A:**

**Sample Questionnaire**

**Section A: Bio-Data**

- A. Name of respondent \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Indicate your office \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Age: 18-25 years \_\_\_\_\_  
 26-30 years \_\_\_\_\_  
 31-35 years \_\_\_\_\_  
 36-40 years \_\_\_\_\_  
 41-50 years \_\_\_\_\_  
 51 and above \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Marital status: Married \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_
- F. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_
- G. Educational Qualification \_\_\_\_\_  
 NCE/OND/HND/B.SC/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 M.SC \_\_\_\_\_  
 PhD \_\_\_\_\_
- H. State your: (i) status \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) Years of service put in \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B-Planning Constraints**

S/N	Questions	Alternative Answers
1.	How long has the Yenagoa Capital City Master Plan been put in place?	15 years 16 years 18 years 20 years
2.	To what extent are planning authorities, agencies and departments of local government areas amongst others involved in the urban economic, social and physical development process organise their activities towards achieving the plan	Fully Partial Not at All
3.	In your view is the existing formal institutional set up adequate for the effective implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City master plan?	Yes No Not Sure
4.	What is your opinion about the stability of the laws and policies having an effect on economic activities of the capital city area?	Stable Not stable Undecided
5.	What is your view on the provision of security (protection of citizen’s property) based on the law of the Yenagoa Capital City Master plan?	Adequate Not adequate Undecided
6.	In your view, is unnecessary bureaucracy and bottleneck /red tape a major obstacle in implementing the master plan?	Yes No Don’t know
7.	What, in your opinion, are some of the hindrances that make it difficult for the master plan to be implemented?	Comment freely----- ----- ----- -----
8.	What is your view about the involvement of experts in the process of the preparation of the Yenagoa Capital City master plan?	Comment freely----- ----- ----- -----

9.	What is your view about the plethora of planning organisations (CCDA, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Lands and Housing, etc) and planning service provision in the Yenagoa metropolis?	Adequate Too many Undecided
10.	What is your view about the how land issues being handled in relation to plans implementation:	Adequate Not adequate Unsure
11.	What specific constraints, in your opinion, has bedevilled the smooth implementation of the Yenagoa Capital City Development master plan	Resistance from community members Customary barriers Game reserves for threatened species Places of traditional religious worship All of the above
12.	What environmental and health related complaints are reported from within the capital city and the nearby communities?	Mention (a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____ (e) _____
13.	Do you consider government planning agencies in Yenagoa such as CCDA adequate?	a. Yes _____ b. No. _____
14.	Has there any form of collaboration between government and private planning agencies in the transformation drive of Yenagoa capital city area?	a. Yes _____ b. No _____ c. Not sure _____
15.	Has there been any form of citizen participation in the planning and execution stages of the Yenagoa capital city area?	a. Full participation b. Limited involvement c. Not at all
16.	What are the effects of elite (big-man) factor constraints in effective city planning	a. Building of houses on natural drainages b. Sand filling of drainages for aesthetic purposes
17.	What other constraints, in your opinion, stifle city planners in Bayelsa State?	a. Poor funding b. Inadequate logistic support c. All of the above
18.	In your opinion, are city planners qualified or experienced to undertake city planning?	a. Yes b. No