

**PROCEEDINGS**

of

**WEBINAR TO CELEBRATE  
WORLD CITIES DAY 2020**

**THEME: VALUING OUR COMMUNITIES  
AND CITIES IN NIGERIA**

**OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2020**

**ORGANISED BY  
ASSOCIATION OF CITY MANAGERS IN NIGERIA  
(ACMAN)**

## 1. Inaugural Session

The webinar to celebrate World Cities Day 2020 (WCD,2020) was organized by Association of City managers in Nigeria (ACMAN), and held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020, 11:00am to 2:00 pm West African Time, on Zoom. The theme of the webinar was *“Valuing our Communities and Cities in Nigeria”*.

**TPL. Godswill Unekwuojo Musa**, the Secretary General of ACMAN and the Moderator of the event in his welcome address, welcomed all the participants to WCD, 2020. He elucidated that WCD, 2020 is the seventh global celebration since the Day it was launched on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014 in Shanghai, China. Under the general theme of *“Better City, Better Life”* The aim of the day is to focus the international community’s attention on urbanisation as a central issue for development and to encourage cooperation among countries in meeting opportunities and addressing urban challenges towards sustainable development. Each year a different sub-theme is selected, to either promote successes of urbanization, or address specific challenges resulting from urbanization. The sub-theme for this year is *“Valuing our communities and cities”*. He emphasized that ACMAN is a membership-based association of City Managers that include individuals of the built environment and those that have effectively promoted city management in: planning, financing, development, and governance (urban and local), towards equitable, liveable, and sustainable cities.

The speakers during the event include: Professor Mustapha Zubairu, Professor M. B. Nuhu, Barrister Bello Bawa Bwari and Dr. Valda Martins. The Host of the event is the President of ACMAN, Qs. Aisha Jibril.

**Qs. Aisha Jibril**, the President of ACMAN in her opening remarks joined the Secretary General in welcoming all the participants to the webinar in celebration of World Habitat Day, 2020. In her statement, the year 2020 has been a very trying year with the Corona Virus pandemic, natural disasters like flood in some parts of Nigeria and the most recent ENDSARS protest that took a different toll. All these have drastically affected the Country’s economy, population and environment. We have gone through a total lockdown for weeks due to the COVID-19 pandemic which did not only affect the Nation’s economy but also affected businesses, mental/public health and the way individuals – like you and I – in communities and cities interact with each other. To add to it, the ENDSARS protest came with lots of lives being lost, destruction, theft and vandalization of both public and private properties. It is sad! We have to start valuing our communities, infrastructures, cities and the entire populace even more... and the first and most important step towards achieving this transformational change of building a better, safer and greener environment for all is by valuing our cities.

This is why the Association of City Managers in Nigeria have put together this webinar to promote and enlighten each and every one of us on urbanization, its challenges and how we -as individuals -can contribute to the sustainable urban development of Nigeria through valuing our communities and cities. As I open this webinar, I wish you an interesting and intellectual discussion and pray that we all take something valuable home that will make our communities and cities more valuable.

## 2. Technical Session

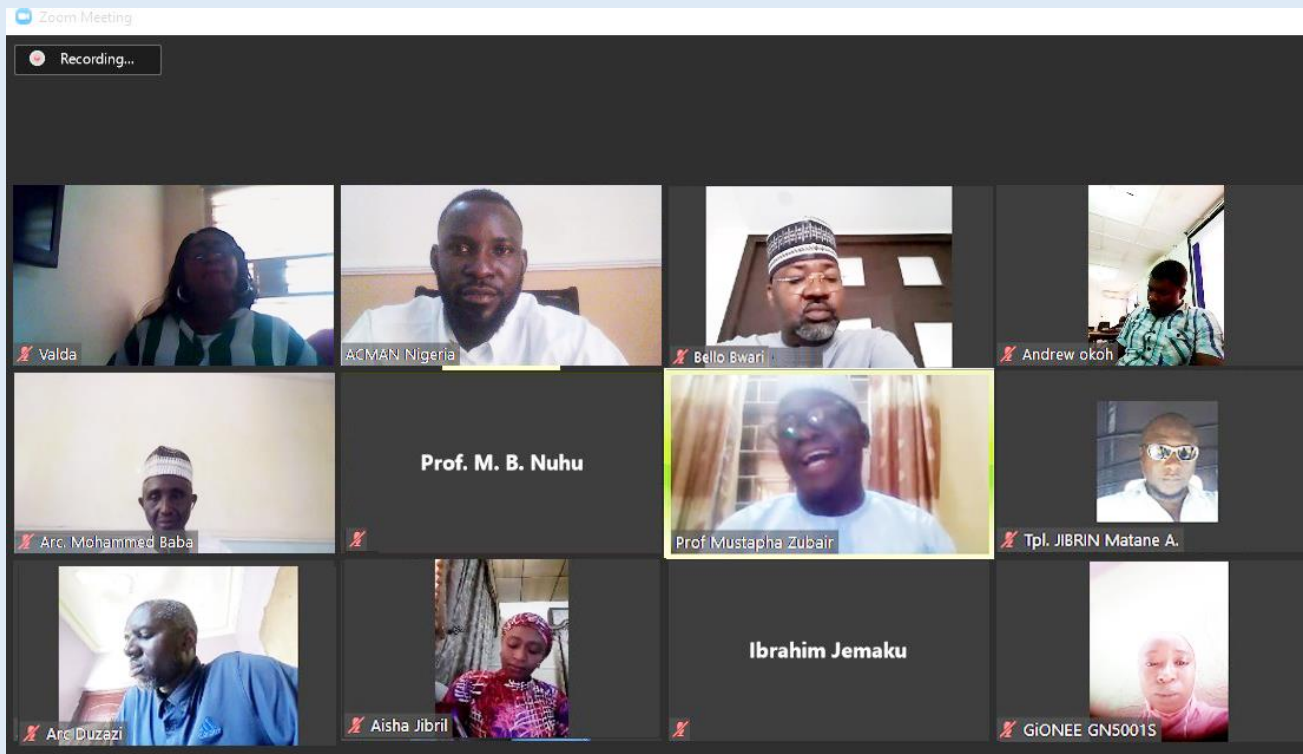
The technical session had four types of presentations by the distinguished professors and experts. Following is the list presentations.

- i. Professor Mustapha Zubairu, Professor of Urban Planning, and Coordinator, Niger State Urban Support Programme (NSUP).  
Title: Valuing our communities and Cities in Nigeria; Better City Better Life.
- ii. Professor M. B. Nuhu, Professor of Estate Management and Valuation and Director, Centre for human Settlements and Urban Development (CHSUD), Federal University of Technology Minna;  
Title: Valuing our communities and Cities in Nigeria
- iii. Barrister Bello Bawa Bwari, Principal Partner, Bello Bawa Bwari & Associates and 2019 Niger State Gubernatorial Candidate  
Title: Valuing our communities and Cities in Nigeria
- iv. Dr. Valda Martins, Senior Lecturer, Urban and Regional Planning Department, Federal University of Technology Minna.  
Title: Social Capital and Poverty in Cities

**Professor Mustapha Zubairu** speaking during his presentation thanked ACMAN, for inviting him to share his thoughts on this important topic, being first time to address the members of the esteemed Association. He emphasized his love for the motto of ACMAN “towards equitable, liveable and sustainable cities”. In his presentation, he stated that the current development path in Nigeria is: obsolete; top-down; generating high levels of urban poverty, environmental degradation, and a significant contributor to greenhouse gas generation / climate change; breeding a large percentage of disillusioned polity; and incapable of harnessing the tremendous benefits of globalization, urbanization and ICT. Weak educational base is a major hindrance to: creating globally competitive economy, fully harnessing our economic development potentials, and building a knowledge-based economy required in the 21st century that ensures that no Nigerian is left behind. He suggested Nigeria should emulate Singapore’s global development model of: meritocracy, pragmatism and honesty.

Some lessons from city development across the world presented include:

- a) Putrajaya - Administrative Capital of Malaysia- Built by the private sector. Malaysian Government is paying for the Presidential Complex through a Mortgage;
- b) Abuja, FCT - Public Sector Driven- Planned to be constructed by FGN, within 30 years but only 30% of the city had been constructed, 40 years into the process;
- c) Dubai, UAE - Initially planned to be built by the UAE government and the family of Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoun. However, after the economic crisis of the 1980s, the construction of the city is now driven by the global private sector;
- d) Cairo, Egypt - New City under construction near Cairo by the private sector.



### Webinar in Progress

Based on the consensus reached at the World Urban Forum 10, in Dubai, UAE, there is between USD \$2.4 and \$2.5 Trillion in *Investment Gap* in most cities especially in developing countries. As the world is rapidly becoming urbanized and globalized, there is equally a rapidly growing *Co-Dependency* in research, sharing of knowledge of common development challenges; and technical and financial assistance to address the development challenges of the developing countries in particular. The professor emphasized that globally, there is the availability of grants and concessional funding from institutional, private, FDI investors and venture capitalists for assisting developing countries to prepare bankable projects and climate-oriented finance for projects in urban

development. However, only very few developing countries are able to access such funds due to: inability to prepare bankable projects; lack of awareness of the availability of such grants and technical assistance; and inability of such projects to fulfill the expectation of financiers and private investors. He further recommended that city managers in Nigeria should Specialize in Identifying Bankable Projects in each of the six geopolitical zones; also, at state, LGA and city levels and develop up-to-date electronic data base on parameters for determining bankable projects. He concluded with a quote by R. Buckminster Fuller *“you never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”*

**Professor M. B. Nuhu** started his presentation by appreciating ACMAN for the invitation to speak at this event. He stated that the theme of the event Valuing our communities and Cities in Nigeria, is very important topical issue in not just in Nigeria but also in Africa. The governance system of Nigeria stipulates three tiers of government: The Federal, State and Local Government. At the state level particularly in Niger state, all Local Government headquarters have been declared as urban areas, and these come with a lot of other effects and realities in terms of capacity of development and compliance with the needed frameworks. Another important aspect is the existence of the traditional community framework and cannot be kept aside. The traditional community aside the three tiers of government, play distinct role in the governance of settlements in Nigeria, especially in community mobilization, land administration and dispute resolution amongst others. A lot of land ownership in Nigerian cities today comes from communities or traditional rulers, and these are issues that bothers orderly safe and crisis free development.

Key urban issues that affects the valuing of our communities and cities in Nigeria are that:

- a) There is non-alignment of the three tiers of Government structures in terms of administration of these areas of municipalities.
- b) Unclear mechanism through which federal state, local and traditional governance interconnect in terms of service delivery and urban management.
- c) Absence of operational basis for classification of urban areas.
- d) Weakened local government and inadequate financing.
- e) Lack of coherence in operational policy framework to guide developmental issues.

A way forward is partnership and linkages between the governance systems. Mobilization of community associations to close the gap in communication as urban management issues is not solely dependent on the government, but also in partnership with the communities. Urban objectives can be achieved but a major challenge is

connecting with the communities. Another issue to contend with is the state of insecurity in rural areas which has increased the burden on the cities due to migration. The presentation was concluded by stating that ensuring security and adequate infrastructure especially roads to effectively link cities will aid in effective management of our cities.

**Barrister Bello Bawa Bwari**, commenced his presentation by saluting the previous presenters and ACMAN. He stated that the problems of our cities are multifaceted and be considered in various categories. Consequent to this, he identified that the most critical approach to all the categories of problems at this point is the design of strategic solutions. In his words, "we have not made much progress in managing urbanization not to talk of further engaging in the development of rural areas. There is a need for leadership to own a vision of developing the rural and urban centers. A well-coordinated development planning cannot afford the isolation of rural areas as critical key factor to progress. The question is how to resolve these problems? In Nigeria, it is clear that the government lacks the political will to enforce Town planning regulations, we have continued to use obsolete strategies and at the moment, it is literally impossible for the state to bankroll the infrastructure required for liveability. These in turn makes it difficult for investors to their resolve in the development of cities especially where there is no security and adequate basic adequate infrastructure which are the beacons that encourage investors to measure risk and viability. Without a doubt, investors can only get involved in city development only when town planning is guarantees clear oppotunities. Furthermore, it must be re-echoed that economic development too is significantly determined by the level of city planning.As such, city planning would require conducting a survey on the economic need of the city and the types of economic clusters should be created to meet such needs." The presentation was concluded with the recommendations that the approach to urban development should include the following:

- i. Political leaders must bear the responsibilities of urban and rural planning as part of their development templates.
- ii. Town planning regulations must an integral part for any form of development the government maybe contemplating.
- iii. Leaders must be viewed from the lens of clarity of vision and accountability.
- iv. Clarity of commitment from stakeholders in the implementation of development is an essential factor suitability.
- v. Consideration of multiple window for infrastructural development opportunities.
- vi. Community engagement should be considered as a key driver towards achieving an all-inclusive strategic approach.

**Dr. Valda Martins**, started her presentation with salutation, and gave a clear definition of the three key areas of the presentation which includes: city, social capital and poverty. A city as a large human settlement where people live closely together to earn a living. It is also a place where inhabitants want to have a sense of belonging and importance. Social Capital involve all kinds of support from the city through one or many interactions that improves household livelihood and societal welfare. It is also a societal threshold of collective support that can get people out of poverty. Poverty is not only absence of basic necessities of life like clothing, shelter, nutrition and other important needs, also, “He who has nobody is poor” Woolcock and Narayan (2000). Poverty is a state of voicelessness and inability to make choices.

The effects of poverty in cities include: Homelessness, unsafe neighbourhoods, rape, lack of access to adequate healthcare, food insecurity e.t.c. All these affect city dwellers and the value they place on their cities. A great city is an environment that is safe, liveable, open to everybody and provide an enabling environment for people to interact and enjoy the dividend of their interaction or association. The gain of such association is called *Social Capital*, which when well nurtured can be a sustainable tool for poverty reduction and increase value inhabitants most especially the poor place on cities. The presentation concluded that A great city should be void or have minimal negative vices that and should be able to accommodate all irrespective of status where people can use their social capital to break out of shackles of poverty and huge value can be placed on our cities. When the poor value themselves through dividend of social interaction they will also place value on their environment because, you can only give what you have. The presentation further recommended that; In order to have a safe, valuable and sustainable cities, poverty should be fought using social capital where city dwellers can be on the driver’s seat to direct the affairs of their lives through associations and social interactions. The poor should be the engine of their wealth creation so that the wealth accumulated can be protected and valued.

### **3. Conclusion**

The Webinar was concluded by vote of thanks by the President of ACMAN for the engament of all participants in the event, most especially the speakers for availing themselves to contribute in the webinar through their technical presentations. Vote of thanks was also extended to the moderator for adequately moderating the event.

**ASSOCIATION OF CITY MANAGERS IN NIGERIA (ACMAN)**

(Towards Equitable, Liveable and Sustainable Cities.)

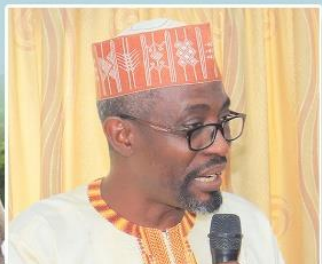
# World Cities Day

October 31, 2020

THEME: **VALUING OUR COMMUNITIES & CITIES IN NIGERIA**



**Prof. Mustapha Zubairu**  
Coordinator, Niger State Urban Support Programme.  
**Guest Speaker**



**Prof. M. B. Nuhu**  
Director, Centre for human Settlements and Urban Development, FUT Minna.  
**Guest Speaker**



**Bello Bawa Bwari Esq.**  
Principal Partner,  
Bello Bawa Bwari & Associates.  
**Guest Speaker**



**Dr. Valda Martins**  
Lecturer, Urban and Regional Planning Department, FUT Minna.  
**Guest Speaker**



**Qs. Aisha Jibril**  
President, ACMAN.  
**Host**



**TPL. Godswill Unekwuojo Musa**  
Secretary General, ACMAN.  
**Moderator**

**11:00AM WAT. ON ZOOM Registration: <https://rb.gy/wbjqmy>**

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