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MANAGING FLOOD DISASTERS IN NIGERIA THROUGH PHYSICAL PLANNING APPROACH

Kingsley C. Ogboi, Samson Fadare,
Lekwa Ezutah and Catherine E. Uloko

Abstract

With the current challenges of climate change many cities are experiencing consistent annual flooding, causing huge damages and losses. This paper highlights the role of physical planning in the prevention and management of flood disasters in Nigeria. It explores the institutional arrangements for flood management, planning measures that have been undertaken to reduce flood risks, and possible ways to enhance the application of physical planning in flood risks reduction and management. Although the potency of physical planning in mitigating flood risks is well recognized, its effectiveness is often reduced by some impediments. Lack of plans and poor enforcement make disaster preparedness, response and recovery inadequate, hence resilience and sustainability is weak. This is not unconnected to the fact that there are inadequate policies to support and guide development in that direction. These missing pieces within the physical planning strategies bedevil its efficacy in flood management. It suggests that physical planning can become an effective tool for reducing urban flood risks if the DRR framework is properly integrated into it. This requires reorientation of the existing planning framework to place planning at the centre of flood reduction and management. Effective application of planning in flood disaster management requires the promotion of inclusion of disaster mitigation measures in all settlement planning. It can be comprehensive, integrating both preventive (preparation of plans) and curative measures (recovery), covering such measure as relocating existing developments or directing new developments away from hazard locations and preserving the natural environment. There is need for Nigerian cities to have clear policies and guidelines to promote resilient urban development.

Keywords: disasters, flood, hazards, planning, resilience

1.0 Introduction

Policy options and overall framework that prescribe how disasters should be handled globally have gone through a series of evolutionary stages. Today, a number policy frameworks exist to attest to the fact that governments have made concerted efforts to reduce the catastrophic effects of disasters on citizens. Most developing countries have recorded disasters in terms of number, scale and trend especially in the last two decades. In response to

this problem, the world has developed a number of policies and frameworks for disaster risk reduction and management. Being a member of the global community and a signatory to these frameworks, Nigeria developed series of mechanisms for disaster risk management including review of the National Urban Development Policy periodically to incorporate and domesticate whatever new approaches and tools are introduced at the global level (Federal Ministry

