

Original Article

Estate
Management

Land: a Potential Capital for National Development

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ABSTRACT [ENGLISH/ANGLAIS]

Land remains the most valuable asset to be exploited to every possible means that could generate the necessary capital for national development. However, this seems to remain hidden and untapped to that fullest by many land owners in developing countries which made the poverty level of these developing countries which made the poverty level of these developing countries to remain high. This paper seeks to establish the fact that land is an active capital base to exploit to empower every land owner for investment for an enduring economic productivity. The study is partially survey opinion and review of literatures. Nasarawa State was clustered into 13 units and each of them represents a Local Government area of the state. Seven of these 13 clusters were systematically selected and questionnaires were administered urban and rural areas in each of the selected Local Government area to ascertain the proper awareness of land titles registration and accessibility of information on land transactions for viable real property market. A sample unit of 1400 was adopted and their opinions were sampled. The study reveals lack of political will by the leadership class on land titles registration, lack of effective functional Land Information Systems for information on Land transactions. The study proffers a change of political will or attitude by our leaders for good government policy on Land transactions as well as providing effective and functional Land database in Nigeria and lastly, public enlightenment programmes on the importance/necessity of formal land system in Nigeria.

Keywords: Land use, assets, national development

RÉSUMÉ [FRANÇAIS/FRENCH]

La terre reste le bien le plus précieux à être pleinement exploitée pour générer des capitaux nécessaires au développement national. cependant, cette opportunité semble voilée et inexploitée par les propriétaires fonciers des pays en voie de développement ce qui maintient leur niveau de pauvreté élevé. Ce document vise à établir le fait que la terre est une base d'un capital actif qui est à exploiter afin d'inciter chaque propriétaire foncier à y investir pour une productivité économique durable. L'étude est en partie basée sur le sondage d'opinion et les analyses des revues littéraires. L'Etat de Nasarawa est formé de 13 communautés et chacune d'elle représente un espace gouvernemental local. Sept de ces 13 communautés ont été systématiquement sélectionnées et des questionnaires ont été régité par les localités urbaines et rurales dans chacune des zones gouvernementales locales sélectionnées pour vérifier l'enregistrement des titres fonciers en bonne et due forme et l'accessibilité de l'information sur les transactions foncières pour un marché immobilier viable. Une unité de 1400 échantillons a été adoptée et leurs opinions ont été répertoriées. L'étude révèle le manque de volonté politique de la classe dirigeante pour l'enregistrement des titres fonciers et le manque de système d'information effectif concernant les transactions foncières. Elle profère également un changement de volonté politique ou d'attitude de nos dirigeants pour une bonne gouvernance des transactions foncières ainsi que la mise à disposition d'une base de données efficace et fonctionnel des terrains et enfin l'information du public sur l'importance, la nécessité de formaliser le régime foncier du Nigeria

Mots-clés: Exploitation des terres, actif, développement national

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Accepted/Accep
té: November,
2013

Full Citation:
Angbo YB.
Land: a
Potential
Capital for
National
Development.
World Journal
of Building
Technology,
and Estate
Management
2014;1(1):1-5.

INTRODUCTION

Land assets are indispensable in human life since creation. "Land remains the most valuable asset and ultimate resource base for human exploitation for his immediate needs and national development" [1].

It is known for multiple uses such as for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, religious as well as other forms of special uses which are more used directly or indirectly in physical perspective. The quest for national development in developing countries cannot be achieved without the "use of Land beyond its

conventional (traditional) Land uses" [1]. Thus, the inherent potential value in Land resources as capital must be put to exploitation. Therefore, the potential value in Land assets as capital is harness through conversion process of formal property system to liquid capital tamed as "active capital" for Land owners to obtain for investment. The study therefore, intends to assess popularity of these conversional processes in developing countries using Nasarawa State as a case study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used survey opinion and review of literatures for the research studies. Information and other data gathered and used for this write up were through questionnaires and other literatures. Nasarawa State has thirteen (13) local governments and these were adopted as clusters. These Clusters (i.e. local government areas) were arranged in alphabetical order while the clusters occupying odd numbers in the order of arrangement were selected. They are: Akwanga, Doma, Keana, Kokona, Nasarawa, Obi and Wamba Local Government area. Each cluster has sample opinions of land occupiers that were served with questionnaires. 200 questionnaires were administered to land occupiers in each of these Local Government Areas (See table 1 below). While questionnaires were dispensed at the urban centres of each cluster, questionnaires were also administered in rural areas of each Local Government respectively. Out of 1,400 questionnaires shares, only 1,203 questionnaires were retrieved. (See table 2 below).

Besides, literatures were contacted for clarity for good presentations. The data gathered were presented in table 3 and mode of responses was found to take decisions. Also, conclusions were made base on the presentation.

RESULTS

This section presents the administration of the questionnaires prepared for the study as well as the results from the returned questionnaires.

Table 1: This table shows the statistics of questionnaires administrated and retrieved

Clusters (Local Governments Areas)	Number Administered	Number Retrieved	Percentage Retrieved (%)
Akwanga	200	186	93.00
Doma	200	177	88.50
Keana	200	182	91.00
Kokona	200	163	81.50
Nasarawa	200	141	70.50
Obi	200	175	87.50
Wamba	200	179	89.50
Total	1400	1203	85.92

The table 1 above presents the administration of questionnaires prepared for this study. The table 1 above showed that a total of 1400 questionnaires were administered systematically in 7 Local Government

Areas of Nasarawa State while 1203 questionnaires were retrieved. This gave the percentage retrieved to be 85.92%

Out of 200 questionnaires shared in each local government area, were administered in the urban centres and the other in non-urban areas. This was done to avoid biasness. Table 2 below gives the ratio of the questionnaires shared and retrieved from urban and non-urban areas in the 7 local governments under study.

Table 2: This table shows the detailed statistics of questionnaires administrated and retrieved from urban and non-urban centers in each local government area (LGA).

Clusters (LGA)	Shared UC	Retrieved UC	Shared NU	Retrieved NU
Akwanga	100	97	100	89
Doma	100	85	100	92
Keana	100	94	100	88
Kokona	100	89	100	74
Nasarawa	100	87	100	54
Obi	100	92	100	83
Wamba	100	89	100	90
Total	700	633	700	570

UC represents urban centres while NU represents non-urban centres

DISCUSSION

The analysis presented in table 3 above is the mean responses of opinions of respondents to the questionnaires administrated for this study. The questionnaire is structured in such a way that the opinion of each respondent to an item in the questionnaire is rated and at the end of it all, response frequency of the modal class of each questions asked was written as opinion are found and decision taken based on the mode response. The findings of the study are derivable and are found as contained in the decision column on the table 3 above. Thus, the findings can be summarized and grouped into three:

1. Lack of political/leadership will upon title registration of land and land asset.
2. Difficult conditions for mortgage loan.
3. No adequate database for land and land transaction.

The idea of potential capital in land assets is synonymous with concept of “mortgage” [2] as well as ‘mystery of capital’ which states that “land assets lead a parallel life as capital outside physical world” [3]. Land as potential

capital for sustainable national development is laying hold on formal property as abstract capital in land/land assets as they stand security or collateral in financial institutions. The issue of formal property is not new in most of these developing countries. However, the formal property system did not work well in developing world as Musa and Nuhu[4] argued it as "evidence from much of the developing world has long pointed to the failure of formal system of land delivery". Thus, the unpopularity of mortgage system in developing world as revealed by this study in the table 3 above. For sustainable national

development to take place in developing countries, land titling and land registration processes must be embraced in its fullest by the political/leadership class in the developing nations. It must become an issue of concern by government. That is, government must take it as a policy for all ownership in land and land assets must be registered. Registration of titles in land/land assets is a key issue for sustainable national development for developing countries. Unfortunately the issue is misunderstood by the political/leadership class in the developing world.

Table 3: This Table shows respondents' responses to some important questions in the questionnaire regarding use and land information

S/N	Item in Questionnaire	Frequency of Modal Class of Responses	Decision
1.	There is good public awareness on land, farm land titling/registration in Nasarawa State.	957	Not too popular
2.	The processes of land/farm land titling/registration is simple and easy.	31	People find it very difficult
3.	Encouragement of land/farmland titling/registration is government.	22	Not encouraged by government
4.	Registration policy and Land/farmland titling in this country discourages land transactions.	1,003	Policy discourages land transactions.
5.	The idea of mortgage loan is very popular to every average land/farmland owner in Nigeria.	21	Not popular to every majority land/farmland owner or users.
6.	The mortgage loan pre-requisite conditions from financial houses in Nigeria are simple to go-by.	12	Conditions not simple at all.
7.	Information on land/farmland, transactions are readily available in Nasarawa State.	18	Not readily available.
8.	There are strong database for dissemination of information on land and land transactions in Nasarawa State.	7	Database not hardly exist.

Latent value of land/land assets are only feasible in financial institutions when on such lands are registered. Our urban and rural lands/landed resources need to be registered to be important and relevant in human life. The rationale for this paper is that land is a major key driver in a land-market-based economy. Definitely, it would have encouraged everybody including the rural people to register their land/farmland titles. By this policy titles on land assets would have been very popular to every average Nigerian who owns a parcel of land. Land asset in Nigeria whether in urban or rural areas would have been registered. At this, an affordable low level land assets taxation that every land owner could pay would be levelled no matter how low, since the policy has encouraged everyone to register his/her titles.

It would be revenue generating avenue for government to face national and sustainable developments. The idea of land: as potentials capitals for national development as viewed by Angbo[1] was in line with the concept of mortgage principles. Mortgage conditions and principles appear to a common man as difficult to meet up in order to obtain the huge capital he needs to invest on land or his farm land. If government embark on encourage able policy, both urban and rural lands will be register, everyone would have his/her title documents at hand to offer as collateral in financial houses. A lot of our farmers in this country would have gone commercial farming. Agricultural sector would be encouraged and boosted for national development. Another aspect to be discussed is the land use act of 1978. "The Land Use Act[5] vested on

the governor of each state in Nigeria the power to hold in trust the land of that state for the people of the state" [5]. As revealed in this study, the policy discourages transactions in land. The power has been misused by our political/leadership class as a way of dealing negatively with their rivals/political enemies. The power is misconceived as a political/leadership weapon against opponents. Thus, land transactions that would have promoted economy and national developments are been put to frustration. Many land titles in the cities of developing countries are denied approvals on this account. This poses further frustration on individual or corporate bodies as they might be pursuing approval of their title(s) for viable and sustainable investments.

To exploit to the fullest the capital potential of land, the information on land transactions are very necessary. The need for strong land information system as the whole world is going global cannot be over emphasized. Most of developing countries have not strong Land Information Database (LID). As pointed out by Harnando[3], "integrating dispersal information into one system as well as networking titling/business information on land assets" is obvious for national development and overcoming poverty syndrome of developing nations. According to Genesis 2:8, after creation man was asked to manage and eat from the Garden of Eden, [6]. That means, land remains the most resource base in which man irrespective of race, make his entire exploit for all his discoveries, developments and his needs since inception of human life. The abundance potentials of land have attained discoveries and development over the years in one form or the other. For examples, the hunting age, the Stone Age, the early tool age and the industrial/technological age. Indeed, land has witnessed tremendous and several discoveries and exploitation in both physical and abstract perspectives. The argument behind this paper is that land assets with its title document(s) registered can be used to obtain liquid capital for investments without necessarily having the land been sold. The concept is also supported by a concept of "non-financial compensation" which portrays the "use of land in the place of liquid capital for achieving a goal or certain objectives", [7]. The study of land potentiality in any way should not be discouraged. Land indeed, is a stock of treasuries. It is said to be "ultimate resources, for without it life on earth cannot be sustained" [8]. The hidden treasuries in land entail essential inherent usefulness of land that is unknown to man, and lie dormant for years without or improperly

exploited. It is worthy of note stressing here that average Land Owner in developing countries lack financial capital for intensive land development for national development. Thus, the need for exploiting the liquid capital potential obtainable from land assets for "massive and sustainable national development" [9] as argued out in a communiqué to Federal Government of Nigeria by the Nigerian constitution of Estate surveyors and valuers (NIESV). Lack of land/real property registration poses many hindrances to land transactions management and administration. Indeed, this is a setback for the generation of revenue to government treasury. The lack of good database such as Land Information System (LIS), Geo-information system (GIS) also hinders or discourages real property market. Lack of these information systems on land result in difficulty in getting the desire information on various parcel of land for transactions in landed assets. When the processes of titles registration in land are cheap and easy, the easier it is to register and obtain land title document. Similarly, with easy accessibility to land information, the more the land owners will rush to do the registration. And the more one is access to land information readily the more the booming of real property market which in turn, the more "revenue generation through land taxes" [10] [11]. The unpopularity of potential capital in land assets is a proof of mass unfamiliarity with the mortgage concept as revealed by this study and thus, the need for making known the potentiality of financial capital in land assets for national development. Therefore, the only way to make the concepts of mortgage which is in line with potential capital in land assets very familiar, popular and functional is to encouraging/making land titles registration cheap, easy and mandatory for all land/land assets owners at both urban and rural areas. This in turn, will facilitate and encourage land and property market. Besides, going on strong and good technological base for information in will bring about accessibility of information on land and land related transactions, accountability and transparency in all land transactions. Conclusively, for developing countries to break the gap between them and developed nations, there must be a change in the "political will" of our politicians and leaders in the area of their thinking toward legal issues surrounding land holdings, land policy, management and administration. Murphy once commented that "the process of making capitalism a normalized component of a society is more of political or attitude change", [12]. Unless our leaders change and embrace good policy

governance, the concept of land: as potential capital for national development will not work well. Similarly, Whaley observed that "it is not religion, culture or race issues that are blocking the spread of capitalism but the lack of a legal process for making property system work", [13]. There should be vibrant and effective database for all land information system (LIS) or geo-information system (GIS) network system on all land/land related transactions in the country.

Land Assets: as a potential capital for national development is an idea built upon mortgage concept with generalized view that would enable every landowner have access to liquid capital for investments and development of any kind and of any magnitude to facilitate national development. This idea can only be achieved fully by legalizing all our lands/land resources into formal property system with the aid of functional modern information database systems that will encourage real property market transactions, Nigeria, and or developing countries will soon be then the giant of the world.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / SOURCE OF SUPPORT

Nil.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

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