Strategic Urban Planning Perspective

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The world’s major cities are either on a collision course with the future, or they are planning to become masters of their own destiny.
Globalisation has been the dominant influence on cities in the past 20 years

- Increased the significance of major cities as centers for business, logistics, culture, and decision taking.
- Increased decentralization with minimal resource allocation
- The influence of local governments is no longer confined to their territorial region
- And to a greater extent than ever before, the national economic growth of a country is determined by what goes on in its cities
Global Context – Influence of Cities

- National
- Provincial
- City region
- City
Global Challenges

Demographic and Migration

Segregation

More political power to Local Authorities

Unmet MDG

Unequal Spatial Growth

New Actors in City Development

Poverty

Rise of Urban Regions

Decline of Public Funding
Value of Strategic Urban Development

Translates vision into action → Plan Long Term → Integrated Plan

Prioritization → Co-ordination → Communication

Investment → Common Planning Base
African Context of Strategic Urban Development

• Municipalities are newly established
• Municipalities are vast in geographic extent
• Most municipalities face increasing demand for services
• Most municipalities have a limited tax base, and limited ability to generate revenue
• Most municipalities there is a need to develop strong capacity building programs
• Municipalities are characterized by complex land use patterns and different forms of tenure, some of which involve traditional authorities
• Focus for local government is now on developmental local government, incorporating a more long-term and strategic approach
• Both urban and rural areas are incorporated within one municipality’s boundaries, which creates problems for strategic planning and appropriate planning capacity.
• There is a need to ensure that the benefits of urban development are spread to the more rural hinterland.
• There are historical backlogs in service delivery and inequitable provision of services and opportunities across municipalities

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Governance and cooperation:
• It can help local government establish performance-based management that creates sustainable economies and social capital

• It can identify more clearly the challenges facing a local community and respond to those challenges more directly and more effectively than the national government

• It can provide more coherence and better communications between administrative structures to coordinate public actions through multi-level governance

• It is a tool for change management that helps to prioritise and improves institutional responses and local decision-making
Advantages of Strategic Urban Development

Mobilization of stakeholders and consensus
• It supports and structures dialogue between stakeholders, eg, private sector and citizens, and can help to develop consensus-based solutions

• It provides new perspectives and opportunities for social inclusion

• It can provide continuity between local administrations, so that plans are not abandoned thereby creating stability for citizens

More Critically, Strategic Urban Planning can be used as an opportunity to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals at a Local Level.
Advantages of Strategic Urban Development

Develop innovative and sustainable city concepts
• It recognizes tangible and intangible cultural assets that add value to the quality of life
• It builds opportunities on emerging trends and creative potential
• It places environmental issues as a priority for the sustainable development of the city
• It can be a platform to develop concepts and new models of housing, energy and mobility
• It provides flexible instruments for local government to rapidly respond to natural disasters

Implementation
• It helps to direct the budget of local and national government budgets and orient long and short term private investment
• It makes it easier to balance fewer resources with the demand from more people
• It generates a broader understanding of responsibilities
• Strategic Action plans at Local governments fail when:

• Clear boundaries between their responsibilities and those of the central government were not established. The transfer of functions must ensure that local governments have the necessary capacity to perform their functions.

• Plans focused only on local economic development, which sidelines other aspects of urban development, including: the organisation of territory, sustainability, civic citizenship, cultural identity, and democracy, among many others.

• The focus was only on municipal action programs. Moreover, strategies supported only by the local government are very fragile when an electoral change happens.

• Weak strategic content with objectives that are very general and vague can lead to a lack of responsibility to deliver amongst competent bodies.

• Strategies were constructed for the wrong reason and/or have no clear focus, sometimes just intended for city marketing, and were not connected to the tasks nor with a clear commitment to implement.
Weaknesses of Strategic Urban Development

• Potential of people’s support was ignored or reduced, as when limited to providing information.

• Support was lacking from higher tier governments or there was “disconnection” between local and national government.

• Lack of leadership by the local government led to strategies driven by experts or groups.

• Financing shortfalls and there was insufficient relation to the municipal budgets.

• Lack of ability to push for joint commitment from all stakeholders and cross-city working with neighboring municipalities.
Characteristics of Successful Strategic Urban Development

• The quality of a plan lies in the participatory process.

• This commitment generates performance-oriented management inside local governments.

• A plan succeeds when results and change are tangible and measurable.

• Successful strategic planning is characterized by strong leadership, usually from a mayor or his cabinet, who acts as intermediary and facilitates an “enabling environment for stakeholder action”.

• A plan succeeds when it motivates investment that can come from different sources it does not necessarily need to be equipped with its own resources for urban development.

• A plan is legitimatized if impacts are communicated and tangible.

• Urban Development Strategies are a necessary tool for cities that need to plan beyond their boundaries and to refine their inter-municipal co-operation.
Citizen participation was used as a resource for explicit local knowledge of the challenges and expectations.

Implementation performance indicators were established during the development process.

Involvement of the private sector which had transparently attracted investment.

All spheres of government communicated and were committed to the same goal.

Strategic actions were prioritized beyond the most urgent matters.

Mayor backed the committed leadership driving the strategy.

Bespoke strategy had been designed, rather than copied as “blueprints”.

Aspects of social, economic, institutional, cultural and physical change were attempted to be integrated.
1) Strategic plans must establish clear priorities which are synchronized with other spheres of government

2) Strategic plans must be sustainable, based on clear values, on proper and updated data

3) Strategic plans must be cooperative,

4) Strategic plans, must pay specific attention to poor, vulnerable and marginalized people;

5) Strategic plans must reflect proper principles and models of urban development,

6) The new generation of strategic plans should anticipate demand and address the urgent challenges of the depletion of natural resources, environmental degradation and mitigation of climate change, and adaptation to its effects;

7) Strategic plans must contribute to the construction of social capital,

8) Strategic plans contribute to the identity of cities and their distinctiveness,
What Should LG Do in Strategic Urban Development

• Recognise the need for strategic planning in general and to allocate appropriate resources and time,

• Recognise that strategic plans need to be short and clear, and easily communicated

• Achieve effective strategic planning with strong local leadership and political support at all levels.

• Put in place mechanisms to increase the revenue raising ability of municipalities

• Ensure clear and transparent criteria for funding from central government to ensure stability and facilitate strategic planning.

• Involve all stakeholders in the development of a clear strategic vision.

• Encourage sustainable investment from the private sector
What Should LG Do in Strategic Urban Development

• Implement a strong framework to avoid duplication of functions

• Develop resources and capacities to make sure there is the local competence to perform the municipality’s mandate and carry out its strategic plan.

• Strategic planning needs to be tied to the budget and the performance of senior municipal

• Promote dialogue, skills and knowledge sharing between networks and municipalities.
What Are We Doing As the UCLG

• Voice of Local Government at a Global Level
• Influencing the Global Development Agenda on behalf of cities leading up to Habitat 3 and Post Habitat 3
• Co-Authors of Global Planning Guidelines for cities
• Activating and promoting Public Space development globally
• Durban Co-chairs the Urban Strategic Planning Committee for the UCLG
• Current projects
  • International learning Exchanges
  • Intermediary Cities
  • South – South Co-operation
  • Public Space Development
  • Promotion of SDG Localization
• Durban Is a Voting member of the UCLG
• Taking forward the defined New Urban Agenda - Post 2016
Thank You