



Capacity Building For Automated Land Information Systems In Nigeria

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Introduction

- Land is a natural resource and its potentials may be harnessed effectively where there is proper documentation of title and constant updating of records of ownership and transfers.
- Increase in volume of land records requires the application of more sophisticated tools such computer based alternatives in order for the system to be transparent and more effective.
- Nigeria has 36 states including the Federal Capital Territory - Abuja and a population of over 140 million people. So far only two States Lagos State and the FCT have embraced GIS tools

Automated Land Information Systems

- Automated land information systems simply refers to computer based record keeping storage, management and retrieval systems of land and property records.
- Computers are perfect tools for working with information and can handle and process large amounts of information for various purposes which would otherwise be difficult to manage manually.
- Despite these obvious benefits, the land management profession in Nigeria has been slow to respond to computerization for a number of reasons such as lack of funding etc.
- ICT awareness and computer literacy level amongst landed property professionals in Nigeria is quite low (Kakulu, 2003) and so they lack the capacity to initiate and drive the required change process.

Consequences Of Deficiency In Capacity

- Automated land information systems will not be encouraged because the end users are not in a position to press for change due to insufficient technical knowledge and exposure.
- Change then becomes externally induced and therefore faces pockets of resistance some of which might be fuelled by ignorance or the fear of redundancy.
- University graduates also lack the technical knowledge to apply on graduation and those with the responsibility to train them (Lecturers) also lack capacity to do this effectively.
- The problem is further aggravated by an uninformed and untrained workforce in both the public and private and corporate sector who are expected to embrace innovations when their ICT knowledge is either very weak or simply non existent.

Fundamental Factors Responsible For Lack Of Capacity

- Based on the Nigerian National Universities Commission's (NUC) minimum standards, the total number of courses each student is expected to offer on a five-year bachelors degree programme in Estate Management including electives, is approximately 73.
- Out of this number, only 1 compulsory course on computer applications is mentioned. This represents only 1.3% of the total course content over a five year period. This is grossly inadequate in a generation that is largely ICT driven.
- Some Universities have expanded these minimum standards into 3 separate courses namely: Introduction to computer science at 300 level which is taught by mathematics or computer departments; computer applications to real estate practice which is taught in 400 level within the departments and computer applications is taught at the PGD level.
- **Mainstreaming ICT into curriculum is considered to a way forward.**

Capacity Deficiencies And Needs In Academia

- Lecturers teaching core departmental courses who may need to mainstream ICT into various aspects of the syllabus lack the capacity to do so and need to be trained or re-trained to enable them fully integrated ICT
- ICT courses are offered to students in a very general way and on an awareness level only without establishing the connection with other courses.
- Lack of professional software developed in line with local practice procedures and methods.

Capacity Needs In the private and public sectors

- From the above discussion a conclusion may be drawn that graduates absorbed in the private and public sector do not possess a strong ICT foundation.
- This hinders their ability to press for change in the form of automated land information systems
- There is the need for capacity building and career development programmes to correct these deficiencies and create a more informed work force.

Findings

- Teaching curriculum lacks sufficient content and context to provide undergraduates with sufficient grounding on ICT
- Lecturers are in urgent need of capacity building to enable them cope with the ICT age and mainstreaming.
- University graduates absorbed in the private or public sector are unable to handle ICT challenges because of a weak foundation and

Findings contd....

- The absence of focused career development programmes that adequately address the ICT learning needs of mid-career professionals.
- The public sector lacks the infrastructure or capacity to provide on-the-job training in this specialist area coupled with the absence of indigenous software for use.
- The private sector land management professionals appear to be well ahead of their colleagues in terms of their ICT competence but also suffer the absence of indigenous software for use.

Conclusion

- Although changing business conditions all around us motivate a request for new or improved computer system support, the first real step in this process is to recognize the need to change and clearly define what changes are needed.
- Automation at the national level is collective responsibility of the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria, The Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, Universities and other Higher Institutions as well as the individual Valuer as part of his/her personal continuous professional development efforts.
- Intervention at the international level is also required by way of infrastructure development and capacity building.