The Africa Forum

Landscape architecture in Africa

Summary Report
January 22, 2008
THE IFLA 2008 AFRICA FORUM

SUMMARY REPORT
James Taylor, Editor

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Knowledge Village Conference Centre
Dubai, UAE

IFLA Africa Committee
Grant Donald
Martha Fajardo
James Taylor, Chair
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Executive Summary

The IFLA Africa Forum was held in Dubai, UAE, on January 22, 2008. The Forum was part of our Africa Strategy that encourages and supports the development of the profession of landscape architecture in Africa. The purpose of the Forum was to bring together leaders within the profession from Africa and other parts of the world to examine key issues, opportunities and needs for the region and to develop an action plan.

Following presentations and a round table discussion, action items were proposed in six areas of professional development and cooperation:

1. Recognition
2. Education
3. Engagement: Existing Associations, Individual Members and Other African Landscape Architects; New Associations and Individual Members
4. Communications
5. Capacity Building
6. External Support and Partners
Attendance

There were participants from 17 countries in attendance. Five African countries were represented and made presentations. The Executive Committee of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) and a representative from UNESCO were also in attendance. The full list is included in Appendix B.

Opening- IFLA President Di Menzies

Landscape architecture education and professional status and contribution in Africa have been a concern of IFLA for a number of years. Although IFLA provided leadership in the 1980’s this had not been sustained. Africa had previously been included with what was called the Central Region of IFLA. When EFLA became the European Region of IFLA in 2006, Africa was identified as a separate region along with the Middle East this was the catalyst and a project was formulated to develop networks and professional strength in Africa.

The GLADAC08 conference in Dubai was seen as the opportunity to hold a forum and take a step forward in networking and establishing African needs and interests for the profession.

The chair of the Africa committee Professor James Taylor, African delegates and other contributors to the meeting were welcomed by Dr. Menzies and thanked for their participation.
Overview- James Taylor, Forum and Africa Committee Chair

The International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) established an African Working Group in 2005 that was chaired by Grant Donald to explore how the profession might be effectively advanced on the African continent and to develop strategic programme(s) for implementation by the World Level of IFLA. A programme was adopted by IFLA with the following objectives:

1. To assist in the development of the profession of landscape architecture through enhancing recognition, improving educational opportunities, organizing professional associations, developing means for communication and through capacity building.

2. To engage existing IFLA associations, individual members and trained landscape architects on the continent in developing the program.

Following the development of a Network of practicing African landscape architects and others interested in the objectives of the programme, it was determined that a Forum that included leaders from the various regions of the continent would be an essential tool for advancing the profession in Africa. The Gulf Landscape Architecture Design Awards & Conference 2008 (GLADAC2008) provided a venue to hold the Africa Forum.

To date, the Committee, in addition to establishing the Network, has provided educational assistance through a visit to Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) in Kenya. This established BLA programme is now producing 15 to 18 graduates a year to serve the country and the greater region. Members of the Committee and the IFLA Executive Committee have worked to formalize collaboration with allied professions (UIA and ISOCARP) and United Nations Agencies such as UNESCO and UN-Habitat and the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi.

The specific objectives of the Africa Forum were to document the current state of the profession in each region, identify issues and develop a basis for forming a strategy of support.

Presentations-

Leading landscape architects were identified from the IFLA Africa Network and invited to present the state of practice and issues at the Africa Forum. Invitees included; Robert Kariuki, Kenya; Niyi Kehindi, Nigeria; Abigail Khonje, Malawi; and David Gibbs, South Africa. Benard O. Ojwang, a student from Jomo Kenyatta University (JKUAT) in landscape architecture was also invited to participate but could not attend due to the conflict in Kenya. Dr. Jala Makhoumi, Lebanon was also invited to participate and provide insights from the Northern African and neighbouring Middle Eastern regions. Hitish Mehta, a native Kenyan and international consultant contributed to the round table discussion following the formal presentations.

David Gibbs, South Africa

David presented an overview of the profession and the activities of ILASA, the Institute of Landscape Architecture of South Africa. He noted that the first educational programme was established in Pretoria in 1971 and that Landscape Architecture is also offered by the
University of Cape Town. In 1986 the first registration for landscape architects was initiated within the Architects Act. An independent act now exists. There are 120 landscape architects currently in ILASA. The Institute has progressive goals including the objective of reducing the carbon footprint as part of the design process. “Ubuntu”, which means humanity, is a guiding principle for landscape architects in South Africa.

David presented a photographic essay of South African landscapes. David Gibb’s full paper is found in Appendix A of this report.

Abigail Khonje, Malawi

Abigail provided an overview of the geography and history of Malawi and described her role as the chief landscape architect in the Ministry of Works. She noted that there is a great need for trained landscape architects in her department and at the two University of Malawi campuses (Bunda Agricultural College and the College of Polytechnic Architecture School) that offer courses in landscape design. She noted that either location could provide a base for establishing a full curriculum in landscape architecture.

A joint IFLA/UNESCO Regional Symposium on Landscape Education in Africa related to Professional Education and Training was Held in 1991 at the Natural Resources College in Lilongwe, Malawi. Nothing really came of the proposals developed at this meeting although Julius Fabos (USA) and Alex Rattray (Canada) provided advice on curriculum development.

There are only two landscape architects in the country. Numbers have actually decreased in recent years. It is very difficult to attract or fill positions due to the lack of schools and the low wages in Malawi.

Abigail’s paper is found in Appendix A.

Robert Kariuki, Kenya

Robert outlined the development of the profession in Kenya over the past 30 years. He noted the 1981 IFLA Conference held in Kenya and the establishment of a Landscape Architects association within the Architectural Association of Kenyan Architects (AAK) that followed in 1982. Melanie Richards was the first delegate to IFLA from Kenya. An important IFLA Seminar was held in 1994 in Nairobi that focused on education in landscape architecture in Africa. This initiative was promoted by past presidents Zvi Miller and George Anagnostopoulos and the seminar was organized by Robert Kariuki and Hitish Mehta. The goal was to 1) establish educational programmes in Africa, 2) promote cooperation with allied professions and 3) strengthen the network of landscape architects. Although a programme was not established at the University of Nairobi as envisioned, later in 2001 a BLA programme was developed, approved and is now producing graduates.

He suggested that major issues facing the profession include the lack of a comprehensive green industry to support the execution of landscape architectural projects. The government needs to recognize the profession and establish positions for graduating landscape architects. He also noted that as the profession is not well understood, there is a need to build a case for the value-added that landscape architects can bring to the built environment.
Niyi Kehinde, Nigeria

Niyi noted that landscape architects are few in number in Nigeria. However, two schools are now established and are producing graduates. He discussed the concept for a new capital city for Nigeria and his role in the new Capital Authority as a landscape architect. He noted the importance of educating government officials with regard to the potential role of landscape architects in all aspects of the environment. It was suggested that the African Union should be approached with respect to the development of landscape architecture as is the case in Europe with the European Union. Niyi proposed that new ways of practice must be found and that the scope of the field be expanded in his country.

Niyi provided a background of the history and politics of Nigeria and his full paper is included in Appendix A.

Benard O. Ojwang - Kenya

Benard was invited to attend the forum to bring the student perspective. He was not able to attend due to the violence in Kenya during the time of the Forum. He forwarded his presentation which has been summarized and included in Appendix A.

Roundtable-

David Gibbs, Abigail Khonje, Robert Kariuki, Niyi Kehinde, and Hitish Mehta participated in a roundtable discussion after the lunch break. Input was also invited from special guest participants Jala Makhzoumi, Lebanon; Mark Olweny, Uganda; Ingrid Duchhart, the Netherlands; Nigel Thorne, president Landscape Institute UK; Perry Howard, President of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Wataru Iwamoto, Director of Social Services Research and Policy UNESCO, Paris; IFLA President Di Menzies and the members of IFLA Executive Committee.

The results of the roundtable discussion are as follows and are organized around the principal elements of the IFLA Five Year Plan for Africa:

**SUMMARY of KEY ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES and NEEDS**-

A number of issues were raised during the discussion including the need for design respecting local cultures and environments, the negative social and environmental impacts resulting from multi-national resource developers (oil, mining, etc.), and the well known problem of deforestation in many regions of Africa.

The profession of landscape could have a role in addressing these issues and an example of sustainable eco-tourism design was provided as an example. The key issues and needs identified by the roundtable were as follows:

- **Professional Development- Recognition**
  1. Lack of awareness of the profession.
  2. Need for more visibility in media.
  3. Landscape architects must assume a leadership position in environment design and landscape management; be in charge of projects.
4. Lack of input in international environmental policy (Millennium Guidelines and
others).
5. Need for government recognition of the profession, protection of the title and a
framework for regulation (positioning landscape architecture within the political
context of Kenya and other African countries). South Africa presents a model.
6. Lobbying of government required to advance the goals of the profession.
7. Lack of local by-laws and regulations requiring a minimum level of landscape
content and professional input on development projects.
8. Need for more landscape architects in the public service.
9. Low salaries for professionals in Malawi and other parts of Africa.
10. Lack of a green industry to support landscape projects in many African countries
including Kenya.

- **Professional Development - Education**

1. Need to establish a school of Landscape Architecture in Malawi with outside
support (funding, scholarships, and faculty).
2. Established Department of Landscape Architecture at JKUAT is well developed
but requires increased support to serve the region.
3. Need for increased student support (bursaries, competitions and prizes, etc.).
4. Shortage of faculty for existing Schools in Africa.
5. Need for African research in landscape architecture.
6. A system of accreditation or recognition of developing and existing education
programmes is needed.

- **Professional Development - New Associations and Individual Members**

1. The few landscape architects in many parts of Africa feel isolated.
2. Profession needs a focus or base of operations in South Africa.
3. A regional association might be considered for North African countries.

- **Professional Development - Communications**

1. Little opportunity exists for communications among landscape architects and
related professionals within Africa.
2. The Africa email network has been a good start but other modes of
communications are required.

- **Professional Development - Capacity Building**

1. Professional development and advanced education required to provide existing
landscape architects in Malawi to advance in government and private practice.
2. Need for a dramatic increase in landscape architects to accommodate demand in
South Africa and other parts of the continent.
3. Need for skills to allow landscape architects to work effectively at the grass root
level and with local communities.

- **Engage Existing Associations, Individual Members and Other African
Landscape Architects**
1. There is no IFLA Region to serve Africa.
2. Greater contact is required from IFLA and other developed countries to foster new individual membership, support existing small associations with limited numbers and resources and to assist in establishing new associations.

**Exploring Means for External Support and Partners**

1. Development of the profession in Africa requires a sustained effort from IFLA and others.
2. Time sensitive financial assistance.
3. Need for greater collaboration and multidisciplinary information exchange.
4. Contact needed with relevant agencies and aid organizations.

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

**Professional Development- Recognition**

1. IFLA to organize missions to promote the profession (specifically Malawi, Nigeria and South Africa).
2. Develop a programme to educate governments in Africa about the potential role of landscape architects in government service and the need for recognition of the profession.
3. Create awards programmes to recognize good African landscape architecture.
4. Establish broad public education initiatives to raise awareness.
5. Advance the IFLA Global Landscape Charter with UNESCO and allied professionals to serve as a guidance document for the developing countries of Africa.

**Professional Development- Education**

1. Support developing schools with faculty exchanges.
2. Educate and encourage “hybrid instructors” with a interdisciplinary backgrounds and capabilities to respond to more advanced curriculum development. Country-wide networking of science (ecology, horticulture, agriculture) and design (architecture, planning, urban design) faculty to support new courses in landscape architecture.
3. Education: Consider holding a forum in Africa with leading academics and selected participating academics from other universities outside the continent. This could lead to an academic version of “Landscape Architecture without Borders” as proposed by ASLA President Perry Howard where professors could then visit African Universities to deliver lectures and educational support for a specified period.
4. Educator Network: Identify and promote a roster of educator resources to share teaching expertise among African countries and from outside of Africa.

**Professional Development- Engage Existing Associations, Individual Members and Other African Landscape Architects; New Associations and Individual Members**
1. Provide model constitutions and by-laws for local association development and/or professional regulation. Also for local site development standards.
2. Broaden the representation of the Africa Committee—Professor James Taylor, Chair; David Gibbs; Abigail Khonje; Robert Kariuki; Niyi Kehinde; Hitish Mehta; Mark Olweny; and Ingrid Duchhart (representing Europe) with IFLA past-president Martha Fajardo and Grant Donald to continue in advisory roles.

- **Professional Development- Communications**

  1. Develop an Africa page on the IFLA website to post news, opportunities and links for communication.
  2. Provide publications to African universities and practitioners (Uganda’s electronic journal) (ASLA’s Landscape Architecture magazine) (LI publications)
  3. Publish case studies of significant projects and practitioners.
  4. Develop exhibitions and presentations of Landscape Architectural works

- **Professional Development- Capacity Building**

  1. Develop means for professional exchange and support.
  2. Explore the idea: “Landscape architecture without borders” to provide volunteers from developed countries.
  3. Consider a programme for workshops and forums in Africa sponsored by IFLA and other partners such as the UNESCO Chair of Landscape and the Environment at the University of Montreal.

- **Exploring Means for External Support and Partners**

  1. Identify aid organizations, both within African countries and at a regional, national or international level
  2. Strengthen the relationship with United Nations agencies including UNESCO, UNEP, UN-Habitat, and their programmes
APPENDIX A

Papers by David Gibbs, Abigail Khonje, Niyi Kehinde and Benard O. Ojwang.
SOUTH AFRICAN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  Synopsis

Prepared by David Gibbs PrLArch for ILASA

With grateful thanks to my colleagues for their suggestions and contributions: Finzi Saidi, Graham Young, Gwen Theron, Piet Vosloo, Michelle Robertson-Swift and Johan Barnard

Landscape Architecture in South Africa is a young, dynamic and growing profession. Considering our geographic location as well as our political history, we are faced with unique environmental, social and economic challenges which require critical thought and strategic input to effect changes – in perceptions, in attitudes, and in human living conditions. Our work is thus underscored by both environmental and humanist values. We see ourselves as leaders in site-planning and place-making design, placing emphasis on the importance of context and recognizing our social responsibility.

Although approximately 350 Landscape Architects have graduated from South African universities over the last 40 years, we currently rely on 130 registered professionals practicing countrywide to spearhead our discipline. What we perhaps lack in critical mass we more than compensate in spirit and motivation. ILASA, the Institute of Landscape Architects of South Africa is an active organisation, involved in many exciting initiatives, and engaged in promoting Landscape Architecture as a profession to young people considering career choices.

ILASA has recently launched an updated marketing strategy, whereby we proclaim Landscape Architecture as the profession that focuses on the relationship between people and the environment. We define Landscape Architecture as: the holistic application of the skills of architecture, the science of ecology, the power of art, and the responsibility of ‘Ubuntu’ (a traditional African concept meaning ‘humanity’) to design, restore, protect and manage places that connect us to the land in meaningful ways. We further strive to design dignified and vital social spaces within the public environment by identifying, connecting and constructing with local material and human resources; thereby augmenting the essence of place and minimizing the carbon footprint of our projects.

Landscape Architecture in South Africa is a challenging field in which problems are resolved at multiple scales, through interdisciplinary collaboration with built environment professionals, planning authorities and communities.

In our fast developing context, Landscape Architects are assuming increasingly significant roles, particularly in the realms of environmental planning, in urban landscape design, and in cultural heritage management. There can be no formulaic approach to design, as each project is uniquely fraught with its own challenges and opportunities. There is little room for arrogance, ego or whimsy; each decision must be strategic and thoroughly defensible, making the most of limited resources. In South Africa, Landscape Architecture is perhaps the most challenging, stimulating, gratifying and rewarding professional discipline to pursue. It calls for passion, innovation, dedication and determination; the scope is broad; the possibilities are endless.

From where we have come

Before the profession was formally established in South Africa, many of the more well-known historic landscapes were designed and built by architects and horticulturists. Large municipal gardens were established under by Public Works departments and similar governmental offices. Such civic landscapes now include the Company’s Garden in Cape Town, cultivated (on earlier Khoi grazing lands) as a vegetable garden by the Dutch East India Company during the 17th Century, later becoming an English Landscape Park, and still today the green heart of the city; and the Union Buildings Garden in Pretoria, designed as a foil to Sir Herbert Baker’s British Imperialist masterpiece (the image of colonial power) – and now reinvented as the seat of the South African democratic Government.

Elsewhere in the country, public parks, wild flower and nature reserves, national parks and wilderness lands, were owned and operated by national or provincial administrations or municipalities, which prioritized the conservation of unique or spectacular environments. Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens, the flagship estate of the National Biodiversity Institute in Cape Town, is perhaps the most internationally recognizable of these. Sheltered by ancient mountains of the Table Mountain group, Kirstenbosch is more than a place of recreation and exhibition - it is also a laboratory for botanical and horticultural research.

Landscape Architects began to emerge....

During the 1960s, the property division of the mining conglomerate Anglo-American commissioned Joane Pim as landscape architect to design the Greenfields mining town of Welkom in the Orange Free State. With its wide boulevards and grand traffic circles, extensive lawns and expansive open spaces, this mining town remains an...
excellent example of the approach to town planning prevalent during that period. Truly a pioneer, Joane Pim brought to the attention of a much wider audience, an understanding of the role played by the landscape architect in planning and design. Her book, *Beauty is Necessary*, published in 1971 (three years before her death) further emphasized the valuable role of the landscape architect. By advocating the application of sound environmental planning principles, Joane called (vehemently) for an immediate moratorium on the environmental degradation then taking place in South Africa.

**Collegial support**

In May 1962, ILASA (the Institute of Landscape Architects of South Africa) was founded by Joane Pim, Ann Sutton, Peter Leutscher and Roelf Botha. This mobilized the next phase of the development of the profession: establishing a university degree course to provide for Landscape Architectural education within South Africa. Prior to this, as Ian Ford recalled, all Landscape Architects practicing in South Africa had obtained their training abroad – at American or British Universities; each with their various approaches and teaching methods, but all influenced by the pre-eminent names of the day: – globally McHarg, Halprin, Eckbo, Church, Jellicoe, Lynch, Crowe, and Colvin; locally – and more modestly, our own tenacious Joane Pim.

A school of Landscape Architecture was officially opened at the University of Pretoria in 1971 with Professor Roelf Botha appointed as first lecturer. Ben Farrell (later to become Professor Ben Farrell) was enrolled as the first student in the programme. Initially structured as a four year (and later five year) undergraduate degree, the course is now restructured as a three-year Bachelor’s degree; followed by a one-year Honours degree, in term followed by a one-year Masters degree. Since the programme’s inception, the curriculum has continued to evolve responsively; interfacing with the related disciplines of architecture and interior architecture; and enjoying regular input from practicing professionals. For almost thirty years, it remained the only school of Landscape Architecture in Southern Africa - and it is still the only school with a specialised undergraduate programme.

But in February 2000, after more than 20 years of preliminary discussions and preparations, the University of Cape Town launched a two-year MLA (Master of Landscape Architecture) programme, incorporating environmental planning and detail design; with Bernard Oberholzer at the helm. Operating in parallel with post-graduate programmes in architecture, urban design, city and regional planning; the MLA course produced its first graduating class in December 2001.

Generally post-graduate students with a first degree in architecture are accepted into the course, but mature candidates from related non-design disciplines (such as horticulture, botany, environmental management, geographical science, and fine art) are also considered - after the completion of a after a one-year conversion course.

Both universities are producing fine graduates who are extremely sought after in the employment market. Our students are head-hunted before the final results are even published – in terms of supply, we cannot yet meet the demand.

**What we are teaching and learning**

After 8 years teaching at the University of Pretoria, Dr Finzi Saidi currently convenes the MLA programme at the University of Cape Town. He observes that ‘The Landscape Architectural profession is in a state of continuous flux: the practice of Landscape Architecture continually adjusts according to changes in society. Understanding the social context is perhaps the one area in which all Landscape Architects are forced to respond - as most projects involve considerable social stakes and public expectations.

Knowledge of the process of negotiating delivery therefore becomes critical. These societal changes dictate that educators take the lead in ascertaining what is taught, what should be taught, and how the teaching and learning process should manifest.

Further, students need to understand the multicultural, heterogeneous, context in which they will have to operate. In order to achieve sustainability in different contexts, Landscape Architects must learn how to develop a value system that respects and enhances opportunities in other cultures’ perception of open space systems. In our urban context, particularly in economically disadvantaged communities, the public environment becomes the platform for social interaction and human engagement. Understanding people perceptions of landscape – without asserting preconceived assumptions – enables far more meaningful intervention. The learning process of Landscape Architecture therefore should include experiential learning in preparation for professional practice.’
How professional practice is organised and structured

Landscape Architecture gained statuary recognition in 1986 – through the then Architect’s Act. The profession was thus regulated as a specialised branch of architecture, though Landscape Architects soon felt the need for a distinct Landscape Architect’s Act - to tackle issues specific to landscape architecture, and to gain autonomy of status for the professional discipline.

Ten years later in 1996, Piet Vosloo and Graham Young, practising both professionally and academically, together with Dr Erika van der Berg, a practising Landscape Architect and former lecturer at the University of Pretoria, formed the Legislation Committee of the then Board of Control for Landscape Architects of South Africa (BOCLASA), and actively pursued the goal of an autonomous Act.

In early 2000, in line with a broader law-reform process (which also saw the restructuring of the Architects Act and the promulgation of the Built Environment Act) the BOCLASA legislation Committee was finally given the opportunity by Government to draft their ‘own’ Act. This was undertaken and the Landscape Architectural Professions Act (Act 45 of 2000) was promulgated in December that year.

Apart from finally recognizing Landscape Architecture as a distinct profession, the Act provides for the establishment of a juristic person known as the South African Council for Landscape Architectural Professions (SACLAP). This is now the governing body responsible for regulating the profession, and which sets standards of practice, codes of conduct and ethics, and education - in the interests of the public in general. Although ILASA had previously undertaken some of these regulatory functions, it now became possible for the institute to concentrate on promoting the profession and advancing the profession - in the interests of Landscape Architecture specifically.

SACLAP and ILASA have quite different roles

To clarify the relationship between the two concisely: to be active in practice, Professional Registration with SACLAP (a statutory body) is mandatory; and involves writing (and passing) the Professional Registration Exam which tests core competencies after a 2-year post-graduate internship. The exam covers Environmental Legislation and Contract Law, as well as Codes of Conduct, Ethical Practice, and design. Depending on their eligibility, successful candidates are granted the right to the title Professional Landscape Architect (PrLArch); in theory, SACLAP has similar provisions registration as Professional Landscape Technologist, Professional Landscape Technician, and Professional Landscape Assistant; though as yet there are none registered.

Membership of ILASA (a Voluntary Association), is optional. It is classified and available to Professionals, Graduates, and Students; as well as Associate and Honorary members. Fellow Membership is conferred to any Professional or Graduate Member in recognition of outstanding service s/he has rendered to the advancement of Landscape Architecture.

As ILASA enjoys official recognition by SACLAP as a Voluntary Association; consultation with ILASA is obligatory before any new or amended regulations may be published by SACLAP in the government gazette. ILASA is also responsible for nominating a number of the members of the council for each four-year term, and as certain duties of the council may be delegated to the institute, the two bodies operate in symbiosis: ILASA gives members of the profession a collegial network of support; SACLAP gives the profession political representation and an official voice.

SACLAP operates in parallel with the related Built Environment professional councils – namely those for the Architectural, Engineering, Quantity Surveying, and Property Valuation professions - as a constituent member of the Council for the Built Environment (Act 43 of 2000); and as such we are answerable to the National Ministry of Public Works; in the person of Minister Thoko Didiza.

Standards for Education

Together with the South African Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA), The Landscape Architectural Professions Act calls for the establishment of education Unit Standards which form the basic elements of which accredited qualifications must be compiled. Against these standards, as well as criteria set by the Higher Education Quality Commission (HEQC) of the Council for Higher Education (CHE), tertiary institutions are measured by the SACLAP Education Committee, in the processes of curriculum accreditation. Accreditation is an on-going process, with re-accreditation being sought every four years, in parallel with each successive session of SACLAP.
As mentioned before, the Landscape Architectural Professions Act makes allowance for a broad spectrum of related professions to be regulated and registered, recognizing the vertical differentiation within the profession. It makes for hierarchical registration categories which reflect the level of education and training received, in congruence with the system endorsed by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Both Candidate and Professional registration options are provided in the following categories: Landscape Architect (NQF level 7 – Masters Degree), Landscape Technologist (NQF level 6 – Bachelors Degree), Landscape Technician (NQF level 5 - Diploma) and Landscape Assistant (NQF level 4 - Certificate). This is seen as an enabling system which can facilitate upward mobility without formal education; considering our disadvantaged past and in recognition of prior learning (RPL) through years of practical experience.

The Act further calls for practicing registered Professional Landscape Architects to undertake Continued Professional Development (CPD) on regular basis. This ensures their currency in the profession and to keeps them abreast of global knowledge with local application. Some university course modules are designed and recognised as CPD courses, as are all ILASA events and activities. Through a reciprocal CPD system, participation in interdisciplinary conferences and workshops is also recognised. CPD courses typically focus on aspects such as Environmental Legislation, Sustainable Technologies and Landscape Architecture as Cultural Heritage.

**Acknowledging our Social Responsibility**

As we continue to learn through doing, the importance of Landscape Architecture as a social imperative becomes increasingly more evident and pronounced. Perhaps, as professionals we could be criticised for having become too serious, too conscious of performance and sustainability; as our design decisions are seldom taken without thorough justification and motivation. Given the context of our most necessary work - extreme environmental conditions, (drought, flooding, soil paucity); social injustice (abject poverty, unemployment, lack of education) and economic disempowerment; moral consciousness dictates such an approach.

Where there is such great human need, there is much practical work to be done. These challenges can inspire great creativity and innovation – to reinforce an old adage: out of ancient Africa, always something new. But due to our limited professional human resources capacity (remembering there are only 130 of us!) there is insufficient research currently underway. Professional Landscape Architects seldom have the time to reflect on their projects – to record success and failures, and thus the opportunities to record and publish this valuable experience is limited.

With our incredible biodiversity, richness of human culture, and natural landscapes of phenomenal natural wonder, we have the potential to further advance the theoretical foundation of our profession - as pertinent to the South African condition. And to affirm our position as an academic discipline, we have an obligation to do so.

With sufficient human resources and support (networking, communication, scholarships and bursaries) students, academics and theorists would have the opportunity to pursue research topics that not only inform local practice, but which have global application in similar conditions.

Topics of inquiry are as diverse as defining the role of landscape architecture within informal settlements and place making, exploring empowerment through cooperative urban agriculture, determining the value of landscape cultural heritage, understanding the psychology of landscape, and documenting lessons learned from actual projects - the potentialities are staggering, the need is there.

The ongoing observation, interrogation, evaluation and recording of this data (as a process of academic and professional collaboration), is essential if we are to develop capacity, gain in confidence and professional stature in South Africa. Our experience may inspire other developing regions, and we in turn may offer our assistance.

Although there are many challenges, difficulties, and frustrations, living and working in Africa brings so many rewards; I would have it no other way.

Thank you.

*David provided the following notes for discussion:*

**We need to develop our image- and we need a permanent home.** Our institute has operated, since its inception, on a voluntary basis – from various people’s offices at their own cost. As administrative pressures
steadily increased, the situation became unworkable. In resolution of this issue, ILASA has recently employed the services of a management company who now undertake the administrative functions on our behalf, allowing us to concentrate rather on the advancement of the profession, through education, through practice and through marketing strategies.

However, we still lack a physical presence – a home base – a building with a landscape. A suggestion (though fraught with political entanglements) proposes an existing historic building within the Company's Gardens in Cape Town be secured through a long lease arrangement with the city. Such a scenario would endow our Institute with a Public face and facilities for permanent exhibitions, education and training programmes, meeting rooms, research offices and archives, as well as a venue for collaborative CPD initiatives.

Currently a dream, with enough grass-roots support and political will, (and a fair amount of personal drive!) it will become a reality. In South Africa there is infinite scope for Landscape Architects to become involved and to make a meaningful contribution to humanity, facilitating of the custodianship of our bio-physical environment.

Recalling projects, practices and people from then….and now…. In South Africa, Landscape Architecture is a young profession; we are still finding our niche within the built environment, still proving our worth, and still defining our role. We are somewhat misunderstood by fellow built environment professionals, by officials, and authorities as well as clients and the general public. Awareness is still very limited, assumptions about us are often made in ignorance, and we often need to fight for the respect of our peers and to prove the value of our contribution.

Perhaps landscapes are more subtle than buildings, and thus recognition of their conscious design may not be as overt. However, a brief review of South African Landscape Architecture may reveal otherwise.

Ann Sutton, now in her 80's, continues to practice and attends the ILASA Annual general meeting without fail.

Dayson & deVilliers and their Overvaal oorde, followed by the office parks;
Uys & White and Centirion, master plan, water front & the birth of a new town;
OVP and the redesign of the various beach fronts – first for separation then for integration culminating in the V&A Waterfront

And then the future
The redevelopment of cities and townships – Greening of Soweto
Political redevelopment – Apartheid museum; Freedom Park

Major 2010 developments - sport

As we have so few professionally registered landscape architects, in the country – there are only 2 main centres – Cape Town and Johannesburg Pretoria – 30 and 100 individuals respectively – meaning that many smaller towns and municipalities' operate without landscape architects. And are unaware of them

Within the centres, Landscape Architects are mainly employed in private practice (limiting input at high level planning / strategic planning) and are employed as consultant at the design development and implementation phase of projects – after urban designers and planners have already finalized strategic decisions – often without any environmental understanding.

Budgets are invariably way too low – as quantity surveyors have no idea about landscape costs – Our fee structure needs revision – a percentage based fee is often challenged – and undercut – meaning we work many hours (sometimes at risk) for meagre financial rewards.

WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN:

- International Exchanges
- Education
- Academic support
- Research
- Bursaries for students,
- pressure on government to employ LA is environmental departments, planning authorities,
- Awareness to architects engineers,
- Education to grassroots - careers opportunities
- Placement, internship, apprenticeship, mentorship
• International correspondence / exchange programmes
• Physical presence / home base for ILASA – e.g. a building / property (after 40 years we should have somewhere to stay!!! We cannot be roaming eth desert like the Israelites for so long.
• Thesis / research - particular in to value of landscape heritage
• Review of international standards – remuneration / fees – in line with international standards
• Self-confidence – so much challenge – environment and socially – the administrative / internal battles (with architects etc) are unnecessary
• Need passion, vision, pragmatist, foresight, practically, patience, and diplomacy
• Need support of the green industry – nursery men landscape contractors, irrigation specialists
THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN IN MALAWI

Abigail Khonje

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ladies and gentlemen I am not going to stand here and try to explain to you what landscape development is or am I going to define what landscape architecture development is. The purpose of my talking to you today is to share with you the status of Landscape Architecture in Malawi, the country where I come from. Landscape Architecture Development in Malawi has been negatively affected by a number of factors, the major ones being the change in political dispensation and the non return of students sent to train abroad.

For those of you who do not know where Malawi, it is a landlocked country. It has a total area of 118,480 km$^2$ and a land area of 94,079 km$^2$ the rest of the area is mountains and water. It lies along the Rift Valley. It shares boundaries with Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. The country has the third tallest mountain in Africa, Mulanje Mountain and has a fresh water lake called Lake Malawi, which was called Lake Nyasa before independence. Malawi has a population of 14 million people.

Malawi was a British Protectorate and it was in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Malawi became an Independent State on 6th July 1964 and it attained its republic status on 6th July 1966. Because of the British colonization, English is the official language of the country.

Since independence the country was under the leadership of a one party, which was called the Nyasaland African Congress which later became the MALAWI CONGRESS PARTY, when the name of the country changed from Nyasaland to Malawi. The first Prime Minister was Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda who also became the first president of the country up until 1994 when the country opted for multiparty political dispensation through a referendum vote. People voted for multiparty politics and not single party system. The first president during the multiparty democracy was President Bakili Muluzi.

I am going to discuss briefly how this change in political dispensation has affected landscape architecture development in the country. At the moment landscape architecture services are not taken as a priority in infrastructure development.

Landscape services started in the State Residencies with expatriates from Britain who were called Gardeners and Horticulturists. One would see good landscapes around residences belonging to white people. With development and need for expansion some local Malawians were participating in the provision of landscape services but usually under the leadership of the British Landscape Gardeners and Horticulturists. The Malawian employees with experience could only rise to the position of a Head Gardener, in the State Residences set up.

The first Landscape Architect was an Architecture student who was sponsored by government to go and study in England. While there he learnt of landscape architecture profession and he decided to study Landscape Architecture. He then left England and went to Germany to study landscape architecture. This was the late Mr. Felix Sapao who is amongst the pioneers of landscape architecture in Malawi. Upon his return to Malawi he was attached to the state residences up until 1983 when his position was established in the Civil Service and it was established in the Ministry of Works and Supplies in the Buildings Department where it is until today. Mr. Felix Sapao became the first Landscape Architect in the Malawi Civil Service. However, the development and maintenance of the State Residence landscapes was still being done by the British expatriates.

With the establishment of a section of Landscape Architecture in the Department of Buildings, there was need for more people to be trained in this profession. Mr. Darwin Mulaga was sent to Australia to train as a Landscape Architect. He came back to Malawi after his studies and worked with Mr Sapao and several others in the Department of Buildings. He retired from the service in the year 2000 and started his own practice, but he died three years later from a heart failure.

During the One Party System the section of Landscape Architecture was flourishing and there were a lot of projects that the section was responsible for especially from the Presidents Residencies and the village that he built for his family members. Some of the projects were Chiwengo village which was the president's mothers' family side and Mphonongo Village which was his family from the father's side. President Kamuzu Banda built the Kamuzu Academy, which is a grammar school and it was properly landscaped. The Kamuzu Military College
a training institution for the military in Salima was also one of the big projects for the section. It was a government policy that all the government buildings must be properly landscape to prevent soil erosion and make it aesthetically appealing to the eye and for environmental enhancement and conservation. This was achieved through landscaping services provision from within the Civil Service.

City Assemblies were also players in development of landscape services and the provision of recreational facilities like parks and botanical gardens in the cities of Blantyre, as the commercial city and Zomba which was the first Capital City of Malawi. Mr Yesetsani Kambewankako was the first Landscape Architect in the City Assembly and was responsible for the establishment of the Zomba Botanical Gardens and Rangely Park in Blantyre. He was also working with Mr. Felix Sapao in the state residence landscape projects.

While realizing the need for proper landscaping to address issues of soil erosion, aesthetics and sustainability in infrastructure development, a total of six Malawians both from the Civil Service and the private sector were sent to Britain and America to study landscape Architecture but they have not returned to Malawi to work. This has also contributed to the lack of the development in the profession of Landscape Architecture in Malawi.

Mr. Yesetsani Kambewankako is the only other Landscape Architect in Malawi up until now and he is trying to establish his own Landscape Consulting Company. He is also working hard on trying to establish an association of Landscape Architects in Malawi.

The writer studied landscape Architecture at the University of Pretoria from 1992 and this was after the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) Central Region Symposium on Landscape Architecture Education in Africa which was held in Malawi from 2nd to 5th April, 1991.

Two other Malawians were sent to Republic of South Africa, at the University of Pretoria to study Landscape Architecture in 1993 but they have also not returned to Malawi. This has contributed to the fact that landscape architecture is not developing in Malawi.

The writer is heading the Landscape Section in the Department of Buildings. She is the only Landscape Architect in the whole Malawi Civil Service. Presently there are difficulties in the Civil Service to fill many vacant positions in the Landscape Architecture profession because there are no trained people in this field in the country. Government has sent so many people for training as Landscape Architects but most of them do not return home to Malawi to work for their Government. This is one of the challenges that government has to overcome somehow.

From the discussion on how landscaping was introduced in Malawi and after the change of Government in 1994 government interests changed. The government policy on environmental enhancement was thrown out and in the name of democracy, people started building without regard to environmental issues and the government development direction changed, priorities changed. Change in government driving machinery and personalities and personal priorities of government authorities changed as well. All this led to the lack of support that the section was enjoying when the authorities were people who took landscape as an important service in infrastructure development. This is the state of affairs presently. This compounded with lack of human resources due to the non return of Landscape Architecture students studying abroad just makes the situation worse for the Landscape Architect.

Landscape Architecture profession in Malawi is not developing; it is at a stand still. The issues negatively affecting the development of landscape architecture in Malawi could be summarized as follows:

- personal attitudes of the authorities in the Civil Service machinery
- attitudes of other environmental design disciplines or professionals
- change of government policies
- change of political leadership and political dispensation
- those that have been sponsored by government to go and study abroad have not returned to Malawi to work
- none existence of own training institutions in the country
- lack of understanding of what a landscape architect does
- antagonism between professions
- non existence of a local body – LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION OF MALAWI.
- lack of financial resources
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN IN MALAWI

Malawi like the rest of the world is experiencing numerous problems of environmental degradation as result of rapid population growth and humanity’s quest for improved living standards. The environment, both natural and built, is also under threat because of this human population pressure. In addition to infrastructure development, environmental degradation is also caused by agricultural methods and deforestation. Agriculture is the backbone of Malawi’s economy and the biggest source of energy for the average Malawian is firewood. This is a very big challenge for the government of Malawi.

The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Housing is the policy holder for infrastructure development and rehabilitation in Malawi. The Department of Buildings, which is one of the Departments in the Ministry, is mandated to facilitate and regulate the provision and delivery of quality and safe buildings in Malawi. This is achieved through the creation and enforcement of policies, standards and regulations that ensure a sustainable built environment in an efficient, economic and transparent manner. One of the sections of this department is that of landscaping. Landscaping is an environmental response to urban development and conservation as well as enhancing biological diversity.

Landscape Architecture deals with the interface between development and concern for the natural environment, through designing landscape schemes. There is therefore that need to look at sustainable strategies in our development endeavours in order to have organized sustainable healthy and safe environments that can be perceived to have character. Environments, whether built or natural are supposed to be healthy, providing housing and employment opportunities while meeting environmental standards and be sustainable. Sustainability needs to be addressed on a global scale; reforms need to concentrate on an interaction of urban environment with the global economy. A chaotic urban development as seen in many of the third world countries is difficult to be perceived by the user and can be alienating. Unplanned urban development has resulted in major sustainability problems and environmental concerns. Further development is at risk unless these problems are acknowledged and addressed in a multidisciplinary manner.

When we talk of Environmental Design we are looking at professions like Urban and Regional Planning, Urban Design, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture which together are responsible for designing the contemporary landscape – the Built Environment. However, differences in perception have caused major communication difficulties for example between planners and designers. As landscape architects become more systems sensitive communication between architects and landscape architects becomes more difficult. We need to start looking at systems design and not just project design.

Legal and Institutional Frameworks need to be strengthened in order for our environmental design to be comprehensive and coordinated. At the moment a lot of planning is done without multidisciplinary approach.

Environmental Design in Malawi is fragmented between the disciplines that are involved with environmental design namely Architects, Engineers, Planners, not to talk of local people, the public who are basically the users and most of the time the ones who are greatly affected by our designs. There are so many informal settlements coming up. People feel that it is their democratic right to go and occupy any idle piece of land without regard to what that land is planned for. There was a zoned plan for Lilongwe City development but after multiparty democracy building were seen sprouting everywhere even in public places that were supposed to be public or neighbourhood parks. Now it is very difficult to understand what is happening, it is all chaos.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI

In addition to the Landscape Section in the Buildings Department, there are other institutions that also address environmental issues in the government machinery.

- Department of Environmental Affairs: The Department of Environmental Affairs is a government department that is mandated to look into issues of environmental development and sustainability. It is also the holder of the Environmental Management Act (EMA) as well as the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) of Malawi. The department champions the preparation and regulation of guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and it is the secretariat for Technical Committee on Environment (TCE). However, even this department is not properly staffed to handle all issues of control, monitoring and enforcing of it policies.

- Local City Assemblies of Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu Cities
CONCLUSION

The historical development of Landscape Architecture Profession in Malawi started very well. But changes in leadership and political dispensation have seen changes that have negatively impacted on the development of the profession. This compounded with non return of government sponsored students has seen the profession lacking qualified manpower to support and recognize its importance in infrastructure development.

The compartmentalized approach to infrastructure development in Malawi poses a problem of uncoordinated environmental design. Something needs to be done to attain a holistic approach to infrastructure development if the environmental design is to be organized and coordinated.

Improving Landscape Architecture Education in Africa and Malawi in particular can be part of the solution to this problem because when there are a number of voices speaking out on the issues of environmental management someone can hear and may be start listening.

References:

THE PRACTICE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN AFRICA: 
THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE.

BY NIYI KEHINDE 
PRESIDENT SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS OF NIGERIA. (SLAN) 


Perhaps to the people of Middle East, Africa doesn’t sound outlandish, to others, it does. Africa is that continent partitioned after the Berlin conference in 1884. To Americas and Americans, Africa is the continent of slave sellers and slave buyers until the abolition of slave trade in about 1861. To a geographer, Africa is the continent encircled by Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean and the Red sea. To the political world, Africa is the region, of coups de tat and sit-tight presidents. The world economy puts Africa in the class of the wretched of the earth with few exceptions like Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt and Libya.

The different colonies came with their different cultures, tastes and environmental behaviours. These are reflected all over Africa, and hence different environment signatures (English, French, Portuguese, German, etc) all over the continent. The signature in Yamoussoukro in Cote De’Voire - French, is different from that in Abuja, Nigeria- British; even though they are both modern cities. Space perception in Kenya and Nigeria may be similar while differing significantly from that of Cameroon and Senegal because of the colonial antecedents.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that we can not be talking of the practice of Landscape Architecture in Africa without discussing in detail, the peculiarities of the practice in the different countries moderated by cultural practices, economy, government type (Democratic or Dictatorial) and awareness of world Environmental issues.

For this reason, we will discuss issues pertaining to Nigeria, believing that my colleagues from Kenya, South Africa and Senegal will do the same for their countries. Perhaps at the end of discussions, a pattern may emerge, which may be peculiar to Africa.

Pre-Colonial Nigeria:

Settlement Pattern:

South Western Nigeria had villages, towns and a few cities as settlement pattern. The South Eastern part was characterized by scattered settlements with a few population nodes. This is also the pattern in the North in which there is an open country. This region enjoyed light vegetation which allows for farmsteads to be easily established. Few population nodes also abound.

Without exceptions, all the settlements (villages, farmsteads and Towns) had ‘tree places’ where people congregate to exchange pleasantries of farming. In South Western Nigeria, among the Yoruba’s, it is called L’abe Odan, Odan being a cultivar of ficus. In the East, amongst the Igbo’s, such tree place is called Ulo Mpkuke and in the North with Arabic influence, it is called Majalisa. There are also villages or towns squares with thatch gazebos for social interaction. All year round flowing streams or stagnant water bodies were protected by heavy plantings around them. These were the regular sources of water to the settlements. The palaces and or settlement Heads Places were easily identified by the type of plants used to surround such hallowed spaces.

Colonial Period.

Space definition and landscape (use) planning came into existence during this period. Also by now, towns and cities have emerged in large numbers. While not tampering with the status-quo of many of there villages and towns, the British colonizers tried to re- configure certain towns identified as Administrative Headquarters.

It is in such towns you have what is called GRAs (i.e. Government Reservation Areas) or Government quarters that housed Colonial Officers. Often times, the GRAs are located on unique land forms such as elevated places and outskirt of towns. These GRAs are marked with copious plantings to reduce the glare of equatorial sun, reduce heat and provide outdoor living spaces. All roads into and out of these colonial abodes were lined with trees. Orchards are planted. Vegetable gardens are established for madams of the estates. Gardeners emerged as a Guild that tended vegetable gardens and lawns in and Colonial houses and offices.
The Railway Influence.

For ease of transportation, the colonial Government decided to build rail tracks from the South port towns to Northern Administrative Trade Centers. Residential quarters and offices were established in towns along the rail routes. Plantings similar to administrative quarters were done in the railway quarters. ‘The Natives’ took a cue from here and planted trees in front of their houses. With the Railway Officers and District Officers, quarters emerged recreation outfits like lawn Tennis, Badminton, Tenniquirt, Archery and Swimming pools. The railway Staffers arranged football (soccer) competition among their zones, and regions and hence the need to have more football fields around the country.

Missionary Influence.

No doubt the influence of Christian Missionaries impacted positively on the space organization of land and the activities pertaining to such space budgeting. Church houses i.e. Residential Quarters of Missionaries are located at the outskirt of towns where copious spaces are available for proper development. The houses here are well laid out. Avenue trees copiously planted. Shade trees are also planted. Deliberate gardens are created where parties are held and, the ‘Natives’ are allowed to mingle with the foreign missionaries for Bible education. Vegetable gardens are a common element of the arrangement.

It is important to note that the Early Christian Missionaries came purposely to evangelize the continent. Those missionaries realized early enough that they would not achieve their mission without first of all teaching the Natives how to read and write. The realization coincided with the needs of the entire mercantile group from Europe. A joint effort was put in place to educate the Natives who will now be Pastors in the Church and Clerks in the mercantile office.

Again, Mission schools became another precursor of open space management in Nigeria. Recreation and Sports fields were built to accommodate the extra-curriculum activities of the schools, Missionaries and European owners of the then Trading Companies.

Post-Colonial Period.

Post-Colonial period for the purpose of this exercise shall mean the period between 1900 and now not necessarily Post Independent Period which began in 1960 October. Modern Physical Planning started in Nigeria around 1900 with Western Nigeria 1946 act on regional Planning. The Act broadly addressed ‘initiation of planning scheme, establishment of planning authorities, preparation and approval of planning schemes, acquisition and disapproval of law for planning schemes… Payment of compensation’. The only allusion the Act made to Landscape Planning that is Landscape Architecture was in the area of amenities. The concept, that is, amenities provision in the 1946 Act was the authority for planning and managing open spaces as it served among other things.

- To reserve land for open spaces (either public or private and for burial grounds)
- To preserve views, prospect and amenities for place and features of natural beauty.
- To preserve buildings and objects for artistic, architectural, archaeological or historic interest.
- To prohibit, restrict, or control indiscriminate hoarding.
- To prevent damage to amenities, buildings or fences, or control of objectionable condition of any land attached to building or fences on a road or situated in residential areas.
- To prohibit, regulate and control either the position or disposal of waste material and refuse.

This was as far as landscape architecture could go in the scheme of physical development then. Things started to look up for landscape architecture beginning with the Returnees in the seventies when some Nigerians who studied Landscape Architecture as a Professional Degree came back home.

East central states of Nigeria established Open Space Development Commission (OSDC) to develop and maintain public open spaces in that state. The function did not deviate from the 1946 Amenities content of the Physical Planning Act. Also in 1984, the Federal ministry of Works and Housing created a Parks and Gardens Unit. Some state authorities have taken a cue from this and created Parks and Recreation Departments or Divisions in their Ministries of Works, Housing and urban development. The Master Plan Concept brought a positive influence on the urban form in Nigeria particularly the need for aesthetic appeal in our cities. The Master Plan has a philosophy to foster standards of settlement appropriate not only to the current Nigerian Culture and environment but also to the needs and aspirations of future generations of Nigerians. Ornamental parks and open spaces with indigenous and exotic species were meant to be visible everywhere in the city. Abuja was
conceived in the tradition of the ‘city beautiful’ or the ‘garden city’ of Ebenezer Howard but it was also meant to be functional and efficient...

Poverty as a Militating Factor.

Justice will not be done to any discussions on the education and practice of landscape architecture in Nigeria and indeed in other parts of Africa, without highlighting the impact of poverty on education and practice. This paper at the outset tried to define what Africa meant to the different Nations of the world. The aggregate of the different definitions is that Africa is a poor continent. There is economic poverty, political poverty (coup de tat, sit-tight presidents, and brain-drain), poverty of ideas and Institutional Sabotage aided and abetted by Developed Economies of the world.

The varying poverties have indeed impacted negatively on education and practice of Landscape Architecture in Nigeria to be specific and in Africa in general.

Education.

Colonial Period education focused on reading and writing to produce clerks and shopkeepers for the mercantile outfits. Even when the University started, it was designed to produce graduates in Latin, Philosophy, History and classics to produce those who would populate the civil service.

It was later that courses like geography, engineering, medicine and architecture were allowed to be studied. Even at that, planning and urban design as a subject of study was non-existent. This explains why most Nigerian town planners are geographers until recently. When young Nigerians became aware of Landscape architecture as a professional course, it was not available locally. Till today, those with BLA and MLA degrees were obtained then from Canada, USA, Britain, Australia or Germany. Same can be said of citizens from the former French colonies of Cote de’ Voire, Togo, Benin, Senegal and also of the Arab African countries.

The fees for the five years Bachelor of landscape Architecture (BLA) degree were discriminatory against foreign students, therefore prohibitive and not affordable. This means only few aspiring students will have access to landscape architecture education. This definitely is a limiting factor. Up to date, the total number of landscape architecture who are Nigerian is not more than thirty. We shall see the negative effect of this number shortly.

Whereas professions such as accountancy and law were obtainable by correspondence and open studies access, this is impossible in the environmental professions such as engineering, architecture- landscape inclusive, town planning and surveying.

Non-production of landscape architects in equal proportion to other environmental professions means small voice and hence non-inclusion of landscape matters in policy making.

My people would sum up that in ‘Oo si nibe, o ni won ti pin’ meaning you cannot question the rational for sharing the commonwealth if you were absent at the sharing time. This is still affecting the practice of landscape architecture to this day. This is a direct assault by poverty on education and practice. There are indirect assaults.

Political instability.

This engenders policy summersaults. Brilliant policies have suffered at the hands of policy executioners who always want to do something new irrespective of how it is going to impact on on-going or existing policies. A good example is the issue of housing and environment in Nigeria that have been variously warehoused in ministries of housing, works and housing and urban development.

As the parasatal changes motherhood, so also does the policy shift, no matter at what level of execution the policy is. Environmental professionals are ignored to satisfy political exigencies. Within fifteen years, federal environmental protection agency in Nigeria changed base three times. From being a division in ministry of works, to being an autonomous body as FEPA, to being swallowed by a new creation – Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development with all its bureaucracies. In October 2007, a new body emerged again from the same ministry called Environmental Protection Commission.

Urban design, town and country planning and architectural professionals are usually the first victim of these shifts. Guiding laws which the environmental professionals rely upon are changed at will. Many at times, environmental professional are pitched against the public in trying to conform to development control regulations which the public judge as anti-people. Members of the public see the measures as punitive and vent their anger on the Environmental Professionals by (1) not patronizing them on issues of urban concern (2) deviant behaviour
by ‘powerful’ politicians, e. g. building without recourse to professional technical inputs. A more damaging effect on urban design is when politicians completely disregard plans and design, be it master plan or urban designs of particular elements in urban areas. This was how the master plan of Abuja—Nigeria’s now Federal Capital City—was destroyed. Thank God it took another political will to embark on the restoration of the master plan. Professionalism cannot thrive under the situation described earlier. Policies are not allowed to be chewed, digested and assimilated before new ones are grafted on them. The consequence is negative environmental development. Collapsed buildings due to involvement of cheap but deadly quacks whom the staccato environmental policies allow to practice as professionals abound. Mountains of garbage are a daily occurrence on many of our internal roads and highways. Shifting policies are responsible for some of the situation. ‘Planners are denied the opportunity to test out the various plan concepts’. This writer is a victim of several of such denials. This explains why landscape planning is a rarity in most of our urban plans.

### Poverty of Access and Urban Planning and Design.

Environment professionals—surveyors, planners, architect, engineers rely on effective demand that the citizens make for survival. In a country where there is prevalent poverty of access, less patronage will be experienced by the professionals. Clientele is limited in supply making it difficult for professionalism to blossom.

The UN publication on Urban Poverty captures the essence of the writers thought on lack of access by the majority of city dwellers who are supposed to be the clients of environmental professionals. “Because there is often no security of tenure in illegal settlements and the fear of imminent eviction exists, the poor do not invest in the improving either their housing or settlements. Similarly, the children of the poor are unable to access good education.”

Again we have seen how poverty impacts on development and growth of Landscape/Urban Planning and Design in Africa.

### Urban Planning and Generation of Poverty.

One area of special concern to this writer is the uncensored or wholesale adoption of Urban Planning Standards developed in other lands without recourse to African culture, climate and economy of most African Countries. Our little experience in Abuja, the new Federal Capital City shows that the disregard of culture, climate and economy has wiped out the informal sector of the city’s economy creating more jobless people, making the erstwhile active streets sterile and engendering armed attacks from the displaced street persons. Traditional African settlements are boisterous in character, active in form with a sense of community, security and order. Blind adherence to standards has robbed many of our cities and towns this essence of human co-habitation. As one of the solutions to arrest alienation of the people and further distortion of Abuja Master Plan, McNulty advocated reinforcement of ‘traditional ties of social, cultural, occupational and administrative groupings in evolving a sense of community which can contribute to residential satisfaction.’

### Culture.

By nature, Africans are an open space people. This is shown in the way streets are organized, how markets are located. Streets form parts of African market, be it on the high way or in the city. Non-recognition of this in our city planning has led to a disaster in places-pitching the people against Development Control Authorities. This writer believes that cultural peculiarities should not be sacrificed in building African new towns and settlements. The constant battle between Development Control Authorities will be minimized if we make provision for open air or street side market in our urban design consideration. Much as we have tried in Abuja to rid the streets of vendors, we have not succeeded in getting the maximum cooperation of those concerned because it is a matter of survival. Witness the Friday market around the central Mosque which is patronized by marketers from as far field as Chad and Niger. It is an un-authorized market, but it is a successful market because it is acceptable to the people because it approximates their cultural practices. ‘It suffices to say here that, because the way formal markets are regulated and structured, the poor are unable to afford the choices offered to them in these markets. In contrast, the informal and illegal markets of slums and squatters are specifically geared to meet their needs’.

To avoid this unpleasant situation calls for ingenuity on the party of urban planners. One definite way out is to provide for the informal sector of the economy in the urban design by recognizing such cherished cultural practices like informal markets.

### Climate.

Africa is blessed with good climate with most cities enjoying good weather on daily basis for at least nine months of the year. Why lock up such a people? The lack of introspection on our parts as urban designers makes us
ignore this God given attribute. The design of our urban centers should admit of opportunities for socialization, commerce and leisure at the same time. Its makes more sense to have covered malls in temperate countries where snow and cold make outside marketing almost impossible. It does not make any sense to this writer to import that concept wholesale to Nigeria at least. While providing the super malls for the urban mandarins, the real people should not be denied opportunity to enjoy urban spaces simply because we want to be like America or Britain in Nigeria. Let us build lateral opened markets where vehicular traffic will be banned as part of urban development. One may want to ask why are the summer months in America, Canada, and indeed any of the temperate countries filled with side walk sales, farmers market, garage sale, backyard bar-be-que etc? The answer is simply because of the clement, weather. Why will urban design standards deny Africans of the same thing? Urban designers should please ponder on this.

Economy.

Let us please recall that the urban poor have no access to wherewithal of active competition in the economy of their cities. Poverty of money, Poverty of access made sure monthly cost of renting spaces and shops in the malls are way, out the reach of the urban poor. This locks them in a vicious cycle, no money, therefore no access to land and shops, no participation in daily commercial activities, therefore no money. Hunger is assured. Ill heath guaranteed. Early demise assured. Under such a situation, spatial organization and aesthetics and those who advocate them are a luxury the urban poor can ill afford. In fact such concepts and their purveyors are an irritant.

Landscape Practice as an informal solution to deforestation in Africa.

Deforestation is a serious problem all over Africa. Let us look at the causes:

- Overgrazing
- Demand for fell wood.
- Inadequate rainfall in places
- Oil pollution.
- Clearing for food-subsistence farming
- Over population(Stock and Rochen)
- Logging is the major cause of global deforestation
- Policy Head-On-Collision

The intention here is not to discuss deforestation in details but to see how the practice of Landscape Architecture can help prevent environmental disaster in Africa. Our experience as a watcher of our society is that programmes aimed at stemming deforestation tide are too formal, too, rigid, too ambitious, unsustainable prone to corruption and therefore wasteful.

In my country Nigeria, it has become a yearly ritual for government to lay out a large sum of money for tree campaign on a particular day of the year. Government officials come out to do the ceremonial planting and therefore revert to their comfortable offices. No questions are asked as to the survival of the program. In fact, the money so disbursed is seeing in some quarters as shares ‘from the national cake’. Relevant groups are sometimes ignored. The consequence is grave. Witness the desert encroachment, urban blights, air pollution and large scale erosion. The approach of landscape architecture (i.e. stewardship of the land which incorporates landscape planning of an entire region and small and intimate landscape design to small and intimate landscape design) should be employed.

The approach is persuasive, appealing and acceptable by the people. We recall here that the colonial Government started by copious planting of their immediate environments which the natives imbibed as a status symbol. The meaning then was that elites were associated with such practices. An attempt to want to belong to, made the practice of tree planting around ones immediate environment spread like wild fire. When finally, the forest reserves came on board, the natives who already appreciated trees around them had no quarrels with helping to establish and maintain the forest reserve laid on approach to towns and villages.

Let all highways in addition to the roads within the cities and towns be planted. Let us have landscape architects attached to every local government area (countries, councils) to institute landscape planning’s in these areas. Nigeria has 774 local government areas or councils. This writer is convinced that by the time local people are exposed to why trees matter both in the towns, villages and in the larger area of the council’s domain, they will imbibe forestation culture in the region and landscaping in the towns.
Aggressive campaigns, such as is being done for AIDS/HIV and malaria should be embarked upon on deforestation. As HIV/AIDS is being supported by supply of anti-retroviral drugs, deforestation must be supplied with alternative energy for cooking in the areas prone to deforestation. In the regions where erosion devastated the land, landscape planning can stop the problem.

Mr. Nwasomba, a landscape architect worked for East Central State of Nigeria in the Open Space Commission where he identified a vast land being devastated by erosion. He zoned the area for plantation. He ingeniously asked the government to plant cashew trees over the entire area. The villagers knowing full well that they will harvest the cashew fruits and nuts not only to protect the government plantation but also added their own lands to the projects. This is the only area in that State that the incidence of erosion has been drastically reduced if not completely eradicate. This is an approach that worked. This is landscape architectural approach that is being canvassed here. This approach is only possible on a larger scale if more landscape architects are produced in Africa for Africa.

There are other areas where landscape architects and civil engineers can collaborate for the good of our environment in Africa. The low number of landscape architects on the continent now muffles the voice to challenge and proffer a more efficient solution to some environmental problems. The 'city beautiful' approach is being gradually accepted by some people in authority in Nigeria now. This should be sustained by making the relevant professional landscape architects available in large number to pursue the concept. Hitherto, the request for aesthetic appearance is generally considered superfluous by government agencies, now that we have an in-road, let us keep it.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The paper has looked at the practice of landscape architecture in Africa. It has been revealed that the type of education provided at the initial stages of development in Africa was largely responsible for the low number of landscape architects in the continent. The negative impact of the low number of these vital shapers of the built form was highlighted. Not only was the physical environment debased, poverty is also being generated by unqualified adherence to standards that do not consider design factors such as culture, climate and economy of the people. The practice of landscape architecture that permeates the entire areas of Africa has been identified as a panacea to both physical and economic threats. Urban planners and designers have a duty to use the architecture of open space to prevent urban poverty. The Fish Gardens in Abuja, the Federal Capital of Nigeria is an experiment that may bail out many an urban poor.

The vital role IFLA should play in assisting African Countries to provide landscape education for their citizens has been pointed out. The urgency of such a role is what this paper canvasses.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN KENYA:
A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

By Benard O. Ojwang

“Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Benard O. Ojwang, a student of landscape architecture at JKUAT, Kenya. I was invited to attend the IFLA conference in Dubai together with you early this year but could not make it due to violence in Kenya at the time. I hope Mr. Kariuki relayed my apologies. I was adversely affected by the violence and had to spend months in displacement camps.”

Kenya- not a very different case from other African countries

Probably among the most beautiful natural landscapes in Africa are found in Kenya. These range from beautiful mountains, the magnificent rift valley, rich wildlife, expansive beaches, mythical creeks just to mention a few. Our landscape has gone through tremendous changes from pre-colonial times to post-colonial times. During pre-colonial times, landscapes were revered. Though traditionally Africans never designed the landscapes and outdoor spaces, our forefathers mastered the art of co-existing with nature. No massive destruction of the environment was witnessed as is the case today.

Colonial times also never witnessed such massive destruction of the environment. The white man came and settled in the Kenyan highlands, later called the white highlands, and cleared vegetation for farming and settlement. Though this impacted on the landscape, it is important to note that the colonialist had knowledge of landscape and environmental conservation. Agricultural land was carefully managed and green forested strips left in between crop fields. It is also important to note that some of the designed landscapes and green spaces in Kenya today originated from colonial times.

Post-colonial Kenya has seen the worst degradation of the environment. Though we might share a lot in common with many African states with regard to our perception of space, the present day Kenya is poignantly ignorant of the environment and importance of open spaces. Post-independent Kenya has seen massive destruction of forests, poor farming activities causing soil erosion leading to siltation of water channels and dams, careless dumping of solid wastes, channelling of industrial effluent into rivers endangering aquatic biodiversity and the eruption of satellite estates/slums with no regard to city planning and zoning regulations.

The countryside is not spared either. A major population of Kenya depends on wood as a source of energy. The countryside has thus witnessed merciless clearance of forests for firewood or charcoal, farming or settlement due to expanding populations. The resulting implications are more devastating than terrorists attack. There is increased desertification causing biting droughts and famine as witnessed in 2005 where lots of lives and livestock were lost. Today we experience scanty, sporadic and unreliable rainfall causing folds in some parts of the country, destroying property and lives. Water volumes in major rivers of Kenya have gone down leading to power and water rationing in most urban centers. Some rivers have since dried or become seasonal.

The effects on the urban landscape are worse. It is disheartening to see how people dispose solid wastes carelessly. Polythene paper bags posses great hazard to health and are an eyesore. They block sewage lines, swales and water channels for storm water. Domestic refuse carelessly dumped into the environment emit poisonous gases upon rotting and produce awful smells. Such is the experience at Dandora dump site in Nairobi and Kibarani in Mombasa. Seepage from these dump sites find their way into the nearby water bodies killing aquatic life and harming human health. For instance, seepage from Kibarani finds its way into the Indian Ocean. This has led to killing of the once thriving mangrove forest at Makupa Creek and solid wastes have led to recession of our once expansive beaches. Seepage from Dandora finds its way into the Nairobi River which is relied upon for domestic use in the lower courses. Human health is at stake here.

Water channels and bodies in Kenya are not left out. Most industries channel their raw waste into rivers. This kills aquatic biodiversity, harm health and kill wildlife. Solid wastes cause siltation and floods due to raised river beds and blockages. I have personally witnessed a case of death of fish in River Nyando as a result of effluent discharge from Muhoroni and Chemelil Sugar factories.

What is the state of Urban Landscape Architecture in Kenya? (my view as a student)

As a young Kenyan adult and a student of landscape architecture in Kenya, my interest in urban landscape has enabled me to visit almost all major towns in the country. Kenya like most African countries has no regard to green spaces. In almost all the major towns, urban developments have none or very little regard to landscape
architecture. City councils lack policies and structures to oversee the creation and development of urban green spaces. The once open spaces in urban centers are speedy fading with the remaining ones facing extinction through grabbing and careless dumping of solid wastes. For instance, Nairobi city council recently embarked on extensive paving of the city’s open spaces leading to demise of green spaces that could otherwise be planted by lawns, ground covers, shrubs shading trees and street furniture. Many spontaneous satellite estates are developed with no provision for outdoor space. Kenya is a capitalistic economy that seems to believe that the landscape is there to be covered by buildings and roads. The result are slum dwellings and ugly unpainted buildings with sub-standard or not infrastructure/services and lacking green spaces like neighborhood parks for recreation and relaxation.

Most towns are now embracing what they call “tree planting and beautification programmes”. This is a good initiative but when looked at keenly, it is bound to collapse. The project lacks clear objectives and proper planning. It is narrow and concentrates only in planting of trees in towns. These town councils lack landscape professionals to guide them in execution of these important projects. Nairobi city council for instance has seven slots for landscape architects but these positions are currently held by people who are not landscape professionals. Many town councils have no slots for landscape architects. There are no scenic roads and streets are barren of furniture and characterized by strong winds and dust.

This is where landscape architects come in. However, architects and engineers have little understanding what we do. Landscape architects have been reduced to gardeners with little opportunity for involvement in the building project from concept stages. The same view is held by all the stakeholders in the building industry.

**Is there hope for the Kenyan landscape?**

I believe yes. As a student of landscape architecture in the country, I believe the introduction of this programme in Kenya was timely. As students, most of us have had to endure to pursue this course, while many have changed to other courses. However, I believe we are the angels sent by god to come and save Kenyan and African landscapes from the devastating impact of man and forces of nature. Through we have a long way to go and hurdles to jump; I can see light at the end of the tunnel. I must appreciate the efforts by IFLA, our Department, Mr. Robert Kariuki (IFLA Kenyan delegate), alumni and fellow student colleagues.

**What have we done so far?**

As students, our commitment to the success of the profession has borne fruits. As student leader and with the help of the Department of Landscape Architect at JKUAT, we have managed to convince the university to initiate and involve students in the “Campus Landscape Beautification Project”. This is a project where students will be given spaces within the campus where they will be expected to design, implement and maintain their landscapes. The university will provide all the materials and provide students with a small sum which will go to our student organization to support the development of the project. This will be a design-build project for students and a test of functionality of student designs.

We have had several environmental clean ups in the surrounding Juja town as part of a process of giving back to the community and sensitizing the general public on the role of landscape architects. We have plans to extend this to the many slums in Nairobi. Already we have met a delegation of slum dwellers from Kibera and we are planning a clean up as soon as we resume in August.

As student leader, I am currently pursuing the means by which our students will voluntarily participate in the recently announced revitalization of Nairobi River. We intend to invite the media to cover our activities and publish as a means of increasing awareness in the community.

Another notable achievement is the establishment of a Department model-making shop. We intend to create a portfolio of student work that will include models and drawings of our best work. We are planning an internal exhibition and our work has already been exhibited at the annual Agricultural Society of Kenya show in Nyer, Nairobi and Mombasa. This will be extended to other locations in the coming year.

We are also requesting more substantial support from the Architectural Association of Kenya and the Chapter of Landscape Architects.

**What is the way forward?** (Recommendations)

1. There is a need to facilitate students and lecture exchange programmes with other countries in Africa and with western countries which offer landscape architecture.
2. Intensive creation of awareness of the profession among people, government and the private sector.
3. Embrace the latest technology in design (example GIS).
5. Extensive green industry policy that focuses on the importance of open space and the role of landscape architects in society.
6. Creation of structures to ensure establishment and sustainability of the profession.
7. Promote the potential role of landscape architects in the development of projects with allied professions to improve their understanding of the profession.

Conclusion

It has been my passion for the environment that drove me into pursuing landscape architecture. We must stand up for the environment in our work and by pulling together. We have a purpose, a task and a vocation which is to ensure that the generations of tomorrow will benefit. Kenyan and most African landscapes are devoid of clear history and faces a potentially bleak future. It is our role as landscape architects to construct a better future for our country.

I believe we can make a difference.

(This is an edited summary of Benard's speech that he was unable to deliver in person.)
### Appendix B

#### Listing of Participants

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