

# The Nexus Between Urban Plan Implementation and Governance Culture of Ethiopia: The Cases of Dilla and Werabie Towns, Southern Region

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## Abstract

The ultimate goal of urban planning and implementation is to ensure the improvement in the lives of urban society and the growth of the city, which in turn demands different attributes of good governance. Successful implementation of the urban plans requires strong political will, transparent legal framework, sound and flexible urban planning as well as finance. The research is conducted based on the practical experiences of two urban centers. Descriptive approach is followed as the research designing and Digital data collection is employed for capturing spatial data of land uses. Focused Group Discussions were thoroughly deliberated. Document review was cautiously performed in the perspective of the plan implementation. The findings of the critical analysis elicited there is strong nexus between the level of plan implementation and governance conception. To enjoy from the benefits of urbanization, inclusive planning, effective management, good governance and institutional setup are must.

**Keywords:** governance, land use, plan implementation, Plan Violation, urban planning

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## 1. Introduction

It is unbelievable to think of sustainable urban development without planning practice since urban plan guides the overall developmental endeavor of urban dimension. Sustainability of urbanization requires planned development of urban centers, competent institutional frameworks in place and proactive management and governance strategies (Dube, 2013).

Cities are expanding in endless peripheries, residential densities are reducing and public spaces are diminishing. This is a direct consequence of poor implementation of urban planning and design (Un-Habitat, fundamentals of planned urbanization, 2017). The effectiveness of any plan should be assessed by its outcome. Findings from various studies have indicated that many organizations slowly embraced strategic planning but the implementation of the same remains a challenge, resulting a well-formulated plan that fail at the implementation stage (Rotich, 2017). Whatever the planning approach, successful implementation of the urban plans always requires strong political will, transparent legal framework, sound and flexible urban planning as well as finance (Un-Habitat, International Guideline on Urban and territorial planning, 2015). Plan implementation mainly focused on assessing the extent to which implemented as intended. It generally involves identifying the initial plan outcome as the implementation process evolves (Guyadeen, 2017). While evaluating the implementation process, considerations should be paid from plan inception including technology available, management options and financing resources may improve the fit between plan and execution (Un-Habitat, Urban planning for city leaders, 2014).

Therefore, urban plan implementation is a function of governance since it requires strong government, involvement of public and private organization. Urban planning is a framework that helps leaders transforms a vision in to reality. Plans enable urban centers to pursue their vision and develop them in an orderly manner. The benefit of urban planning can be only realized upon implementation of the plans (Kitur, 2019). Urban planning can only achieve as much as the support it has from public investment, private investors, compliance by residence and developers (Un-Habitat, Urban planning for city leaders, 2014). This in turn requires strong local governance for coordinating the overall activities.

Urban governance describes the various platforms for dialogue and decision making, as well as processes for implementation (Taipale, 2012). It is the process by which government (local, regional and national) and stakeholders collectively decide how to plan, finance and manage urban areas (Avis, 2016). Competent and accountable urban governance is a key factor in the potential contribution of cities to overall development (organizatio, 1999). Well-formulated, well-executed city development schemes can bring a number of benefits such as provision of employment and supply of infrastructure and services (UN-Habitat, The state of Asian Cities, 2011).

Urban challenges are the results of weak governance and inability of the plan to be practiced. City governance and planning initiative failures can exacerbate urban problem. Institutional frameworks, coordinated or uncoordinated, for effective urban and regional plan are highly constrained, making it almost impossible to

control urban development and management of urban areas (Wapwera, 2015). City governments therefore must make informed decisions about their infrastructure investment based on up-to-date data sources (Bank, URBAN SUSTAINABILITY, 2017). Capacity building for city managers, leaders and other actors ensures the transfer of knowledge and facilities for implementation of urban plan (UN-Habitat, Urban Planning for growing cities, 2014).

To put in a nutshell, urban plan implementation demands strong, well organized and context based governance system. Despite its crucial role, less attention has paid to plan implementation. Moreover, the research works so far linked the effectiveness of a plan with the spatial dimension (quality of urban plan) with little attention paid to the contribution of political commitment and governance system. This research contributes to the knowledge regarding the relationship between governance system and urban planning practice.

## **2. Essentials of local governance affecting plan implementation**

The ultimate goal of urban planning in general and plan implementation to the specific is to ensure the improvement in the lives of urban society and the growth of the city, which in turn demands different attributes of good governance. This implies good planning practice and strong local governance ensure sustainable urban development.

Sustainable cities stem not just from physical assets, but also from sound legal and institutional framework (Un-Habitat, World cities report, 2020). Regulatory framework comprises a complex and a wide range of laws including local government laws, ordinances, legislations and regulations related to town planning building and land (Franz Vanderschueren, 1996).

Municipal capacity is significantly influence urban governance. Expanding the capacity to plan, finance and manage urban growth is the fundamental component of effective urban governance. Each tier of the government needs sufficient capacity to ensure that physical and socio-economic planning process are well-coordinated, legally enforced, inclusive and cross-sectoral. However, many municipalities lack the skills, capacity and resources to meet the obligations (Avis, 2016)

Municipal finance is about the revenue and expenditure decisions of municipal governments. It includes ways of financing infrastructure through the use of operating revenues and borrowing as well as charges on developers and public-private partnerships. It covers the source of revenue that is used by municipal government such as property tax and income tax (UN-HABITAT, 2009).

Technical instrument (surveying equipment) is also vital for plan implementation since the level of plan quality is evaluated with such surveying tools. The availability of planning tools from assessment the detailed design is crucial for success (UN-Habitat, Urban Planning for growing cities, 2014).

Monitoring and evaluation system is a powerful management tool in urban planning practice in terms of achieving related goals, improving the quality of life, enhancing sustainability and having an effect on decision making (KOBAYASHI, 2018). An evaluation needs to be well linked to both planning and budgeting to meaningful. It allows the plan to be responsive since it allows for decision to be made about plans if an evaluation suggests expanding or resigning them. (Un-Habitat, Urban planning for city leaders, 2014).

## **3. Research Methods**

Descriptive approach is followed as the main designing of the research and Digital data collection is employed as a main method for capturing spatial data of land uses. Focused Group Discussions (FGD) were thoroughly discussed with help of semi-structured interviews. Document review was cautiously performed in the perspective of the plan implementation. Assessment of plan implementation of the two urban centers was conducted for two months (one month for each town). For both towns, the plan evaluation activities were undertaken by the year 2021 G.C.

Global positioning system (GPS) is used for spatial data(X and Y coordinates) acquisition. The spatial data of randomly selected places were gathered. After collecting data, it was organized and compiled systematically for analysis. To this effect the complexity of data will be reduced or condensed by organizing, classifying, editing, encoding, and data cleaning. Geographical Information System (GIS) and AutoCAD were chosen as vital tool for depicting the spatial configuration of different land use categories spatial data analysis. Tables, maps, graphs and pie charts were used for presenting the final output of urban planning or designing.

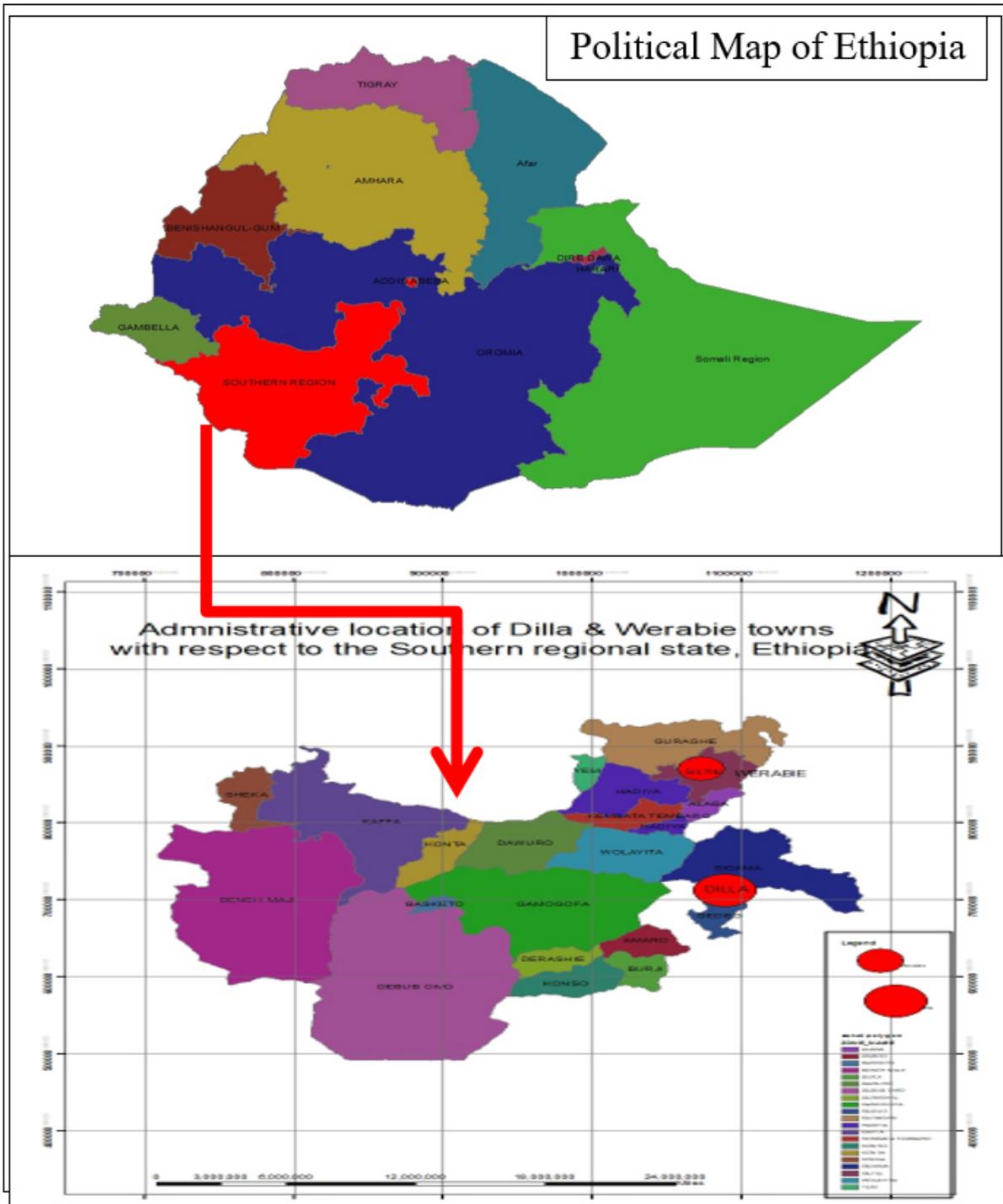
## **4. Description of the study areas**

Southern Nations, Nationalities and people's regional state is one of the ten provinces (regions) in Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It has structured in to 15 zones, 4 special weredas and 134 werdas and 3,652 kebeles. Hawassa is administrative capital of the region. It is situated along the international road that connects Addis Ababa with Nairobi at a distance of 275 kilometers south of Addis Ababa.

Southern Nations, Nationalities and people's regional state is located on the geographical co-ordinates of 04° 43' - 08° 58' North latitude and 34° 88' - 39° 14' East longitudes. The region has the total area of 110,931.90

square kilometers and experiences the mean annual temperature of 7.5<sup>0</sup>c up to greater than 27<sup>0</sup> c. The region Receives mean annual rainfall ranging from 400mm to 2200mm. Southern Nations, Nationalities and people’s regional state is established on a an altitude of below 500 meters above sea level to above 3500 meters above sea level.

Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State has the low level of Urbanization of which is below of the national average (25%) but the region has among the highest rate of Urbanization (more than 4.8%).



Source: Personal GIS Analysis

### 5. Plan implementation experiences of urban centers

The practical experiences of urban centers in the perspective of plan implementation are dealt in detail in this section. Both cities are randomly selected in Southern Nations, Nationalities and people’s regional state. The

urban plan of Dilla town is prepared by consultant whereas the plan making process of Werabie town is undertaken by government institution. Before launching the actual evaluation activity, the quality of plans were crosschecked by Differential Global positioning system(GPS) and the survey result confirmed that there is no accuracy problem for the two cities. Therefore, the detailed examination of the actual implementation of urban plan, best practices and the challenges are presented in the following sections

*5.1. 1. Background of the study area*

Dilla city is the capital of Gedeo zone. It is situated at a distance of 90 kilometers and 360 kilometers south of the Hawassa regional capital and Addis Ababa(national capital) respectively. The city is located on the geographical co-ordinates of about 06<sup>o</sup> 04' North latitude and 38<sup>o</sup> 10' East longitudes. The city is established on relatively flat plain areas with an average elevation of about 1,600 meters above sea level .The city is situated within the Rift Valley. The city experiences ‘subtropical’ climate with the annual mean temperature and rainfall 20<sup>o</sup>c & 1215 mm respectively.

The city has the total area of 2140 hectares and out of which 1302 hectares covers the built up area while 963 hectares accounts the expansion area. The city is practicing the structure plan prepared by 2013 Gregorian calendar. The citywide structure plan is the framework plan and has the lifespan of 10 years and currently 2 years is left for expiry. Along with structure plan, the city has land grade plan, building regulation plan and neighborhood development plan on the selected area.

*5.1.2. Implementation of structure plan*

The 10 years land use proposal includes the built up areas since the establishment of the city and thus the developed land comprises those establishments built prior and subsequent to the 10 years plan.

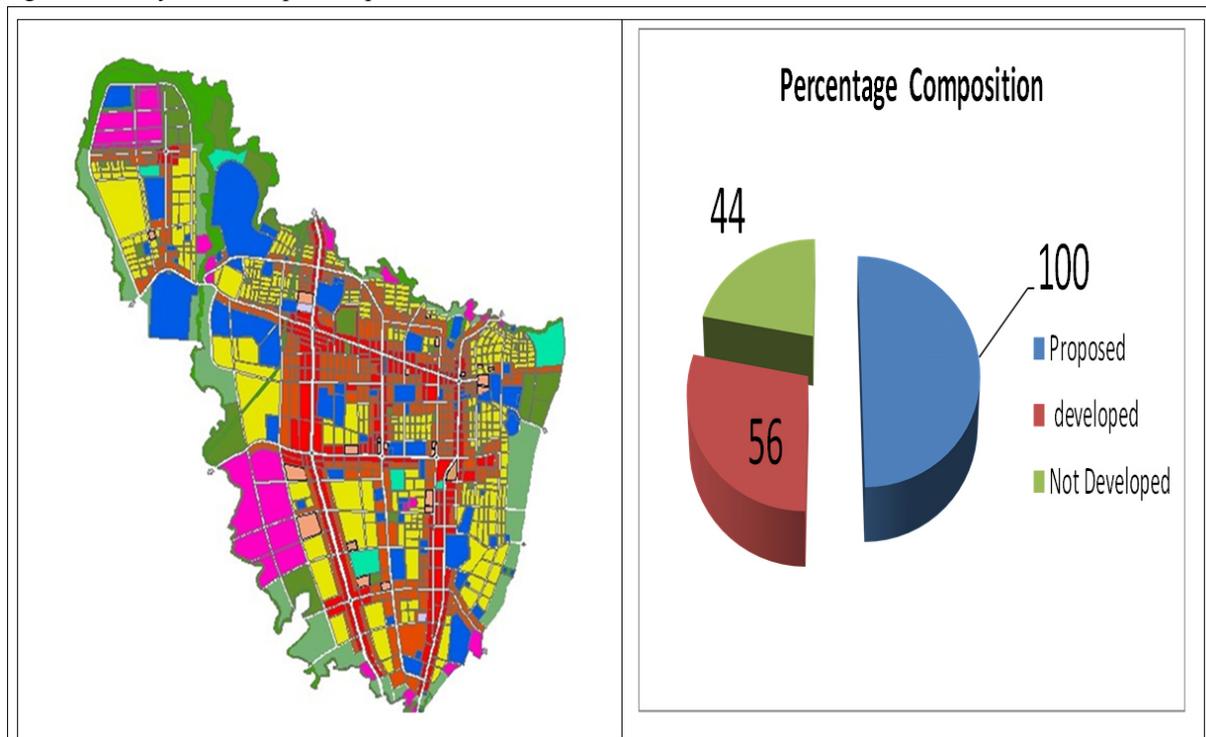
As it is depicted in the table below, 56 percent of the total land use is developed and 936 hectares of land still has not been implemented. Further analysis of the planning practice indicates the existence of disparities among land use categories. Accordingly, 13 percent of Social service, 31 percent of residential functions, 31 percent of Road and transport, 35 percent of Administrative functions, 35 percent of Trade and Business , 68 percent of Urban Agriculture, 85 percent of Recreation and formal green and 91 percent of Manufacturing and storage are the un developed land. The implementation data depicts land use functions such as Social service, residential and land use for Road and transport are found in a better position in terms of practicing the plan. On the other hand, out of the proposed land use for Manufacturing and storage as well as Recreation and formal green, very small portion is implemented.

Table.1. Dilla city Land use plan implementation data

S/N	Land use functions (Hectares)	Proposed(Hectares)	Developed(Hectares)	Undeveloped(Hectares)
1	Residential	670.1	460.5	209.6
2	Administrative	27	17.5	9.5
3	Trade and Business	188.4	121.2	67.7
4	Social service	275.4	240.3	35.1
5	Manufacturing and storage	151	13.2	137.8
6	Road and transport	366.4	254.55	111.85
7	Recreation and formal green	261	38.9	222.1
8	Urban Agriculture	161.4	51.4	209.6
9	Miscellaneous	39.3	5.6	9.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2140</b>	<b>1203.15</b>	<b>936.85</b>

Source: (Municipality D. , 2020)

F.g.2. Dilla city Structure plan Implementation status



Source: Personal GIS Analysis

#### 5.1.3. Level of coordination among sectors

Within municipality there are institutions responsible for implementation of the city wide plan such as land development and management office, construction, urban sanitation and beautification, urban plan and infrastructure provision offices. The existing realities dictate that during implementation of the structure plan, there is a weak link among institutions. For instance plan violations were observed while translating the plan in to the ground and such land abuses were common in the process of opening new road. There is no clear and equal understanding among institutions about how much land is implemented, the growth direction of the city, infill areas and the phases of planning. Due to a missing link, open spaces, recreational areas and other land uses were not properly implemented.

#### 5.1.4. Institutional capacity for plan making and implementation

There is urban planning and implementation regulation enacted at country and regional level and these documents are supposed to dispatch to municipalities and are the basis that guide for local plan making as well as implementing the structure plan. The urban plan office practices the plan without such proclamation and manuals (regulations). Moreover, shortage of skilled manpower and lack of high level technical equipment for implementing the plan, were the challenges of the municipality. Within 8 years only two neighborhoods development plan were prepared by the municipality, which very small as compared to the whole city. The Plan monitoring and evaluation activities were rarely conducted. Similarly, horizontal and vertical relationship among institutions responsible for both plan making and practicing were found feeble.

#### 5.1.5. Turnover of Officials

The major bottleneck of the city development in general and the plan implementation was the prevalence of high rates of turnover of city governments and municipality managers. Due to short life span of the appointed officials, intermingled challenges were realized during the focused group discussion. In adequate finance for developmental projects, coordination problems and in adequate monitoring and evaluation were the adverse effects of local administrative failure.

#### 5.1.6. Plan Violation

The field observation and the spatial data acquisition and verification on selected areas of the city reveal the existence of breach of the structure plan. For instance the opening of new roads in the expansion areas confirms the deviation from the city wide plan. Besides, the neighborhoods development plan (detail plan) faced challenges of compatibility and consistence with the structure plan. Such kind of plan violation is usually linked with the skill of manpower and the accuracy level of the surveying equipment.

#### 5.2.1. Background of the study area

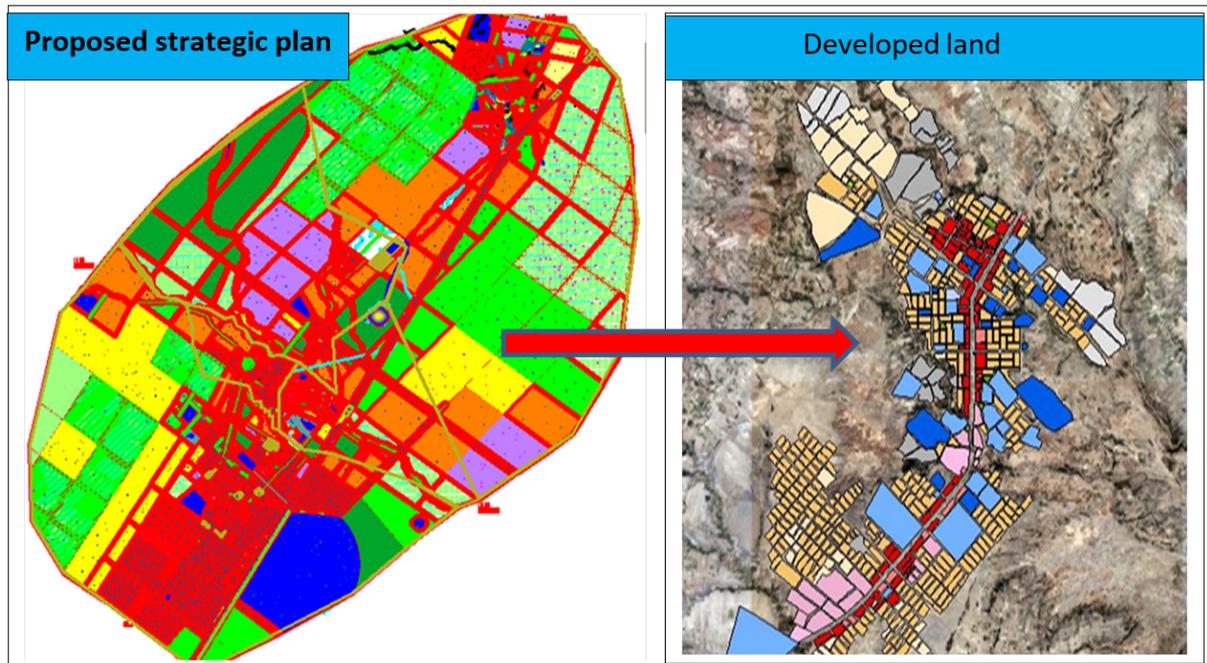
Werabie town is the capital of Siltei zone of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region. It is situated at

a distance of 170 kilometers south of Addis Ababa (National capital). The town is located on the geographical co-ordinates ranges from 07° 48' -07° 55' North latitude and 38° 08' -38° 13' East longitudes. The city is established on relatively flat plain areas with an average elevation of about 1,600 meters above sea level .The city is situated within the Rift Valley. Werabie town has the annual mean temperature and rainfall 18.4 °c & 2633 millimeters respectively.

Werabie is among the recently established but rapidly growing towns of the country. As an urban center, it was established by year 2004 Gregorian Calendar .

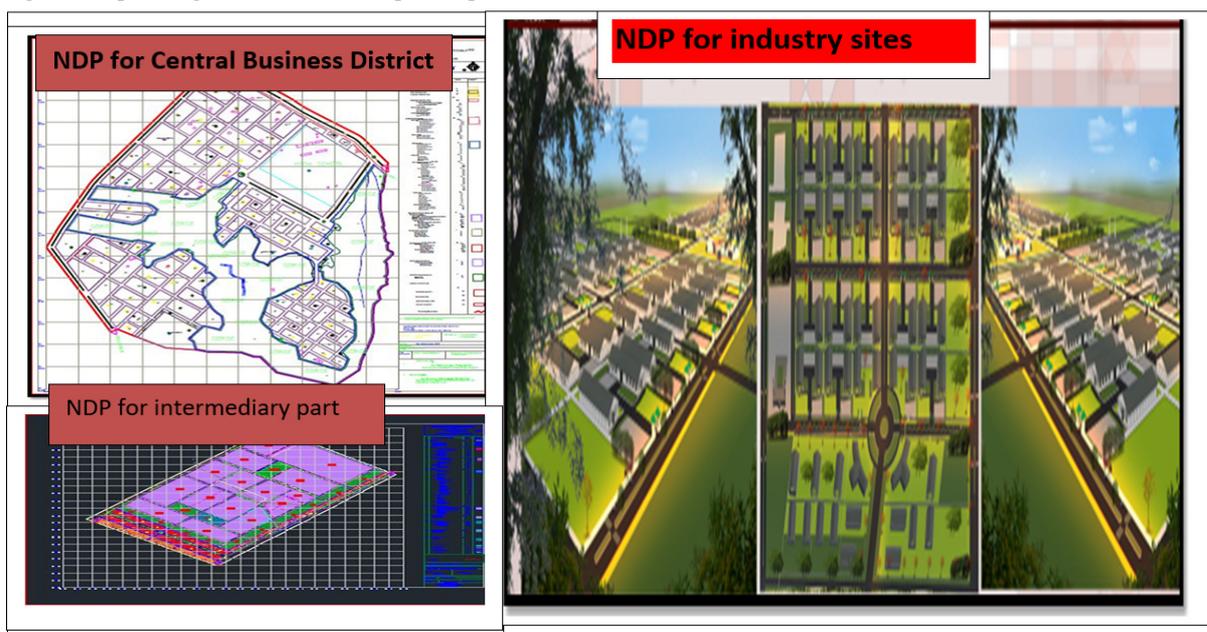
Regarding the planning history, the overall development of town has been guided by plan since the establishment as an urban center. The town is employing the strategic plan (similar with structure plan but more detail plan) prepared by 2015 Gregorian calendar. In order to help implement the strategic plan, the municipality has made 14 neighborhoods development plan (NDP).

Fig.3. Strategic Plan of Werabei Town



Source: Personal GIS Analysis

Fig.4 .Sample neighborhoods development plan



Source: Source: Personal GIS Analysis

Table 2.Land use plan implementation data

S/N	Land use functions (Hectares)	Proposed(Hectares)	Developed(Hectares)	Undeveloped(Hectares)
1	Residential	1887.96	247.02	1640.94
2	Trade and Business	629.328	108.1	521.228
3	Administrative	314.66	23.05	291.61
4	Social service	1321.571	266.782	1054.789
5	Manufacturing and storage	692.252	60.32	631.932
6	Recreation and informal green	1447.39	39.70	1407.69
7	Road and transport	1887.96	488.11	1399.85
8	Miscellaneous	3171.773	237.883	2933.89
9	Urban Agriculture	2718.66	20.76	2697.9
10	Forest and formal green	1661.405	167.89	1493.515
	Total land use	<b>15733.00</b>	<b>1659.615</b>	<b>14073.344</b>

Source: (Municipality W. , 2020)

For the last four years, the municipality developed 23 hectares of land for residential purpose, 18 for trade, 6 for manufacture and 2 hectares for urban agriculture. The planning practice reveals the developments of projects are compatible with both the strategic plan and neighborhoods development plan.

#### 5.2.2. Public involvement in plan implementation

The physical observations of the city as well as the focused group discussion confirm the active participation of the local community in planning practice. The society is well informed about the city wide plan since the draft plan has been made publicized before ratification by the city council. The community plays vital role in minimizing the informal settlement by establishing community level organization for protecting the open spaces, green areas and other land uses and if they faced strange developer, they will report to the concerned officials and by doing so, they played significant role in ensuring the relative peace and security over their town.

#### 5.2.3. The role of local government

The local government played irreplaceable role for the harnessing the growth of the town. The basic characteristics of governance culture in the stated urban center are the prevalence of officials that are responsive, accountable and commitment to work together with the society. They invite the local community for every developmental project and the society has the chance to sort out and prioritize their challenges as well as contribute their share in terms of money or other forms of support for the accomplishment of the project.

#### 5.2.4. Institutional capacity

The urban plan office is equipped with legal frameworks such as urban policy, land development and management proclamation, urban plan proclamation, urban plan preparation and implementation regulations enacted at federal and regional level. Moreover, the office is well furnished with skilled manpower, technical equipment and machineries for implementation of the plan. Preparation of 14 neighborhoods development plan within short period of time is partly the outcome of strong institution.

#### 5.2.5. Coordination among plan implementing institutes

Plan implementing bodies like land development and management, urban plan, construction offices and others are working together in the process of selection and actualizing the development of projects. The stated offices have their own copies of the urban plan and supporting documents that are indispensable for executing the responsibilities of their respective institutions.

The plan monitoring and evaluation activity is undertaken as per schedule and based on agreed upon checklist so that it has paramount importance for correcting, revising and amending of the plan as deemed necessary. Besides, the reporting and feedback of the institution is relatively based on data base management, which in turn is the application of information communication technology.

### 6. Lesson learned from case studies

Plan implementation is a function of strong institution, financial capacity and technical skill. Technical skill can be linked with plan quality (accuracy level) of technical instrument. In this case whether or not the proposed plan contain appropriate vision that is formulated based on the urban context and the involvement of stakeholders are greatly affect plan implementation.

There is strong linkage between plan implementation and the governance culture adopted by national, regional or local government. Effective urban plan management requires strong government that leads and coordinates the development projects and passes directions. Plan implementation refers to the process of transforming the citywide plan (structure or strategic plan) and the detail plans (neighborhoods development plans) in to practice. To translate urban plans in to the ground, financial resource, institution responsible for implementing the plan, full-fledged legal framework, skilled manpower and technical and or surveying equipment are the prerequisites, which in turn are the reflections of governance system. It is paramount

important to see each of factors affecting plan implementation in detail.

### *6.1. Financial capacity*

Finance plays significant contribution for effective management of plan. It is impossible to think planning practice for a city without adequate finance. Investments like massive housing expansion, infrastructure development and social service and amenities provision for redevelopment of old areas and new area development demand huge finance. Moreover, modern technological apparatus such as high quality surveying instruments (Differential Ground Positioning System (DGPS) and Total stations) are the fundamental elements for implementation. The urban plan managing bodies such as the city administrators and municipality managers should set out the budget required for the urban development projects.

Municipal practitioners are keen to use and integrate new financial management ideas and tools to control their cost, identify new revenue source and improve local tax collection (Bank, Municipal Finance: A hand book of local government, 2014). Strengthening local public management, own source revenue generation and intergovernmental transfer as well as new and innovative borrowing mechanisms will be critical to improve urban finance (DANIEL PLATZ, 2017). Broadening of locally generated revenue sources, strengthening of financial management, growing reliance on partnerships to finance capital investments and enhancement to create access to long-term credit for municipalities (Mona Serageldin, 2008)

### *6.2. Local administrators and plan management*

The success of the city demands the powerful and committed local government. As it is indicated in the case studies, the level of commitment and the relative stability of city governments and municipality managers have much to do with the development of projects and effective translation of the plan in to the ground. The local government is the responsible body for establishment of institutions, policy formulation, resource allocation, capacity building and coordination of functional institutions responsible for applying the goal set by organizations. Such kind of integration ensures sustainable development in urban areas.

### *6.3. Ensuring enabling environment for public involvement*

The community has irreplaceable role in the perspectives of attaining the goals of plan implementation. The contribution of local community for practicing of the plan is vital and thus the local officials need to coordinate and lead the public involvement in development of projects. The participation should go beyond the mouthpiece and reach the level of partnership with the government. The implication is that those projects having significant impact to the society should first pass through involvement and get confirmation from the public before translated in to action. Besides, the public control the effective implementation of the goal and other developmental projects through elected representatives.

On the other hand, the role of planners should be shifted from implementing plan on behalf of the people to level where the community has adequate knowledge, skill and experience about the place of resident and thus planners play only a facilitating role to link planning concept with the experience of local community.

### *6.4. Monitoring and evaluation*

Monitoring and evaluation should aim at ensuring service provision and public space allotments as well as other developmental schemes are according to urban plan. The planners main duty during monitoring and evaluation is checking whether enough space for social amenities, recreation, circulation, walking and space for meditating and the like are assigned or not and the urban growth directions are according to the plan. Besides, sorting out impediments for development, plan violation as well as forward the possible feedbacks to the ground realities observed while implementing the plan. Monitoring and evaluation focuses on assessing whether the key developmental issues are put in to practice or not according to the schedule, budget and phasing of planning. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation is time specific and conducted within the lifespan of plan and usually monitoring and evaluation feedback leads to either keeping continue the plan, minor modification of the plan or revision the plan.

### *6.5. Institutions responsible for implementing the plan*

These are organizations accountable for the implementation of the plan. The duties and responsibilities of institutions are formulating plan making and implementing policies, proclamations and related regulation. The institutions have also the tasks of building the capacities by establishing appropriate organizations (decentralization) that make easy implementation of the plan, provide training for experts and supply of equipment and technical instruments. A number of governmental, non-governmental and civic organizations are also expected to work in coordination with the local institutions for effective management of the plan.

## 7. Conclusion and recommendations

There is strong relation between the level of plan implementation and governance culture. Keeping other things constant, urban dimensions experiencing strong governance culture contribute for the effective implementation of urban plan. The governance culture can be realized in terms of coordination, capacity building, expansion and exploitation of revenue, mobilization of local resources and commitment of the local governments. The realities on the ground (Case studies) confirmed that the successful implementation of urban plan, the integration of the local community, the private organization and the government are crucial for ensuring sustainable urban development. More specifically, at urban level favorable environments (platforms) need to be created for urban residents so that they will actively involve in identifying and prioritizing the local challenges and contribute their share for the actual implementation of public investment.

Apart from others, city governments (legislative, Judiciary and executive body) must work together to improve the lives of the respective urban residents. They should update their skills, knowledge and experience regarding contemporary cities' dynamic so as to ensure sustainable urban development.

To enjoy from the benefits of urbanization, inclusive planning, effective management, good governance and institutional setup are must. Besides, urban development policy and legal frameworks need to be updated based on the existing realities and the policy document need to incorporate, among others, the need and interest of vulnerable and marginalized society in plan implementation process.

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