

Assessing the Impact of Property Tax Administration on Sustainable Urban Infrastructure Development in South-East Nigeria

Chiadika Matilda Ikeotuonye¹, Raphael Oshiobugie Sado^{2*} and Tooichi Blessing Nwaikwu³

¹Department of Estate Management, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Uli

^{2*}Department of Estate Management, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

³Department of Estate Management, Federal Polytechnic, Oko

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Abstract: *Nigeria's ongoing infrastructure shortfall, declining oil revenues, and increasing debt levels have sparked renewed interest in land-based taxation as a viable source of subnational financing. In South-East Nigeria, property tax and associated land-based fees remain underutilized despite the rapid pace of urbanization and escalating infrastructure demands. This paper evaluates how the structure and management of property tax systems influence sustainable urban infrastructure development within the South-East geopolitical zone. The research employs a desk-based analytical approach, integrating statutory documents, government reports, and recent empirical research on land-based taxation, property tax management, and infrastructure financing in Nigeria and similar African contexts. Evidence from Anambra State, specifically the unsuccessful Anambra State Property and Land Use Charge (APLUC), land instrument taxation, and emerging proposals for land value capture (LVC) and green property tax, serves as a central case study for the region. The analysis indicates that inadequate tax policy design, unclear valuation methods, insufficient cadastral and ICT infrastructure, fragmented legal frameworks, and low taxpayer confidence significantly hinder property tax revenue and its role in financing urban infrastructure. (ICTD) In contrast, experiences from Lagos and other regions demonstrate that well-structured LVC-oriented property taxes, supported by effective administration and political will, can serve as a powerful mechanism for funding transportation networks, drainage systems, solid waste management, and other urban services. The paper concludes that enhancing legal and administrative frameworks; professionalizing valuation processes; digitizing property records; allocating a portion of property tax revenue for visible infrastructure initiatives; and implementing innovative tools such as green property tax and LVC can greatly improve sustainable urban infrastructure development in South-East Nigeria.*

Keywords: Property tax administration, land-based taxation, land value capture, green property tax, urban infrastructure, South-East Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure such as transport, water supply, drainage, power, waste management, schools and health facilities serves as the foundation of urban productivity and livability. In Nigeria, years of insufficient investment and inadequate maintenance have resulted in an expanding infrastructure gap that hinders growth and jeopardizes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Historically, Nigeria has depended significantly on fluctuating oil revenues and external borrowing to fund infrastructure projects. Recent shocks in oil prices, currency devaluation, and increasing debt servicing costs have severely limited the fiscal space available for capital expenditures, particularly at the state and local government levels. In this context, property tax and broader land-based taxation are being increasingly advocated as stable, locally managed revenue sources to finance urban infrastructure, aligning with international standards (Ikeotuonye and Igwe, 2023).

In South-East Nigeria (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States), rapid urbanization and densification have heightened the demand for roads, drainage systems, schools, markets, and green spaces. However, Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) remains insufficient compared to the needs, and property tax systems are frequently poorly structured and inadequately administered. Comparative studies of land use charge laws across Nigerian states reveals shortcomings in the legal frameworks of South-Eastern states, particularly concerning assessment bases, valuation cycles, and the acknowledgment of professional valuers.

Anambra State exemplifies this situation. The concept of land value capture through land-based taxation has been considered as a means to finance infrastructure, yet existing practices are still underutilized and fragmented across various instruments such as APLUC, land instrument registration taxes, probate tax, governor's consent, and stamp duty. Recent initiatives have also suggested a green property tax framework for Anambra, explicitly linking property taxation to climate resilience and sustainable urban development (Ikeotuonye, Egolum, and Sado, 2024).

This study situates South-East Nigeria within the wider literature on property tax reform, land-based finance and urban infrastructure, and examines how property tax administration shapes the region's capacity to deliver sustainable urban infrastructure.

Problem Statement

Despite the compelling theoretical argument for property tax as a robust, progressive, and growth-oriented local revenue source, the majority of Nigerian states, including those in the South-East, are collecting significantly less than their potential (Odimegwu and Anyakora, 2023). Property tax accounts for only a minor portion of subnational revenues, while the backlog in infrastructure and deficits in services continue to escalate.

Research on APLUC highlights significant design and implementation shortcomings, such as the absence of clear assessment bases, lack of defined valuation cycles, minimal engagement of estate surveyors and valuers, and opaque administrative procedures that have compromised public

acceptance and revenue generation (Odimegwu and Igwe, 2019; Odimegwu and Odumodu, 2019). Likewise, land-based taxes linked to land instrument registration and probate processes are marked by bureaucratic delays, inconsistent assessment practices, limited automation, and considerable non-compliance.

Concurrently, cities and towns in South-East Nigeria are grappling with persistent flooding, traffic congestion, deteriorating road conditions, insufficient market facilities, slum proliferation, and environmental degradation, which are the indicators of underfunded and unsustainable urban infrastructure systems. Although both international and Nigerian experiences demonstrate that effectively managed property taxes and land value capture (LVC) mechanisms can significantly bolster infrastructure financing, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis regarding how property tax administration in the South-East influences sustainable urban infrastructure outcomes (Odimegwu, Anyakora, and Odumodu, 2018).

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to assess the impact of property tax administration on sustainable urban infrastructure development in South-East Nigeria.

The specific objectives are:

- a. To examine the structure and performance of property tax and related land-based taxation in South-East Nigeria.
- b. To analyse key administrative, legal, technical and political challenges affecting property tax efficiency and equity in the region.
- c. To explore the linkage between property tax administration and financing of sustainable urban infrastructure.
- d. To identify innovative land-based tax instruments (e.g., LVC, green property tax) that can enhance infrastructure funding in South-East Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

This study is geographically centered on the South-East geopolitical zone, specifically utilizing studies and reforms from Anambra State as a case study. It also incorporates literature from Lagos, Delta, and other Nigerian states to provide comparative insights. The focus of the study is on property tax and related land-based instruments, including land use charge, land value capture, land instrument registration taxes, probate tax, and green property tax, examining their relationship with urban infrastructure such as roads, drainage systems, transportation, public spaces, and environmental services.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study extends to:

- a. Policy makers and legislators, as it offers recommendations for the revision of property tax laws, the harmonization of land-based instruments, and their alignment with the property tax policy guidelines set forth by UN-Habitat.

- b. Tax administrators and local governments, by emphasizing practical administrative reforms, particularly in areas such as valuation, cadastre, information and communication technology (ICT), and enforcement, that can enhance revenue generation and infrastructure provision (Odimegwu and Igwe, 2019).
- c. Professional bodies, including Estate Surveyors and Valuers, planners, and legal practitioners, by highlighting their essential role in ensuring fair and transparent property valuation, resolving disputes, and designing tax policies.
- d. Scholars and students, by addressing a gap in the existing literature regarding the relationship between property tax administration and sustainable urban infrastructure in South East Nigeria, while also proposing areas for future empirical research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Property Tax and Land-based Taxation

Property tax is an annual charge levied on the assessed value of land and its improvements, primarily utilized to fund local services and infrastructure. Land-based taxation is a more comprehensive term that encompasses all dues, fees, and charges associated with land characteristics, including property rates, ground rents, capital gains tax, stamp duty, land use charges, and value capture taxes. The administration of property tax encompasses the complete cycle of property identification, valuation, assessment, billing, collection, enforcement, and appeals, along with the necessary legal and institutional frameworks (Odimegwu, Ikeotuonye, and Onwubuya-Ezeala, 2025).

Sustainable urban infrastructure development pertains to the planning, financing, construction, and maintenance of infrastructure systems that are economically sustainable, socially inclusive, and environmentally resilient over the long term. This includes climate-resilient drainage systems, low-carbon transportation, green public spaces, efficient waste management, and energy-efficient buildings.

Land value capture (LVC) refers to mechanisms that enable governments to seize a portion of the increases in land value resulting from public actions, such as infrastructure investments, zoning modifications, or urban redevelopment, and redirect that revenue towards further infrastructure or urban enhancements. Common LVC instruments include property taxes, betterment levies, development charges, and the sale or lease of public land (Ankeli, Akinremi, and Jelili, 2024).

Green Property Tax (GPT) integrates environmental performance criteria into property tax assessments, providing incentives (such as rate reductions) for properties that implement climate-friendly features like solar panels, rainwater harvesting, compliance with planning regulations, green roofs, and flood-resilient designs.

Theoretical Framework

The research utilizes four interrelated theoretical perspectives:

Benefit Theory of Taxation

Taxpayers are expected to contribute in accordance with the benefits they derive from public services. The property tax is well aligned with this principle, as property values and the welfare of occupants are directly influenced by local infrastructure and services. Consequently, prominent infrastructure funded through property tax can enhance tax morale and compliance (Ankeli, 2021).

Fiscal Decentralisation Theory

Local governments are in a better position to customize services to meet local preferences when they possess autonomous and predictable revenue sources such as property tax. Effective property tax administration supports local accountability and responsive governance (Famuyiwa, 2020).

New Institutional Economics

The effectiveness of property tax is contingent upon the presence of supportive institutions, which include secure property rights, dependable land registration, professional valuation capabilities, and efficient judicial systems. Weak institutions increase transaction costs, promote evasion, and undermine the tax base (ICTD, 2022).

Public Choice and Political Economy of Taxation

Political opposition from elites, middle-class homeowners, and rent-seeking officials can obstruct or weaken property tax reform, especially when taxation is not accompanied by visible improvements in services (ICTD, 2022). These theoretical frameworks collectively shed light on the reasons behind the underperformance of property tax in South-East Nigeria and how administrative reforms could lead to enhanced urban infrastructure.

Property Tax Administration in Nigeria and South-East

The property tax system in Nigeria is influenced by the Land Use Act (1978), state-level rating and land use charge regulations, as well as various sector-specific statutes that impose particular taxes on land transactions and instruments. The ICTD literature review indicates that, throughout sub-Saharan Africa, property taxes are frequently underdeveloped, characterized by weak cadastres, outdated valuations, and fragmented legal frameworks. These are trends that are distinctly observable in Nigeria (ICTD, 2022).

In Anambra State, the initial property rating under the Property Rating Assessment Law (1963) was predominantly halted prior to the establishment of APLUC in 2011, which unified tenement rates, ground rent, and various development levies into a singular charge. However, APLUC did not achieve its ambitious revenue objectives due to deficiencies in design and execution, which included:

- a. Absence of clearly defined assessment bases and valuation methodology.

- b. Lack of provisions regarding the skills, training, and roles of qualified tax assessors.
- c. No established valuation cycle for the updating of taxable values.
- d. Limited engagement with stakeholders and insufficient public awareness.

A comparative examination of land use charge legislation in Anambra, Edo, Lagos, and Enugu indicates that numerous states in the South-East failed to provide transparent assessment bases, nor did they officially acknowledge estate surveyors and valuers as qualified tax assessors or members of appeals panels (Odimegwu, Anyakora, and Odumodu, 2019). These are elements that compromise fairness and public acceptance. In addition to APLUC, land-based taxes in Anambra encompass capital gains tax, stamp duty, and direct assessment taxes associated with the registration of land instruments. These taxes are jointly collected by the Board of Internal Revenue and the Ministry of Lands but encounter challenges such as inconsistent assessments, bureaucratic delays, and tax evasion.

Similar administrative and political obstacles have been noted at the national level. Nnamani (2023) highlights flaws in policy design, governance challenges, and limitations in technical capacity as significant barriers to effective property tax reform in Nigeria, especially in the implementation of land use charge systems. The land taxation practices in Delta State also experience issues with inadequate taxpayer identification, manual processes, and low compliance, reflecting the challenges faced in South-East states.

Property Tax and Sustainable Urban Infrastructure

Ankeli (2021) establishes a strong connection between effective property tax systems and enhanced urban infrastructure, particularly in scenarios where revenues are designated for or closely linked to visible local services. They emphasize property taxation as a viable alternative to declining oil revenues for financing infrastructure and urban development in Nigeria. In Lagos, a property tax schedule focused on land value capture has been suggested to improve municipal infrastructure financing, employing differentiated rates and value-based assessments to seize a portion of the windfall gains resulting from public investment and planning decisions (Okafor and Okorie, 2024). Studies conducted by the OECD and World Bank corroborates that well-structured land value capture instruments, such as property taxes, betterment levies, and development charges, can significantly contribute to financing transport infrastructure and other urban services (OECD, 2022).

In Anambra, Odimegwu and Anyakora (2023) contend that land value capture through land-based taxation could offer sustainable financing for infrastructure if it is properly structured and implemented. Their research on green property tax expands this argument by connecting property taxation to investments in climate adaptation and resilience, such as drainage, erosion control, green spaces, and renewable energy, thereby aligning revenue generation with sustainable infrastructure outcomes.

Empirical Studies

Empirical studies pertinent to South-East Nigeria highlight:

- a. The inability of APLUC to produce the anticipated revenues, primarily due to ineffective tax policy design, unclear assessment methods, and inadequate participation of estate surveyors and valuers.
- b. The underutilization of land-based taxation in land instrument registration, exacerbated by administrative hurdles and insufficient staff capacity.
- c. Issues in the administration of probate tax, governor's consent, and stamp duty, including delays, elevated transaction costs, low public awareness, and non-compliance.
- d. Opportunities and risks associated with introducing a green property tax, such as incentivising compliance with planning laws, promoting climate-resilient building practices, but also potential equity concerns and capacity requirements.

Beyond the South-East, recent studies show that property tax reform in Nigerian cities and other African environments is constrained by weak cadastres, limited use of ICT, political resistance and low trust in government (ICTD, 2022). However, there are also positive cases, such as the use of GIS and digital platforms to boost property tax revenue in some jurisdictions and the success of reformed property tax systems in supporting urban services.

Despite this literature, few studies explicitly and comprehensively analyse how property tax administration in South-East Nigeria shapes the region's ability to finance and deliver sustainable urban infrastructure, especially when considering innovative instruments like green property tax and LVC. This gap motivates the present study.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Owing to the study's emphasis on institutional arrangements, legal frameworks, and administrative practices, a qualitative research design based on desk analysis was employed. The research is grounded in a documentary analysis of:

- a. Peer-reviewed journal articles concerning property tax, land-based taxation, land value capture (LVC), and infrastructure finance within Nigeria and similar contexts (2018-2025).
- b. The empirical studies uploaded regarding property tax, land-based taxation, and green property tax in Anambra State.
- c. Policy and guidance documents, such as the UN-Habitat's Land and Property Tax Policy Guide.
- d. Relevant international literature addressing property tax reform and LVC.

Method of Analysis

The documents were subjected to content and thematic analysis, focusing on:

- i. Legal and policy frameworks for property tax and land-based instruments.
- ii. Administrative practices and challenges in property identification, valuation, billing and enforcement.

- iii. Evidence of linkage between property tax revenues and urban infrastructure investment;
- iv. Emerging innovations (e.g., green tax, LVC, ICT-enabled reforms);
- v. Implications for South-East Nigeria.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

State of Urban Infrastructure in South-East Nigeria

There is a significant infrastructure deficit characterized by deteriorating urban roads, inadequate drainage systems, frequent flooding, erosion, insufficient market facilities, and overstretched social amenities (Odimegwu and Anyakora, 2023). Similar findings are reflected in national assessments of infrastructure conditions throughout Nigeria. Infrastructure initiatives are predominantly funded through federal allocations and borrowing, with minimal reliable contributions from internally generated revenue sources such as property tax. This reliance on unpredictable resources limits the capacity for long-term infrastructure planning and hampers maintenance efforts, thereby exacerbating the unsustainability of urban systems in the South-East.

Structure and Performance of Property Tax Administration

In the South-East states, property tax systems exhibit several common characteristics:

- a. Disjointed legal frameworks, encompassing various statutes that regulate tenement rates, land use charges, development levies, ground rents, capital gains tax, stamp duty, and probate processes.
- b. Inadequate assessment provisions, which include a lack of clear valuation bases (whether annual or capital value), infrequent updates to valuations, and insufficient guidance regarding taxpayer categorization.
- c. Limited acknowledgment of estate surveyors and valuers as qualified tax assessors and members of appeals panels, despite their essential role in valuation for taxation purposes.
- d. Administration that is either manual or only partially digital, featuring incomplete property databases, poor utilization of GIS technology, and cumbersome paper-based procedures for land instrument registration, probate tax, and consent.

As a result, property tax yield remains low, far below potential benchmarks suggested by international experience (ICTD, 2022). The failure of APLUC in Anambra exemplifies these structural weaknesses. Annual revenues fell short of projected N1.5 billion, leading to the eventual suspension of the tax and termination of the private administrator's contract. This outcome reflects issues of policy design (complexity, lack of transparency), administrative capacity (property identification, billing and collection systems) and public distrust, which are likely mirrored in other South-East states with similar frameworks.

Key Administrative and Political Challenges

The administration of property taxes in South-East Nigeria faces significant constraints due to a complex interplay of legal, institutional, political, and behavioral challenges, which considerably diminish its effectiveness as a reliable source of public revenue. At the core of these issues is the

inadequacy of tax policy and legal frameworks. Frequently, the criteria and methods for property tax assessment are ambiguous or inconsistently enforced, allowing for considerable discretion, arbitrariness, and frequent conflicts between taxpayers and authorities. This lack of clarity undermines predictability and fosters resistance to payment, as taxpayers often view assessments as unjust or politically influenced.

Moreover, insufficient focus on fundamental principles such as equity, ability to pay, and neutrality diminishes public confidence in the tax system. When property taxes are perceived as inequitable or disproportionate, social acceptance declines, and compliance tends to be largely voluntary rather than mandated. The situation is exacerbated by inadequate stakeholder involvement during the formulation of tax legislation. The exclusion of professional organizations, property owners, community leaders, and civil society from the legislative process results in laws that lack social legitimacy, thereby reducing voluntary compliance and impairing enforcement outcomes.

In addition to legal design flaws, significant technical and administrative capacity deficiencies further undermine property tax systems. A critical institutional shortcoming is the lack of comprehensive and regularly updated property registers, coupled with the absence of modern Geographic Information System (GIS)-based cadastral systems. In the absence of accurate and spatially organized property databases, tax authorities struggle to identify all taxable properties, resulting in widespread omissions, duplication errors, and incorrect billing. This structural gap is compounded by shortages of trained professional valuers, competent ICT staff, and adequately skilled revenue officers, all of which negatively affect the quality of property valuation and the efficiency of enforcement mechanisms. In many jurisdictions, administrative processes remain heavily manual, resulting in lengthy delays in land instrument registration, probate documentation, and the issuance of tax receipts or ownership certificates. These procedural inefficiencies not only slow revenue collection but also create opportunities for corruption, manipulation, and informal settlements that bypass formal tax systems entirely.

Governance frameworks and political conduct exacerbate these vulnerabilities. The reluctance of political figures to enforce tax responsibilities among powerful elites and middle-class property owners constitutes a significant obstacle. Influential individuals frequently gain from exemptions, preferential rate reductions, or intentional non-enforcement, conveying a strong message that compliance with property taxes is negotiable rather than obligatory. This selective enforcement diminishes the credibility of tax authorities and exacerbates inequality within the tax system. Furthermore, practices of revenue centralization, such as collaborative revenue arrangements between state and local governments, diminish the motivation for local authorities to enhance their property tax capabilities. When local governments lack direct control over or proportional benefits from the revenue they generate, their incentive to modernize systems, train personnel, and enhance service delivery is considerably diminished.

Equally significant are the challenges associated with taxpayer trust and compliance behaviour. A prevalent perception exists that the taxes paid do not visibly translate into enhanced public services, infrastructure, or community development. This absence of perceived reciprocity discourages voluntary compliance, as taxpayers feel disconnected from the advantages of their contributions. When roads, drainage systems, waste management, and public utilities do not visibly improve, property taxes are regarded as burdens without returns. This distrust is further reinforced by the complexity and lack of transparency in tax procedures. Complicated processes, ambiguous guidelines, and discretionary administrative practices promote evasion, under-declaration of property values, and widespread reliance on informal transactions, especially in land markets and inheritance processes. Families and individuals frequently circumvent formal registration to evade tax liabilities, further diminishing the tax base and weakening institutional oversight (Odimegwu and Anyakora, 2023).

Collectively, these administrative, political, and behavioural challenges significantly depress property tax yield and limit its potential as a reliable mechanism for financing sustainable infrastructure development in South-East Nigeria. Without legal clarity, institutional capacity, political discipline, and public trust, property taxation remains underutilized and structurally constrained, unable to fulfill its role as a cornerstone of internally generated revenue and local economic development.

Impact of Property Tax Administration on Sustainable Urban Infrastructure

The influence of property tax administration on infrastructure in South-East Nigeria can be analyzed through three key aspects:

Revenue Volume and Consistency

Ineffective administration leads to low and unpredictable property tax revenues, which diminishes their ability to facilitate long-term infrastructure planning and debt financing. Also, research from Lagos, Osogbo, and various international examples indicates that enhanced property tax identification, updated valuations, and digital systems can significantly increase local revenue, allowing for greater investment in roads, drainage, and services (Odimegwu, Anyakora, and Odumodu, 2018).

Allocation and Designation for Infrastructure

In the majority of South-East states, property tax is not specifically allocated for particular infrastructure projects, which diminishes the perceived connection between tax payment and service delivery. In instances where such connections are more apparent, through visible projects funded by property tax or green property tax designated for climate-resilient infrastructure, tax morale tends to improve.

Spatial Fairness and Urban Development

Ineffective property tax administration can worsen inequality and lead to unsustainable urban development. Properties of high value that are either untaxed or under-taxed in serviced areas

disproportionately benefit from public investments, while low-income communities in informal settlements remain underserved and are subjected to informal levies (Ikeotuonye, Egolum, and Sado, 2024). A robust property tax system, in conjunction with Land Value Capture (LVC) instruments, can encourage a more equitable distribution of infrastructure costs and encourage compact, serviced urban growth. The finding indicates that inadequate property tax administration in South-East Nigeria significantly restricts the region's capacity to generate stable, self-sourced revenues for sustainable urban infrastructure, while reforms could reveal considerable potential.

Prospects of Innovative Land-Based Instruments

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This research has investigated the impact of property tax administration on the development of sustainable urban infrastructure in South-East Nigeria, drawing on evidence from Anambra State as well as comparative experiences from other Nigerian regions and international contexts. The analysis reveals that property tax and land-based instruments in this area face limitations due to poorly designed legal frameworks, insufficient valuation and cadastral systems, limited deployment of information and communication technology (ICT), governance issues, and a lack of taxpayer confidence. Consequently, property tax revenues are both inadequate and unstable, contributing only minimally to the funding of urban infrastructure, despite their considerable potential.

Also, findings from Lagos, various other Nigerian states, and international examples suggest that reformed property tax systems, particularly those that incorporate land value capture and environmentally sustainable fiscal policies, can significantly enhance infrastructure investment and promote more sustainable urban development (Famuyiwa, 2020).

For South-East Nigeria, the primary challenge lies not only in the implementation of new taxes but also in the transformation of property tax administration into a transparent, fair, ICT-enabled, and service-oriented system that can effectively support sustainable urban infrastructure financing.

Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of property taxation as a reliable source of infrastructure financing in South-East Nigeria, it is essential to implement comprehensive reforms in legal, institutional, and governance frameworks. A fundamental initial step involves the examination and harmonization of the current property tax legislation. The regimes governing state land use charges and associated statutory instruments ought to be systematically aligned with internationally recognized policy frameworks, such as the property tax policy guidelines established by UN-Habitat. This alignment should offer clear definitions regarding assessment bases, standardized valuation cycles, specified taxpayer categories, and transparent appeal processes, thereby minimizing discretion and uncertainty in administration.

Furthermore, the various overlapping land-based charges currently enforced by different levels of government should be consolidated into coherent and unified frameworks. Streamlining the tax structure would lower transaction costs, curtail opportunities for misuse, and improve both administrative efficiency and taxpayer comprehension.

The professionalization of property valuation and the enhancement of human capacity must also be prioritized. Estate Surveyors and Valuers should be legally recognized as expert assessors in property tax issues and formally included in assessment and appeal panels throughout South-East states. This would bolster the technical credibility of valuations and diminish disputes stemming from arbitrary assessments. In conjunction with this, ongoing investment in the continuous training

of revenue officials, valuers, and ICT personnel is crucial, particularly in modern property tax administration, digital systems, and land value capture (LVC) techniques. Capacity development will ensure that personnel can effectively utilize new technologies, manage extensive property databases, and implement innovative financing tools with professionalism and integrity.

Equally significant is the modernization of property registers and the digitization of administrative processes. Governments ought to create GIS-based digital property databases that thoroughly document land parcels, ownership structures, land use classifications, and value attributes, starting with major urban centers where revenue potential is the highest. These digital cadastres should be connected with tax administration systems to facilitate accurate assessments and minimize leakage. The establishment of online portals for the assessment, billing, and payment of property taxes would further enhance efficiency, transparency, and convenience for taxpayers. Studies from other African and developing country contexts indicate that digital tax platforms considerably improve revenue mobilization while decreasing corruption and human discretion in the payment process.

To restore taxpayer trust, property taxation must be clearly associated with service delivery and climate resilience initiatives. Governments should allocate a specific percentage of property tax revenue for clearly identifiable local infrastructure projects such as roads, street lighting, drainage systems, and market facilities, and communicate these connections transparently to citizens. When taxpayers can visibly observe the results of their contributions, voluntary compliance increases, and the social contract is reinforced.

Additionally, pilot green property tax schemes should be implemented in selected South-East cities, utilizing dedicated revenues to fund climate-resilient infrastructure and to encourage sustainable building practices. This strategy would align local fiscal systems with broader national and global climate action objectives.

The implementation of land value capture (LVC) mechanisms presents a strategic opportunity to ensure that private property owners who gain from public infrastructure investments contribute equitably to their costs. For significant infrastructure initiatives, such as new arterial roads, bus corridors, and modern markets, governments ought to utilize tools like betterment levies, special assessments, or modified property tax schedules to capture a portion of the windfall profits accruing to neighboring properties. These mechanisms should be underpinned by clear legal frameworks and transparent, formula-driven allocation systems that direct LVC revenues specifically towards project financing and long-term maintenance. This would establish a sustainable feedback loop between infrastructure investment and revenue generation.

Ultimately, governance, accountability, and public engagement must be enhanced to ensure the sustainability of these reforms. Improved coordination between State Boards of Internal Revenue and local government entities is essential to clearly delineate roles, minimize institutional conflicts, and create equitable revenue-sharing arrangements. Simultaneously, governments should adopt

structured communication strategies that illustrate the direct connection between taxes paid and services rendered. The publication of annual reports on property tax revenues and infrastructure spending, along with institutionalized citizen feedback mechanisms, would strengthen public trust, improve accountability, and promote active civic involvement in local development initiatives. If systematically executed, these reforms provide a viable pathway for South-East states to significantly enhance their ability to mobilize property-based revenues and allocate these resources towards sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient urban infrastructure development.

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