

Assessment of Stakeholders' Engagement and Participation in Mass Housing Development: A Case Study of Some Abuja's PPP Projects

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Abstract

This paper examines stakeholder engagement and participation in mass housing development projects within Abuja's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives. Through case studies of prominent projects like Sunnyvale Estate, Garki II District Development, and the Life Camp Extension Project, it aims to explore the multifaceted roles of government agencies, private entities, local communities, residents, and the limited involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups. Drawing from extensive literature, the study delves into the theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder engagement within the context of Public-Private Partnerships and housing development, emphasizing the importance of transparency, accountability, and social acceptance. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach, employing case studies and literature review to analyze the extent of stakeholder involvement in Abuja's mass housing projects, with a focus on government agencies, private developers, local communities, residents, and NGOs. Results and discussion underscore the significant roles played by government agencies and private developers in driving housing development projects, while also acknowledging the active participation of local communities and residents. However, the limited involvement of NGOs and advocacy groups poses challenges to achieving inclusive and sustainable housing solutions in Abuja. In conclusion, the paper emphasizes the importance of enhancing stakeholder engagement and participation to address Abuja's housing challenges effectively, advocating for transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in future PPP housing projects. Recommendations include prioritizing community involvement in decision-making processes, adopting socially responsible practices by private developers, and strengthening the role of NGOs and advocacy groups in advocating for housing rights and social equity.

Keywords: Abuja, Mass Housing, Participation, Public-Private Partnership, Stakeholder Engagement.

Introduction

The rapid urbanization and population growth in Nigeria, particularly in its capital city, Abuja, have intensified the need for sustainable and affordable housing solutions (Abubakar, 2021). The burgeoning urban population has exerted pressure on the existing housing infrastructure, leading to a significant housing deficit (Okeke, 2021). In response to

this challenge, the government has increasingly turned to Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as a strategic approach to bridge the housing gap (Batra, 2021; Fell & Mattsson, 2021). PPPs leverage the strengths and resources of both the public and private sectors, aiming to deliver mass housing projects that are both economically viable and socially inclusive (Mutegi, 2020; Nasiru, Isa & Bello, 2024).

Public-Private Partnerships in the housing sector represent a collaborative effort where the government provides the necessary regulatory framework, land, and sometimes partial financing, while private entities contribute their expertise, capital, and efficiency in project execution (Alteneiji, Alkass & Abu Dabous, 2020). This model is particularly relevant in Abuja, where the need for housing is acute, and the potential for real estate development is vast. However, the success of PPP projects in mass housing development hinges not only on financial and technical inputs but also on the effective engagement and participation of various stakeholders (Devkar, Palliyaguru & Oyegoke, 2020).

Problem Statement

Stakeholders in mass housing PPPs include a diverse array of actors such as government agencies, private developers, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, community members, and end-users (Batra, 2020; Miranda-Poggys & Morena, 2023). Each of these groups has unique interests, expectations, and contributions, making their engagement crucial to the project's success. Research efforts emphasize that effective stakeholder engagement ensures that the projects are aligned with the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve, thereby enhancing social acceptance and long-term sustainability (Sukasuka, Musonda, Ramabodu & Zulu, 2022; Magoola, Mwesigwa & Nabwami, 2023).

Despite the theoretical benefits of stakeholder participation, practical challenges often hinder meaningful engagement (Wojewnik-Filipkowska, Dziadkiewicz, Dryl, Dryl & Bęben, 2021). Issues such as bureaucratic red tape, conflicting interests, lack of transparency, and inadequate communication can impede the collaborative process (Ebekoziem, Aigbavboa & Ramotshela, 2024). In the context of Abuja's mass housing projects, understanding these dynamics is essential to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

Study Aim and Objectives

This article seeks to assess the extent and effectiveness of stakeholders' engagement and participation in mass housing development within the framework of some of Abuja's prominent PPP projects. This study aims to uncover the patterns, successes, and shortcomings of current practices by examining specific case studies. Through a comprehensive analysis, the article will offer insights into how stakeholder engagement can be optimized to enhance the efficacy and impact of mass housing PPPs in Abuja and potentially in similar urban settings across Nigeria.

The objectives of this study are: (1) to evaluate the level of stakeholder engagement in selected mass housing PPP projects in Abuja; (2) to identify the key challenges and barriers to effective stakeholder participation; (3) to assess the impact of stakeholder engagement on the success and sustainability of the housing projects; and (4) to propose recommendations for improving stakeholder engagement in future mass housing initiatives.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable urban development by shedding light on the intricacies of stakeholder engagement in mass housing PPPs. It provides policymakers, developers, and other stakeholders with actionable insights that can enhance collaborative efforts and ultimately lead to more effective housing solutions. As Abuja continues to grow, ensuring that housing development meets the needs of its diverse population through inclusive and participatory approaches is crucial for the city's socio-economic stability and growth.

The effective engagement of stakeholders in mass housing development is not merely a procedural necessity but a cornerstone of sustainable urban development. Through this study, we aim to elucidate the mechanisms and outcomes of such engagements, offering a pathway for more inclusive and successful housing projects in Abuja and beyond.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Stakeholder Engagement in Housing Development

Stakeholder engagement refers to the systematic involvement of all relevant parties in the planning, decision-making, and implementation processes of a project (Lehtinen & Aaltonen, 2020). In the context of housing development, stakeholders typically include government agencies, private developers, financial institutions, community members, and non-governmental organizations (Chisumbe, Aigbavboa, Mwanaumo & Thwala, 2022; Oates, Datey, Sudmant, Gillard & Gouldson, 2024). The concept emphasizes the importance of inclusive participation to ensure that the diverse needs and interests of all parties are addressed (Amadi, Carrillo & Tuuli, 2020).

Engagement strategies vary widely but often include consultations, participatory planning sessions, public meetings, and collaborative decision-making frameworks (Liu, Chen, Cai, Huang & Lang, 2020). Effective stakeholder engagement can lead to improved project outcomes, increased transparency, enhanced community acceptance, and greater sustainability (Salvioni & Almici, 2020; Alamanos, Rolston, & Papaioannou, 2021). Reed (2008) highlights the correlation between participatory approaches and successful project implementation in urban planning.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Housing

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are collaborative ventures between government entities and private sector companies aimed at delivering public infrastructure or services (Mirzaee & Sardroud, 2022). In the realm of housing, PPPs combine public oversight and private sector efficiency to address housing deficits more effectively than either sector could achieve independently (Babacan, 2020; Herath & Herath, 2023).

PPPs in housing typically involve the government providing land, regulatory support, and sometimes financing, while private partners contribute investment capital, technical expertise, and operational efficiency (Batra, 2020; Giti, K'Akumu & Ondieki, 2020). This model aims to leverage the strengths of both sectors to produce affordable, high-quality housing. Hodge and Greve (2007) suggests that PPPs can offer innovative solutions to complex urban challenges by aligning public goals with private incentives.

Mass Housing Development

Mass housing development refers to large-scale residential projects designed to provide affordable housing to a significant portion of the population (Patel & Paneria, n.d). These projects are crucial in rapidly urbanizing areas where demand for housing far exceeds supply. The concept of mass housing is rooted in the need for scalability, cost efficiency, and quick delivery times, as highlighted by Turner (1976).

In the context of Abuja, mass housing development is particularly pertinent due to the city's rapid population growth and significant housing deficit. The implementation of PPPs for mass housing aims to address these challenges by fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors, ensuring that housing projects are both economically viable and socially inclusive.

Theoretical Review

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, initially developed by Freeman in 1984, provides a foundational framework for understanding the dynamics of stakeholder engagement in projects (Kivits, Sawang, Kivits & Sawang, 2021). This theory posits that the success of any project or organization depends on the effective management of relationships with all stakeholders, not just shareholders (Dmytriyev, Freeman & Hörisch, 2021). In housing development, this theory underscores the necessity of involving all relevant parties—government, private developers, community members, and other interest groups—in the planning and implementation processes (Muthoni & Obuba, 2023).

Stakeholder theory emphasizes the ethical and practical importance of addressing the needs and concerns of all stakeholders (Dmytriyev, Freeman & Hörisch, 2021). Effective stakeholder management leads to better decision-making, enhanced trust, and improved project outcomes (Ebekozien, Aigbavboa & Ramotshela, 2024). This theory is particularly

relevant for mass housing PPPs in Abuja, where diverse stakeholder interests must be balanced to achieve sustainable development goals.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative approach to analyze the engagement of various stakeholders in mass housing developments in Abuja. The qualitative method is chosen for its suitability in providing in-depth insights into the complexities and dynamics of stakeholder interactions, which are often not fully captured through quantitative methods. The focus on qualitative data allows for a detailed exploration of stakeholders' experiences, perceptions, and the contextual factors influencing their participation.

A case study approach is employed, involving three (3) mass housing project schemes within Abuja, as outlined in Table 1. The case study method is particularly appropriate for this research as it enables a comprehensive examination of the specific contexts, processes, and outcomes associated with stakeholder engagement in each project. This approach facilitates a detailed understanding of the unique and common factors across different projects, providing rich insights into the effectiveness of stakeholder participation in mass housing development.

Table 1: Selected Mass Housing Schemes

S/N	Name of Mass Housing Project	Partners
1	Sunnyvale Estate	Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and Messrs. Sunnyvale Homes Limited
2	Garki II District Development	Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) and several private developers
3	Life Camp Extension Project	Federal Government Staff Housing Loans Board (FGSHLB) and Messrs. UACN Property Development Company (UPDC).

The selection of the three mass housing schemes was done randomly to ensure a representative sample of the various types of PPP projects in the region. The projects were chosen based on the diversity of partners, project scale and impact. To ensure the suitability of the qualitative method and case study approach, purposive sampling was used for interviews.

Case Study I - Sunnyvale Estate

This partnership between the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and Messrs. Sunnyvale Homes Limited is a residential estate located in the Lokogoma District, offering a variety of housing types ranging from apartments to detached units.



Figure 1: Aerial View of Sunnyvale Estate Mass Housing Development
Source: <https://earth.google.com/> (Retrieved April, 2024)



Figure 2: Bungalows of Sunnyvale Estate Mass Housing Development
Source: <https://thingstoknow.com.ng/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/sunnyvale-estate>
(Retrieved April, 2024)

Case Study II - Garki II District Development

Garki is a district located in the southwest part of the city. It is under the phase 1 development plan of Abuja. The district is a partnership between the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) and several private developers. The development is a large-scale mixed-use district in the heart of Abuja, featuring residential units, commercial areas, and public amenities.



Figure 3: Aerial View of Garki 2 Mass Housing Development

Source: <https://earth.google.com/> (Retrieved April, 2024)



Figure 4: Cross Section of Garki 2 Mass Housing Development (Residential Zone)

Source: <https://earth.google.com/> (Retrieved April, 2024)

Case Study III - Life Camp Extension Project

The Life Camp Extension Project is located in the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) of Abuja City. The mass housing scheme is a collaboration between the Federal Government Staff Housing Loans Board (FGSHLB) and Messrs. UACN Property Development Company (UPDC). With a focus on providing housing for civil servants, the scheme offers a mix of detached homes, semi-detached units, and apartments. The project targeted the specific needs of government workers, offering financing options and pricing structures tailored to their income levels.



Figure 4: Life-Camp Extension Mass Housing Development

Source: www.villaafrika.com/life-camp-district-guide (Retrieved April, 2024)



Figure 6: Life-Camp Condominium Mass Housing Development

Source: www.abujaproperties.com (Retrieved April, 2024)

Results and Discussions

Government Agencies

The Nigerian government, primarily through its agencies and public-private partnerships, has significantly contributed to the development of mass housing projects in Abuja, specifically in Sunnyvale Estate, the Garki II District, and the Life Camp Extension Project. In Sunnyvale Estate, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) provides regulatory support to ensure that urban planning standards are maintained. This involvement reflects a commitment to orderly growth and compliance with urban planning norms.

In Garki II District, the FCDA plays an essential role in managing commercial and residential development. The district is a vibrant commercial hub housing many government agencies and private businesses. The FCDA's oversight guarantees that the commercial growth is balanced with residential needs, making it one of Abuja's busiest neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, the Abuja Property Development Company (APDC), a government entity, oversees the Life Camp Extension Project. The APDC has developed various housing estates offering a mix of modern apartments and duplexes, complemented by essential infrastructure like playgrounds and shopping complexes. The Life Camp Extension project is particularly noteworthy for its strategic design and high-quality amenities, making it attractive to both expatriates and locals. Moreover, it caters to government employees and the wider community, showcasing the government's commitment to providing secure, well-managed housing.

Together, these developments illustrate the active role played by various Government agencies in fostering urban growth, ensuring quality standards, and supplying necessary housing through strategic partnerships and state-linked organizations.

Private Entities (Developers)

Private developers are typically the driving force behind projects like Sunnyvale Estate. These developers acquire land, secure necessary permits, and finance the construction of residential units. They often collaborate with architects, engineers, and construction firms to design and build the infrastructure and housing units. Private entities also handle marketing and sales, attracting buyers and investors to the development. In return, they aim to generate profits from property sales and rental income. The involvement of private developers in Sunnyvale Estate demonstrates their capacity to undertake large-scale housing projects and contribute to the expansion of Abuja's real estate market.

In Garki II District, private entities play a multifaceted role. They are involved in the construction of commercial buildings, residential complexes, and mixed-use developments. Private developers invest in projects that cater to the district's diverse needs, including office spaces, retail outlets, hotels, and residential units. These developments enhance the district's economic vibrancy and contribute to its status as a

commercial center. Private entities also participate in property management, ensuring that buildings are well-maintained and facilities are adequately serviced. Their involvement in Garki II District underscores the importance of private investment in shaping urban landscapes and supporting economic growth.

The Life Camp Extension Project, managed by the Abuja Property Development Company (APDC), involves collaboration between private entities and the government. Private developers work alongside the APDC to design and construct housing estates within the Life Camp area. These estates offer a range of housing options, from apartments to duplexes, and are equipped with amenities such as playgrounds and shopping centers. Private entities contribute their expertise in real estate development and construction, while the APDC provides regulatory oversight and access to government resources. The partnership between private and public entities in the Life Camp Extension Project reflects a collaborative approach to addressing housing needs and fostering sustainable urban development.

Overall, the involvement of private entities demonstrates their significant contribution to the growth and development of Abuja's housing sector. Through investment, innovation, and collaboration, private developers play a vital role in providing quality housing options and shaping the city's urban landscape.

Local Communities and Residents

Local communities and residents living in Sunnyvale Estate and Garki II District have a vested interest in its success and sustainability. They contribute to the vibrancy of the community through their participation in homeowners' associations, neighborhood events, and communal activities. Moreover, local businesses may benefit from the increased population in the area, leading to economic opportunities and growth within the community.

Local communities and residents in the Life Camp area are directly impacted by the development of the extension project and thus their engagement and participation are crucial for fostering a sense of ownership and belonging among residents. Their inputs influenced decisions related to the functionality of the housing estates within the extension project. Additionally, residents benefit from improved infrastructure, access to amenities, and enhanced quality of life as a result of the development. However, concerns such as displacement, environmental impact, and infrastructure strain must be addressed through transparent communication and stakeholder engagement to ensure that the project meets the needs and aspirations of the local community.

Non-Governmental Organizations and Advocacy Groups

In mass housing developments in Abuja, such as Sunnyvale Estate, Garki II District Development, and the Life Camp Extension Project, NGOs and advocacy groups typically

do not play a direct role in the planning, implementation, or oversight of these projects. Unlike in some other contexts, where NGOs and advocacy groups may advocate for affordable housing, equitable urban development, or sustainable housing practices, the landscape in Abuja tends to be primarily driven by government agencies, private developers, and other stakeholders. While NGOs and advocacy groups may exist in Abuja and focus on various social and environmental issues, their involvement in mass housing projects is generally limited. As a result, the role of NGOs and advocacy groups in mass housing development in Abuja is not prominent, and the responsibility for planning and executing these projects typically falls to government entities and private sector developers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The mass housing projects in Abuja, such as Sunnyvale Estate, Garki II District Development, and the Life Camp Extension Project, underscore the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders in tackling the city's significant housing challenges. Government agencies, including the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) and the Abuja Property Development Company (APDC), have been instrumental in providing regulatory oversight, allocating resources, and ensuring the implementation of sustainable housing solutions. Private developers have played a crucial role by utilizing their resources and expertise to execute large-scale housing projects, which have contributed to the expansion of Abuja's real estate market and promoted economic growth. Local communities and residents have actively participated in these projects, advocating for their needs and enhancing the vibrancy of the neighborhoods. Despite these efforts, the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups in mass housing development in Abuja remains limited, with primary responsibility resting on government agencies and private sector entities.

The study is, however, limited to the examined PPP projects within Abuja and while it may be a reflection of what is obtainable in other similar projects, there is a chance of difference in the situation surrounding the projects. As a result, the following areas for further studies are advised:

- i. Comparative Analysis of Stakeholder Engagement in Different Regions
- ii. Impact of NGO and Advocacy Group Involvement
- iii. Longitudinal Studies on Project Outcomes
- iv. Community Participation Models
- v. Policy and Regulatory Frameworks
- vi. Economic Impact Assessments

Recommendations

Enhance Stakeholder Engagement and Participation

- Actively involve communities in the planning and implementation phases of housing projects.
- Foster transparent, accountable, and inclusive decision-making processes within government agencies.

Adopt Socially Responsible Practices by Private Developers

- Consider the needs and preferences of diverse population groups.
- Prioritize affordability and accessibility in housing designs.

Strengthen the Role of NGOs and Advocacy Groups

- Advocate for housing rights and promote social equity.
- Hold stakeholders accountable for their actions.

Foster Collaborative Partnerships

- Encourage cooperation among government agencies, private developers, NGOs, and local communities.
- Empower communities to actively participate and contribute to housing solutions.

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Conflicts of Interests

There are no conflicts of interests.

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