

STRATEGIES FOR HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Population in urban areas are growing at a rapid rate, thus recycling of land becomes necessary despite that fact that land is a finite resource. The gap between supply and demand for housing is an issue for the government to address in order to provide housing at a cheaper rate which is the basic need of man. The purpose of this study is to assess the strategies for affordable housing in Nigeria. Research design was used and the population of the study was Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Engineers, Contractors and project managers. Random sampling technique was adopted for this study. A total of 70 questionnaires were distributed and 51 were returned. This represents a response rate of 73%. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis via descriptive and inferential statistics. The study showed that problem of land inaccessibility, stunted financial and mortgage system were the factors affecting housing delivery. Challenges of housing delivery were high cost of acquiring land, social miscreants (“Omo Onile”) and affordability. Anti-corruption measures and a responsive judiciary, Cost – saving house design, Land reforms/reviews of land use act and review of fiscal and monetary policies to reduce inflation and interest rate were the strategies to be used to ensure affordable housing. In conclusion, the Government should create an enabling environment for private sector by reducing the interest rate, taxes collected and creation of a viable housing mortgage sector to cater for the need of interested mortgage loan applicants. The use of the land should be constrained to affordable housing.

Keywords: Affordable, Housing, Land, Mortgage, Urbanization

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria population at the era of independence (1960) was 45,211,614 with an urbanization of 6, 967, 110. It gives an urban population of 15.4%. In the year 2016, the population had increased to 189, 139, 124 with an urban population of 49%

(Nigeria Population, 2016). The total land area of 910, 802km² could not take care of the increased in population. The United Nations estimates that Nigeria's population in 2005 stands at 141 million, and predicted that it would reach 289 million by 2050 (Campbell, 2012). Over 40% of Nigerians lived in urban areas, thus rapid growth in population creates demand pressure towards shelter and efficient supply and distribution of basic utilities such as transportation, water supply, health facilities, electricity and other services for the city dwellers which are provided by the Government (Enisan and Ogundiran, 2013).. With the recession period, Nigeria is experiencing, the Government is faced with challenges to provide housing for the masses especially for those in the urban areas. The effort had been made by the Government in the past (Mabogunje, 2002) but they are not adequate especially for the middle earners. However, the purpose had not been successful because those that need these housings could not afford it. Thus they tend to live in semi – urban areas, slum, and substandard accommodation.

The private sector had contributed about 90% of urban housing (Omole, 2001) to assist the government as a result of rapid growth in the urban areas. Despite this, the private sector is faced with the constraints of meeting up the supply of housing (Nubi, 2008). This is due to the cost of building materials, deficiency of housing finance arrangement, inflexible loan conditions from mortgage banks and government policies (Raji, 2008; Enisan and Ogundiran, 2013). According to Nubi (2008), land value and rents had increased ahead of inflation especially with this recessed economy of Nigeria where diversification is into infrastructure, mining and agriculture. Therefore there is a need to manage macroeconomic stability and pro – cyclical government expenditure pattern by improving non – oil growth performance and saving Nigeria's oil revenues for future use (Ayodele, 2013). As a result of inadequate housing, the sale of land and rentage is very high (Nubi, 2008).

Housing plays an important role in the development of any nation. It had been ascertaining as the basic need of a man (Makinde, 2013; Akinyode and Tareef, 2014). The challenges faced by Nigeria government in providing for housing is not peculiar to Nigeria alone, many developing countries are also faced with these challenges. Thus various strategies had been developed io help in providing housing at a cheaper rate. Previous studies on strategies are on cooperative housing model (Fasakin, 1998), land allocation system (Oduwaye, 1998) and financial model (Omole, 2001). This study intends to assess the significant strategies for housing affordability in Nigeria.

2. REVIEWS ON STRATEGIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY

To address the myriad problems confronting sustainable housing provision, the following strategies are review from literature:

2.1 Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

The PPP housing model in Nigeria is largely similar to that of Malaysia, (AbdulAziz and Kassim, 2011), Australia (Thomas, 2009), South Korea (Choe, 2002) and India (Awil and Abdul-Aziz, 2006; Segpunta, 2005). Its emergence can be traced to the broader Nigeria National Privatization Policy (NNPP) and shift towards structural adjustment in the national economy. However, public-private partnership (PPP), allows the private sector to participate in the provision of affordable housing, It has been a notable feature in the recent past in terms of housing delivery mechanisms. PPP, a form of procurement originally entails the provision of public assets and services through collaboration between the government and the private sector. Grimsey and Lewis (2005) expressed the view that PPP will generally fill the space between traditionally procured government projects and full privatization. Akintoye et al. (2006) noted that this joint venture can assist in developing a project more quickly and efficiently than the government (public) would accomplish on its own. The collaborative effort between this sector and the government is generally believed to be beneficial as Li and Akintoye (2003) noted. It enhances government capacity to develop integrated solutions, facilitates creative and innovative approaches thus reducing the cost and time spent to implement the project, transfers certain risk to the private project partner, attracts larger productivity and more sophisticated bidders to projects while providing an avenue to access better skills, expertise and technology and also to produce an effective housing delivery to its citizens.

2.2 Site and Service Scheme

Site and services scheme is a programme carried out either by the government or private organization which involves facilitating a particular area with the essential infrastructural amenities so that private individuals or corporate bodies can carry out developments in such area at affordable cost. Site and service scheme basically relates to the need of establishing the dwellers as an active participant, in the total process of housing. It is one of the housing scheme requirements carried out mostly by governmental bodies as municipal services because in nature it is not more capital intensive compared with other schemes. Plots of land (or sites) with infrastructure on it (or services) were provided, and the beneficiaries had to, in most of the schemes build their own houses, ranging from the subdivided plots only to a serviced plots of land with a “core” house built on it. Site service scheme allows the owner of land to construct the house with a variety of building materials depending on his desires and preference as well as his income. In this scheme, residential plots are laid out with major infrastructural facilities such as road, schools, open spaces, health centers etc incorporated into the layout. It offers landless housing aspirants the

opportunity and hope of a services plot of land with prospect of home ownership as incentive towards house building. Site and service scheme are the provision of plots of land either ownership or land lease tenure along with a bare minimum of essential infrastructure needed for habitation (Oniyike, 2011). The legal framework for site and services scheme in Nigeria is in the National Housing Policy (NHP, 1991 cited in Magobunje, 2002). This policy document spelt it out as one of the strategies for assisting low income group; Provide sites and services to facilitate home ownership and orderly urban and rural development page 11 section 2.4 (ix) and for all income groups with emphasis on the low income group in the major cities in Nigeria page 16 section 3.7.2. (The National housing policy of 2004 cited in Magobunje, 2002). In the schedule of housing functions to public authorities, The National housing policy of 2004 (section 3.4.1a) assigned the responsibility of production of residential sites and services to the Local Governments (but this responsibility was pursued by majority of local government authority in Nigeria). This is however expected to be complemented by private sector that is expected to participate in the development of estates and houses for sale or for rent, or shared ownership. The philosophy behind the site and services facilities hinged on the fact that the medium and high income earners could easily source for funds and construct their own houses whereas the low income group may not find this easy. It was hoped that if the government develop sites and provide essential services, low income group could get allocation after paying some fees to cover what has been spent on the land and service provided and it will now be the task of the allottees to complete the houses at their pace and financial capability.

2.3 Land Reform/Review of Land Use Act

It is generally believed that the Government has abused the trust of the people as far as the Land Use Act cap 202 LFN 1990 was concerned (Oniyike, 2011). The Act has become an obstacle rather than an enablement to development and therefore needs to be reviewed to improve the availability of land for housing development. Nationalization of land should be reversed. The Land Use Act or any future land reform legislation should not form part of the Nigerian constitution; this will make any necessary amendment of the law easier to achieve thereby making the law responsive to the needs of the times. Apart from the problem of corruption and abuse of trust which has bedeviled the application of the Act, There is the ownership issue which rendered the use of bare land as security for loans very unattractive and risky to the financial institutions. The Act provides for compensation for unexhausted improvements. Revocation of the right of occupancy over undeveloped land technically does not attract any compensation except for the ground rent paid in the year of the revocation; The Government which graciously permitted you to occupy her land will not pay compensation when she takes back what

was hers in the first place. This, therefore, rendered bare land an unsafe and unacceptable security for a mortgage loan, thereby reducing the potential for raising funds for additional housing development. The requirement of governor's consent should be expunged from the Land Use Act to facilitate easy transfer, assignment and foreclosure of mortgages which are essential for the efficiency of the mortgage market. A new land reform which guarantees private ownership of property without compromising government's right of eminent domain is hereby proposed, to increase land availability and improve accessibility of funds for housing development.

2.4 Review of Fiscal and Monetary Policies

High inflation and high interest rates constitute a disincentive to property development and investment. With inflation rate at 7.7% and maximum lending rate at 12%, housing would be unaffordable to most Nigerians (Nubi, 2008). Inflation and interest rates must be reduced to single digits. The Government should work hard to achieve low inflation and low interest rates.

2.5 Creation of a Viable Secondary Mortgage Market

It is impossible to provide adequate and affordable housing without viable long-term lending arrangements, which can only be achievable if there is a viable secondary mortgage market. The secondary mortgage market is therefore a sine qua non for mass improvement in the availability of housing. Sustainable secondary market development cannot proceed unless and until the primary market is able to produce a sufficient volume of high quality mortgages to meet the servicing and performance requirements of investors (Li & Akintoye, 2000). There is need however to firstly amend all laws critical to housing investment to facilitate the issuance of housing-related instruments such as Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS) and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REIT) which will be traded on the secondary mortgage market. The laws include the Land Use Act (Decree 6, 1978), the National Housing Fund Act 1992, the Federal Mortgage Bank Act (Decree 82, 1993), the Mortgage Institutions Act (Decree 53, 1989), the Trustees Investment Act 1962, the Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Act 1993, The Insurance Act 2002, The Investment and Securities Act 1999, the Federal Housing Authority Act 1990, Land Instrument Registration Act, and Conveyance (Mabogunje, 2002).

A new FMBN law should give legal backing to the bank to operate as a secondary mortgage institution with the right to issue mortgage securities. A new FMBN law should give the bank the authority to prosecute any defaulters, for non-payment, non-remittance, underpayment or under-remittance of NHF contributions. As observed by Omole (2001), the NHF contributions can be integrated into the personal income taxation system such that "a defined proportion of taxes paid are allocated to the housing fund pool, as is done in Singapore. The absence of a clear-cut foreclosure law

scares some investors and funding institutions from the housing sector. The very long delays in the disposal of cases in our law courts make property investment a nightmare to many investors. The adoption of the non-judicial foreclosure process in cases of mortgage contracts, as practiced in some countries, is essential for proper functioning of a secondary mortgage market in Nigeria (Akeju, 2007). The use of lands tribunals for such matters is hereby recommended. It is necessary to sound a note of warning that one of the causes of the subprime mortgage crisis in the USA was that due to securitization, mortgage loans with high risk of default could be originated, packaged and the risk readily transferred to investors in securities. The secondary mortgage market in Nigeria must be strictly regulated to avoid catastrophic consequences.

2.6 Creation of a National Credit Database

A nationwide credit database that can provide credit information of all individuals that enjoy financial services in Nigeria is not available (Akeju, 2007). As a result, the financial institutions in trying to establish the financial background and creditworthiness of the loan applicants, take several days or weeks to process most loan applications. A development of a nationwide credit database which will make credit scoring of prospective loan applicants possible has the potential to reduce the loan processing period to a matter of hours. It will also encourage the financial institutions to extend their loan facilities beyond the few well-known rich people the building up of the required databank and the associated networking in Nigeria will take some time. In the interim and until the national credit database is in place, the government should provide guarantees in form of mortgage insurance to lenders to encourage lending to the lower income people.

2.7 Cost-saving house designs.

A cost-to-design approach is necessary for low-cost housing to be achieved. Affordability must guide the designing of houses in the 21st century. According to Alao (2008), the starting point for the design of affordable housing unit is to establish the affordable rent for the area in which the project is to be located. Affordability through design also entails the determination of the best property development methods available to achieve cost reduction without compromising quality. The design must also be sympathetic to both the physical and cultural environment. A good design should aim at achieving affordability, marketability and durability of the finished product.

2.8 Cooperative Housing

An idea to housing development efforts in the African traditional setting is the pooling of resources to develop houses by members of a given social group for the benefit of their 3members. Members contribute into a common

pool for a pre-arranged order of housing development for members; this form of development strategy is most applicable among low-income earners for cheap, notwithstanding adequate low-cost housing.

2.9 Social Housing

Social housing refers to rental housing which may be owned and managed either by the State or non-profit organizations, or a combination of the two, with the aim of providing affordable housing. For majority of the low income earners rented accommodation, subsidized or non-profit, will provide the adequate and affordable accommodation. The Government should through direct funding provisions or negotiated tax waivers assist the housing corporations and certain private developers to provide social housing to alleviate the housing problems of majority of the urban low income earners.

2.10 Government Funded Infrastructural Development.

The Government should encourage increased housing development by providing access roads, power, and water and drainage facilities to proposed housing development areas. The developers will then channel available funds to provide the house's proper and thus quickly realize the houses.

2.11 Strict Development Control

The inability of the Government to enforce development control is one of the major reasons for the deterioration of housing and housing infrastructure in most urban areas in Nigeria. Development control should be implemented devoid of adverse vested interest, to ensure that good housing quality is maintained.

2.12 Research on Building Materials

Readily available local building materials should be studied and improved to render them suitable for producing cost-effective and durable houses. Such improved local materials will significantly reduce the cost of housing.

2.13 Anti-Corruption Measures and a Responsive Judiciary

Corruption militates against the success of housing delivery, The Nigerian nation has suffered greatly from corruption; best thought-out policies and projects have collapsed as a result of this national malaise, Contract costs are fraudulently inflated, Incompetent contractors are favored over and above experienced and capable hands, projects are sabotaged for narrow personal gains, etc. Bribery in whatever name is not good for the system. Badly-executed projects are certified satisfactory by corrupt Government and company officials. Whatever we are proposing for housing in the 21st century can only succeed as planned if corruption is kept under control (Oniyike,2011).The judiciary should be up and doing. Justice delayed is justice denied. Delays in the courts have turned profit-making projects to loss-making ones. The long arms of the law must be made to reach both the rich and poor alike. Justice in the housing industry must be quick and right because of the enormous cost implications of unnecessary

delays and injustice.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methods are the various procedures, schemes and algorithms used in research while research methodology is a science of studying how research is to be carried out (Rajasekar, Philominathan & Chinnathambi, 2013). Research design entails the methods and procedures used to conduct scientific research. The study is a survey research, which involves the usage of cross – sectional survey design. Because data used in the study was made up of variables of the same sample observed at one point in time. The population of this study includes all stakeholders in construction industry sector of the economy in Lagos State especially, the Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Contractors, Project Managers, Estate Surveyors, Civil Engineers and Builders. The sampling techniques adopted for this study is random sampling method. This method was used because all the elements of the population have equal chance of been selected. A total of 70 questionnaires were distributed and 51 were returned. This represents a response rate of 73%. Data realized from the administration of the research instruments were analyzed and processed with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS 17th). Data measured on the nominal scale were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages. The levels of importance of identified factors were determined by the magnitude of their frequency counts with the greatest frequency representing the most important factor.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Factors Affecting Housing Delivery

Table 1 shows the factors affecting housing delivery as rated by the respondents. The most important factors were problem of land inaccessibility (RII = 0.82), stunted financial mortgage system (RII = 0.79) and high cost of construction (RII = 0.78). It was followed by poverty level (RII = 0.77), government policies and slow bureaucratic procedures (RII = 0.76) and exorbitant prices of building material (RII = 0.76). The least important factors were statutory and bye-law (RII = 0.73) and developmental control (RII = 0.71).

Table 1: Factors affecting housing delivery

FACTORS	RII	Rank
Problem of land inaccessibility	0.82	1
Stunted financial and mortgage system	0.79	2
High cost of construction	0.78	3
Poverty level	0.77	4
Government policies and slow bureaucratic procedures	0.76	5
Exorbitant prices of building material	0.76	5
High population growth	0.75	7
Inadequate physical planning	0.74	8
Statutory regulation and bye-laws	0.73	9
Developmental control	0.71	10

RII = Relative Importance Index

4.2 Challenges of Housing Delivery

Table 2 indicates the challenges of housing delivery in Lagos state. The respondents were told to rate the challenges in order of level of importance. From the result, it reveals that high cost of acquiring land (RII = 0.85) as the most important challenges of housing delivery. It was followed by youth harassment of developers (“Omo – Onile”) (RII = 0.81), affordability (RII = 0.81) and high cost of land registration titling (RII = 0.80). The least challenging factors affecting housing delivery were lack of government support in terms of infrastructural facilities to bring down the high cost of housing construction (RII = 0.70), lack of proper coordination of public agencies and law (RII = 0.70) and limited skilled worker (RII = 0.67).

Table 2: Challenges Of Housing Delivery in Lagos state.

Challenges of housing delivery	RII	Rank
High cost of acquiring land	0.85	1
Youth harassment of developers ("Omo - Onile')	0.81	2
Affordability	0.81	2
High cost of land registration titling	0.80	4
Lack of critical infrastructures in urban and rural area of the state	0.78	5
Lack of effective implementation strategies	0.76	6
Dependency on imported building materials which increases the overall construction cost	0.76	6
Lack of government support in terms of infrastructural facilities to bring down	0.70	8

the high cost of housing construction

Lack of proper co-ordination of public agencies and laws	0.70	8
Limited skilled manpower	0.67	10

4.3 Strategies for ensuring Affordable Housing Delivery

Table 3 presents the strategies for ensuring affordable housing. From the table, Anti- corruption measures and a responsive judiciary (RII = 0.90) was ranks first. It was followed cost – saving house design (RII = 0.87), land reforms/reviews of land use act (RII = 0.83), review of fiscal and monetary policies to reduce inflation and interest rate (RII = 0.83) and Public Private Partnership (RII = 0.82). The least strategies for ensuring affordable housing were site and service schemes (RII = 0.79), strict developmental control (RII = 0.77) and creation of a national credit database (RII = 0.75).

Table 3: strategies for ensuring affordable housing delivery

Strategies	RII	Rank
Anti- corruption measures and a responsive judiciary	0.90	1
Cost – saving house design	0,87	2
Land reforms/reviews of land use act	0,83	3
Review of fiscal and monetary policies to reduce inflation and interest rate	0,83	3
Public Private Partnership (PPP)	0,82	5
Creation of viable secondary mortgage market	0.81	6
Research on building material	0.80	7
Co-operative housing	0.80	7
Site and service schemes	0.79	9
Strict developmental control	0.77	10
Creation of a national credit database	0.75	11

4.4 Discussion of findings

For National development of any nation, the government should be able to provide for housing which is an importance necessity next to food and clothing. Though from this study, land inaccessibility, stunted financial and mortgage system, high cost of construction, poverty level, government policies and slow bureaucratic procedures, exorbitant prices of building material and high population growth has been seen as the major factors affecting housing delivery. High cost of acquiring land, youth harassment of developers (“omo-onile”), affordability, and high cost of land registration titling, lack of critical infrastructure in the urban and rural area of the state is

described as the fundamental challenges affecting housing delivery. The studies of Daramola (2004) and Raji (2008) identified high cost of building materials as a major factor affecting housing delivery. The strategies for ensuring an effective housing delivery are anti- corruption measures and a responsive judiciary, cost saving house design, land reforms/reviews of land use act, review of fiscal and monetary policies to reduce inflation and interest rate, Public Private Partnership (PPP) and research on building material among others.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of people relocating from rural to urban areas, limited availability of land are available to accommodate the increased population of urbanization, thus the government and the private sectors need to strategize to meet the increased demand for housing. Some of the challenges to housing delivery are related to the economic and political environment, problem of high cost of acquiring land, youth harassment of developers (omo - onile), affordability, poor remuneration and low minimum wages of workers resulting in low purchasing power that unattractive to developers, escalating high cost of building material, high profit driven attitudes of the private developers arising from high cost of fund or finance among others. To redress this problem the government must create an enabling environment for the private sector to act as the engine of growth in the housing sector. Such enabling environment as pointed out in the body of the research must necessarily include the reduction of interest rates and the creation of a viable secondary mortgage sector to cater for the need of interested mortgage loan applicants amongst other steps needed to be taking by government to tackle the problem of housing delivery in the state. In addition, the government should create a bye-law to eradicate the social miscreants (“omo – onille”) and anti- corruption practices on the land approval documents.

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