

Chapter 14

Public–Private Partnership for Urban Housing Through Civic Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Public-private partnership (PPP) is a contractual arrangement between a public agency and a private sector, whereby the private sector performs a public function in accordance with an output-based specification for a specified period of time in return for a financial benefit. The central problem investigated in this chapter is the challenges in urban housing delivery using the public-private partnership approach, to identify concerns and develop a framework to address them. Adopting a qualitative research strategy and descriptive approach, primary data was collected thru questionnaire administered to selected sample of staff, private partners, and beneficiaries of houses. This research analysed the identified challenges experienced in the urban housing based on the existing literature and theories on PPP. Findings reflect that, despite challenges, there is confirmation that the PPP concept is a catalyst to addressing urban housing delivery by using private investment.

INTRODUCTION

In Public-Private Partnership, a local authority signs a long-term contract with a private entity for the delivery of some services (Iossa & Martmort, 2015). According to Iossa and Martmort (2015), the private entity takes responsibility for building infrastructure and financing the project. The concept of PPP relates to a partnership where local authorities work with the private sector in the provision of housing (PPP Unit Report, 2014). In this partnership, local authorities avail land and the private sector contributes resources, such as technical expertise and financial capital, and the parties share profits from the sales of finished housing units (PPP Unit Report, 2014). PPP in Windhoek were initiated in order to encourage private sector involvement in the development of affordable housing. The aim of such part-

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nerships is to ensure that serviced land is delivered to those in need on time, within affordable means and within acceptable quality standards. Housing is considered as an essential need of every citizen; therefore, housing provision assumes an important objective of all governments (UN 2011). The CoW has not been able to deliver serviced land for housing and township development since 2008, a situation which has led to an acute shortage of housing in the City (CoW Mayoral Annual Report, 2013). In 2013, the CoW launched the concept of PPP in order to fast track land provision for affordable urban housing delivery in the Otjomuise location. Recent years have seen an increase in cooperation between the public and private sectors for the development of infrastructure (Cheng & Yu, 2010). The CoW's PPP project concept for urban housing delivery was initiated based on civic engagement basis. Here in the private sector involves and local authorities avail land and the private sector contributes resources in terms of expertise, finance etc. Urban housing delivery has, however, remained a challenge and a thorny issue for the CoW, despite the introduction of the Public-Private Partnership project to fast track delivery of serviced land and housing. The PPP Unit Report (2014) illustrates that the CoW has a demand supply mismatch. According to the PPP Unit Report (2014), from 2001 – 2014, the population of Windhoek grew by 3.4% per year on average, adding a total of 92, 300 people to the city's population. The PPP Unit Report (2014) further wails the fact that the population has experienced compound growth, yet the number of flats and houses completed has been on a declining trend. This is in spite of reckoning PPP in urban housing delivery, as an innovative concept aimed at reducing housing shortages in urban areas.

Hence, adopting a qualitative research design and case study research strategy with inductive approach using research questions instead of a hypothesis, this chapter aims at investigating PPP's urban housing civic engagement process, delivery encounters and prospects, at Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. The population for the study was 75, consisting of 15 Housing department staff at the CoW, 10 private partners who were once or are currently contracted by the city through PPPs for urban housing delivery and 50 housing beneficiaries. Further with probability sampling procedure using the simple random technique the researcher opted for a small sample of twenty-seven (25) in order to ensure accurate and representative results. Out of a population of 15 staff at the CoW, the researcher utilised a small sample of 10 staff, and out of a population of 10 private partners, the researcher utilised 5. The researcher also had a large population of 50 housing beneficiaries and only utilised 10. The total sample utilised for the study was therefore 25. Using qualitative survey data collection was done thru questionnaires designed to obtain information from the selected sample. The questions were based on different aspects of urban housing delivery in the CoW using Public-Private Partnerships. A total of twenty-seven (27) questionnaires were administered. Likert scale was used with 5 points, namely strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questionnaire also consisted of open ended questions. Data was analysed using Microsoft Word 2016 and Microsoft excel 2016 to arrive at frequency tables and percentages.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Housing system is a complex set of interacting tenures and sub-markets (Badcock & Beer, 2000). The tenure categories are owner-occupation, private rental, public rental and community housing. Moreover, each stakeholder has its own interests and expertise in specific stages of producing and managing the affordable housing asset. Furthermore, a lack of trust and confidence with other stakeholders has constrained innovation and partnership options. Hence, there is a need to work across boundaries to be able to coordinate and to optimize the resources and to maximize housing outcomes (Sullivan & Skelcher,

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