



Gulf Organisation for Research and Development  
**International Journal of Sustainable Built Environment**

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Original Article/Research

# A review of Critical Project Management Success Factors (CPMSF) for sustainable social housing in Nigeria

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Received 24 December 2013; accepted 10 August 2014

## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to investigate and establish the Critical Project Management Success Factors (CPMSF) for the sustainable social (public) housing estates' delivery/provision in Nigeria. The current housing estate deficit faced in the country is credited to poor and inadequate housing delivery and provision by various agencies. **Method/design:** Documentary analysis of data collection was used in the study which involved an extensive and investigative theoretical review of online and visual document resources, followed by an interpretative identification of categories and limits of various materials and information considered vital to the phenomenon in the study. The documents were analysed with a content analysis approach under four criteria of how: authentic; credible; representative; and meaningful. **Findings/results:** The study reveals that 22 Critical Project Management Success Factors (CPMSF) are essential for the achievement of sustainable social (public) housing estates' delivery/provision in Nigeria. These relate to: the project managers' performance; the organisation that owns the development project; the characteristics of the team members; and the external project environment. At the same time, the study reveals that these are social, economic, and environmental factors that are associated with the triple objectives of sustainable development. **Originality/value:** This study reflection aims to resolve or reduce to a minimum the acknowledged housing estate delivery and provision inadequacy problems in the country, and by exploring this phenomenon, best practise project management techniques will be understood and used to provide sustainable social (public) housing estate units for the Nigerian populace.

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**Keywords:** Critical success factors; Project management; Housing delivery and provision; Social/public housing estates; Sustainable development

## 1. Introduction

Housing is not only the edifice of sustainable communities, but concerns the renovation of communities and creating places where people would continually live and work

for present and future generations ([Kabir and Bustani, 2012](#)). Housing also provides the essential amenities and infrastructural facilities of necessity among the indispensable human needs for a safe, secure and comfortable life and living in the built environment. Effective and efficient social housing estate provision provides evidence of the social and economic contribution towards the growth and development of a country; as well as providing a link between the corporeal growth of an urban built environment, and its social and economic outcomes. Housing in

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Peer review under responsibility of The Gulf Organisation for Research and Development.

terms of the built environment *inter alia* provides: accommodation; jobs; education; and health services; which in the research context must be: accessible; safe; hygienic; aesthetically pleasing; and also sustainable (Jiboye, 2011). Housing estates' successful delivery and the provision of such housing will avert housing estate shortages and deficits that have remained one of the major challenges facing developed and developing countries of the world today.

The present level of housing estate delivery and the current provision deficits and challenges in Nigeria run contrary to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nation Habitat Agenda 21 (UN-Habitat, 2006) which provides for the provision and delivery of adequate housing that is safe, secure, accessible, affordable and sanitary as a fundamental human right. This indicates that everyone should have access to housing and the infrastructural facilities as the absence of any of the essential facilities and amenities makes the housing estates provision uncomfortable for human life and living in the built environment.

In Nigeria, the government after acknowledging the universally accepted human rights has (since the period of colonialism (up to 1960) to the present civilian administration) engaged in several initiatives and programmes of housing. These were aimed to sustainably deliver and provide ample housing/housing estates for the citizens (FMLHUD, 2011). Despite all these efforts, sustainable housing and housing estates' delivery and provision when compared to the increasing population remain a major problem facing the country. Housing according to the NHP (2011) is defined as the process of providing safe, comfortable, attractive, functional, affordable and identified shelter in a proper setting within a neighbourhood. This is expected to be, supported by continuous maintenance of the built environment for the daily living activities of individuals/families within the community while reflecting their socio-economic, cultural aspirations and preferences.

Irrespective of how good and elaborate this definition is, the sustainable development or sustainability characteristics such as energy efficiency and resource conservation for enhanced quality of the housing estates' units and human life is completely omitted. Hence, the achievement of sustainable housing estate units' delivery becomes a philosophy to question within Nigerian housing policy, initiatives and programmes. Again, if the universally accepted human rights on housing for all must be achieved, then the housing definition within the ambit of the national housing policy must change to incorporate the sustainability features earlier highlighted. However, this manifest itself in delayed completion, poor quality production and a lack of the needed infrastructure such as good road access, water and electricity.

For example, the five hundred (500) housing estate units earmarked to be provided in all the 36 states during the last civilian dispensation (2003–2007) have mostly been abandoned; such as those located in Elele Alimini (Emohua Local Government Area), Isiokpo (Ikwerre Local Government area) in the Rivers State. Another example is that of

approximately 582,000 housing units from 1971 to 1995 expected to be produced under these programmes, only 84,000 (representing a total percent of 15%) of these units were actually built (Ademiluyi, 2010). Many of these programmes did not move beyond their initial first phase.

The second 5-year housing programme implemented during the Third Development Plan period (1975–1980) proposed a total of 202,000 units. Of these, 50,000 units were to be built in Lagos and about 8000 units in each of the (then) other 19 states of the country. At the end of the programme, only 8500 units were built in Lagos while only 20,000 of the proposed total of 152,000 were provided in the rest of the country (Ademiluyi, 2010). These housing estates have become white elephants in the community while people are homeless and the government has not returned to these housing projects for the past 10 years.

Therefore, it becomes imperative to begin to identify issues that need tackling and integrating into the project management practise of the housing estates' delivery for sustainable housing provision in Nigeria.

Sustainability was first conceptualised in the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) summit (Bruntland, 1987). It provided that a sustainable development is “*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs*” (Bruntland (1987), cited in Cooper and Jones (2008) and Brandon and Lombardi, 2011). In this sense, sustainable development provides a frame to help ensure long-term ecological, social, and economic growth in society (Ding, 2008) and to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. Brandon and Lombardi (2011), Edum-Fotwe and Price (2009) and Worika (2002) suggest that sustainable development is conceived in many different ways; and predominantly in the context of: environmental issues (Bruntland, 1987); economic (Ding, 2008); social (Ding, 2008); political developments (Worika, 2002); and sustaining created assets benefits (Franks, 2006).

This divergence depends on the interest (Worika, 2002); the assessment and evaluation strategy for sustainability (Brandon and Lombardi, 2011); as well as cultural variation, ideological preference, and the development purpose (Worika, 2002).

As a result, there are today over 300 definitions of sustainable development published which represent the products of diverse world views and competing vested interests in the field (De Vries and Peterson, 2008; Moles and Kelly, 2000). However, the problem today is deducing from the definitions to establish a difference and whether the alignment of the features in social housing estate sustainability has been fully utilised in line with the goal of its general objectives. It is in this light that Franks (2006) opined that understanding what represents sustainable and unsustainable development is essential in project management. However, it is largely a matter of prejudiced views which may express public preferences. Boothroyd's (1991) work specified that it is sustainable development

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