

Institutional and Financial Barriers to Low-Income Housing Delivery in Nigeria:

Evidence from the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, Abuja, Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria faces a severe housing crisis, with a 28 million housing-unit deficit as of 2023, affecting mostly low-income individuals who represent the country's largest demographic. Most available studies focus on policy perspectives, programmes and budgets rather than the views of officials who implement these programmes. This research addresses this gap by analysing low-income housing delivery from the perspective of staff of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in Abuja and examining reported institutional, financial and policy limitations. A descriptive survey design collected primary data from 32 Ministry employees using structured questionnaires and census sampling. Findings revealed contrasting perceptions: 78.2% considered delivery levels high, 40.6% indicated persistent challenges, while 87.6% were optimistic about future prospects ($\chi^2 = 12.25-22.00$, $p < .05$). High construction costs, weak mortgage markets, a narrow National Housing Fund contributor base and implementation gaps remained key barriers. The study provides institutional-level evidence for improving low-income housing delivery in Nigeria.

Keywords: Affordable housing delivery, Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, housing affordability, housing deficit, housing finance, housing policy, low-income housing, National Housing Fund, Nigeria, public-private partnership

INTRODUCTION

Housing is viewed as one of the most essential elements of human existence, along with food and clothing, in fulfilling a person's right to a life of dignity and well-being. However, housing serves as more than just a physical place of shelter; it also embodies the social, cultural and economic values of a society and is one of the best measures of civilisation and living standards (Olotuah, 2000). Therefore, the provision of affordable housing is one of the key development priorities and has enormous implications for public health, productivity and social stability.

Housing is an enormous and growing problem in Nigeria. From 1991 through 2023, Nigeria's housing deficit grew from 7 million units to an estimated 28 million units, representing an increase of 300% in approximately three decades and more than twice the population growth rate

during the same period (Dataphyte, 2023). Closing this housing deficit will require an estimated \$21 trillion, equivalent to approximately 72% of Nigeria's total approved federal budget for 2024 (The State House, 2023; Budget Office of the Federation, 2024). Such estimates illustrate both the scale and systemic nature of Nigeria's housing problem.

The low-income population has experienced the worst effects of the affordability crisis in Nigeria. The Nigerian National Housing Policy defines the low-income group as people who earn a salary of ₦100,000 or less annually, classified within government salary grades 01 to 06, or are self-employed. According to Wahab (2006), approximately 57% of Nigeria's population lives below the poverty line, on less than US\$1.00 per day, making it extremely difficult for most

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Nigerians to afford market-rate housing. Based on data from the Central Bank of Nigeria, less than 10% of Nigerians interested in buying a home can do so (Dataphyte, 2023).

Although the Federal Government has made many attempts to address the housing problem through various interventions, including creating the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN), establishing the National Housing Fund (NHF), and most recently launching the Renewed Hope Cities and Estates Programme, there continues to be a significant gap between housing supply and demand in the country. The persistence of this gap raises questions regarding the underlying institutional, financial and policy factors that influence housing delivery in Nigeria. While existing interventions demonstrate sustained government commitment to addressing the housing deficit, their limited impact suggests that the challenge extends beyond the existence of policies and programmes to the institutional and financial conditions affecting their implementation.

Problem Statement

Nigeria's housing deficit continues to worsen despite government interventions over the years, including the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, the National Housing Fund, and the more recent Renewed Hope Cities and Estates Programme, among other initiatives. The persistence of this problem, even in the face of increasing intervention options, suggests that the challenge may not simply lie in the absence of government interventions or policy tools, but also in their implementation. Institutional capacity, financing mechanisms and policy implementation may therefore contribute to the continuing gap between housing interventions and actual delivery outcomes. This research, therefore, focuses on the implementation of low-income housing programmes and the institutional and financial barriers affecting their delivery.

Research Gap

Current literature on the Nigerian housing situation is mostly concerned with the analysis of factors related to housing policy and the economy, as demonstrated by studies such as Nubi (2008), Agbola and Olatubara (2003), and Raji (2008), among others. Many researchers analyse the problem from a macroeconomic perspective using national statistics, policy

documents and programme records. While these studies provide important explanations of Nigeria's housing deficit at the policy and macroeconomic levels, considerably less attention has been given to how officials directly involved in housing administration and implementation perceive current housing conditions and delivery challenges.

This represents an important empirical and institutional gap because the perspectives of implementing officials can reveal possible mismatches between government assessments of housing interventions and actual delivery outcomes. Specifically, limited empirical research has examined low-income housing delivery from the perspective of officials responsible for implementing housing policies and programmes within Nigeria's federal housing institutions. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap using first-hand data gathered from staff of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in Abuja.

The study investigates the nature, opportunities and difficulties associated with delivering housing for low-income people in Nigeria. The data were collected from various sources, including staff of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in Abuja. A review of housing policies in Nigeria from independence to the present was also undertaken to provide context for the empirical data.

The study contributes to existing scholarship by providing institutional-level empirical evidence that complements previous macro-level analyses of Nigeria's housing deficit. By examining the perceptions of officials directly involved in housing administration and management, the study provides insights into institutional, financial and policy implementation barriers that may not be adequately captured through national statistics and policy analysis alone.

Research Objectives

This study pursues three objectives:

- i). To investigate the meaning of the term "low-income housing delivery" within Nigeria's contemporary policy and institutional context.
- ii). To identify the institutional and financial barriers that hinder low-income housing delivery.
- iii). To evaluate the opportunities available for

improving housing delivery outcomes based on the perceptions of officials involved in housing administration and management.

Together, these objectives provide a basis for examining the relationship between housing policy intentions, institutional implementation and actual low-income housing delivery outcomes in Nigeria, while addressing the identified gap in existing housing research.

THEORY

Conceptual Framework: Housing as a Multi-Dimensional Good

Housing is much more than a roof over someone's head; it can also be seen as a manufactured good that the consumer has purchased, as an asset to the household, as one way to reproduce society, and as a means of protecting against inflation in the case of an investment (Nubi, 2008). This multi-faceted definition of housing creates a very complicated situation in many housing markets, particularly in developing countries, where population growth continues to surpass the ability of the housing market to supply new homes. Many factors, such as cultural preferences, social status, income level,

quality of land and availability of infrastructure, influence both the physical characteristics and economic value of housing (Rapoport, 1969). Structural impediments to housing delivery in Nigeria and much of sub-Saharan Africa include insufficient means of allocating land, deficient mortgage financing systems and inadequate infrastructure.

While Nubi (2008) conceptualises housing as a multidimensional good with social, economic and investment functions, Rapoport (1969) emphasizes the influence of cultural, social and environmental conditions on housing characteristics. Taken together, these perspectives demonstrate that housing delivery cannot be understood solely in terms of the number of units supplied. It must also be examined in relation to affordability, accessibility, institutional arrangements, financing mechanisms and the broader socioeconomic environment within which housing is produced and consumed.

Based on these relationships, the conceptual framework presented in **Figure 1** illustrates how institutional, financial and policy factors interact to influence low-income housing delivery

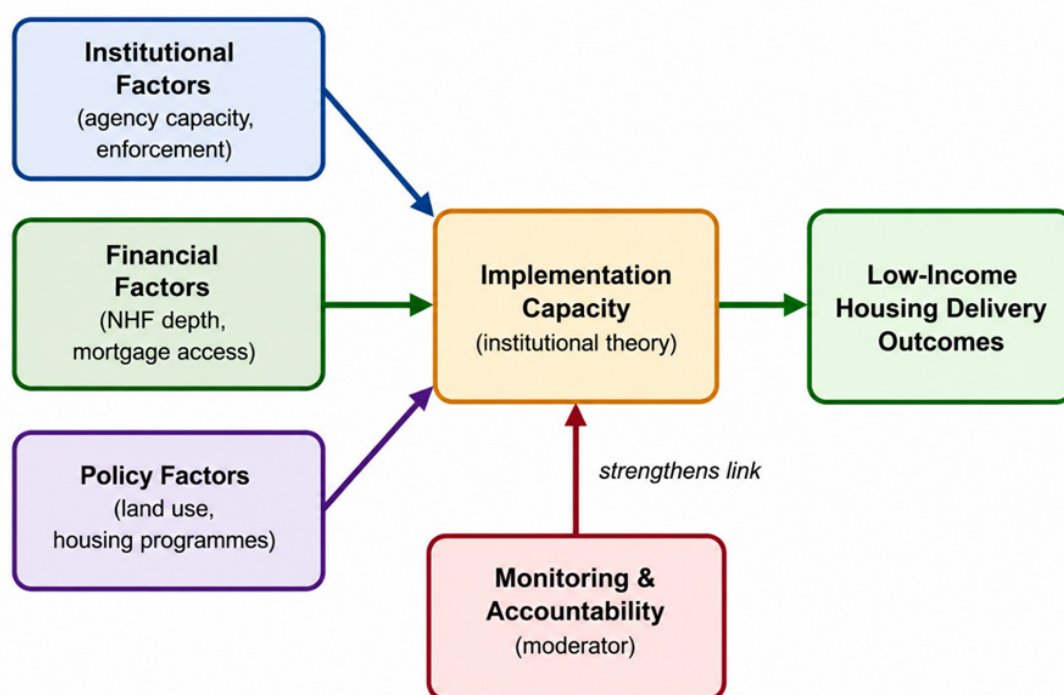


FIGURE 1

Framework linking factors to low-income housing delivery outcomes

Source: Author, 2026

outcomes in Nigeria.

In the conceptual framework, institutional factors, financial factors and policy factors constitute the principal independent variables because they represent the conditions through which low-income housing programmes are planned, financed and implemented. Low-income housing delivery constitutes the dependent variable and is reflected in outcomes such as housing accessibility, affordability, quantity and implementation effectiveness. Monitoring and accountability capacity performs a moderating role because the effectiveness of institutional arrangements, financial mechanisms and housing policies depends partly on the extent to which implementation is monitored and responsible institutions are held accountable. The framework therefore proposes that improvements in housing delivery require not only appropriate policies and financial resources but also effective institutional implementation, monitoring and accountability.

The affordability aspect of the issue faced by people living in poverty regarding their access to adequate and affordable housing is of great importance. Ogieto (1987) identifies cost and quantity as two major factors influencing housing provision. The difficulty in providing housing therefore arises partly from the substantial gap between the price and quantity of housing available to households. Under circumstances where costs are extremely high for each housing unit, the number of people who can access formal housing development becomes extremely limited. Okupe and Windapo (2000) similarly found a wide discrepancy between housing affordability and income in Nigeria, resulting in low-income earners being unable to access the formal housing market.

Afolayan (1987) attributes the high cost of building construction to rising building-material costs, inflation, professional service charges, contractors' profits and borrowing costs. Considered together, these studies demonstrate that affordability is not determined by household income alone. Rather, it reflects the interaction between housing production costs, financing conditions, market prices and household purchasing capacity. This relationship is particularly important for low-income housing because increases in construction and financing costs can undermine accessibility even where housing programmes have been

established.

History of Housing Delivery Policy in Nigeria

Understanding contemporary institutional and financial barriers requires consideration of how Nigeria's housing delivery system has evolved historically. Until 1928, people in most communities built homes through self-help systems based on clan membership, where members assisted one another in building homes (Nigerian Housing Policy [NHP], 1991). Starting with the Bubonic Plague between 1928 and 1929, significant colonial intervention resulted in the establishment of the Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) to plan, develop and supervise the colony's growth as an urban centre, including providing housing mainly for civil servants. Following Nigeria's independence, regional housing corporations were established in each of the three regions—Eastern, Western and Northern—and continued to provide services mainly in their respective regional capitals of Enugu, Ibadan and Kaduna because of limited geographical reach (NHP, 1991).

The period from 1962 to 1975 saw housing designated as a sector of social consumption and, as a result, there was limited public funding in the sector. Policy signals questioning whether the housing sector was viable for private-sector investment discouraged such investment, particularly in low-income housing, despite the private sector providing more than 80% of residential units in Nigeria (Nubi, 2008). The result was a significant and chronic shortage of housing. This period demonstrates an early tension between dependence on private housing provision and inadequate policy incentives for private investment in affordable housing.

From 1975 onwards, the Nigerian Federal Government began to assume a more active role in housing delivery. The Nigerian Building Society was restructured as the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN), which became the apex institution for housing finance in Nigeria. The Employees Housing Schemes Decree of 1979 mandated all employers with 50 or more employees to provide housing or housing loans to their employees. Commercial banks were also instructed to devote 5–6% of their total deposits to mortgage financing for real estate, while insurance companies were required to invest 25% of their life insurance

deposits in housing. Despite these initiatives, the delivery of new housing stock continued to decline. The contrast between expanding institutional interventions and declining housing delivery suggests that establishing institutions and financing requirements did not automatically translate into effective implementation.

The original National Housing Policy (NHP) of 1991 aimed to provide all Nigerian citizens with adequate, affordable and decent housing. Despite this intention, the national housing deficit increased substantially from approximately 7 million units in 1991 to 12 million units in 2007 (Punchng, 2023). This increase indicates weaknesses in the effective implementation of the original NHP. To address these implementation challenges, a revised NHP was developed in 2004, establishing new institutions such as the Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN) and the Building Material Producers Association of Nigeria (BUMPAN), while restructuring the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria as a secondary mortgage market (Ebie, 2004).

Additionally, the National Housing Programme was established to provide 121,000 housing units for citizens throughout Nigeria (NHP, 1994–1995). However, the programme was unsuccessful because of insufficient funding, poor planning and execution, inappropriate pricing of NHP homes and growing inflation (Thisdayonline, 2009). From 1973 to 2006, the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) developed only approximately 30,000 housing units throughout Nigeria. Considering the substantial population growth during this period, the contribution of the FHA to addressing the national housing deficit was inadequate.

The historical evidence therefore reveals a recurring pattern: successive governments introduced new policies, institutions and programmes, yet housing delivery remained considerably below national demand. This suggests that Nigeria's housing challenge is not simply a consequence of insufficient policy interventions but also reflects persistent implementation, institutional capacity and financing problems.

The National Housing Fund and Mortgage Finance

The historical limitations of direct public housing provision increased the importance of mortgage

finance and the National Housing Fund as mechanisms for expanding access to housing. All Nigerian workers with a monthly income of ₦3,000 or more are mandated to contribute to the National Housing Fund (NHF) under Act No. 3 of 1992. The NHF was created to provide access to long-term mortgage financing through the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria using contributions from employees in the public and private sectors, with at least 2.5% of an employee's salary being set aside for the NHF.

The NHF is managed by the FMBN, and loans are provided through Primary Mortgage Institutions (PMIs) at lower interest rates than those available through commercial banking institutions. The current NHF product offers loans of up to ₦50,000,000, increased from ₦15,000,000, at 6% interest for a maximum period of 30 years and with an equity contribution of 10% (FMBN, 2025; FMHUD, 2024). By comparison, commercial bank mortgage interest rates range from 18% to 23% (FMHUD, 2024). This substantial difference demonstrates the potential importance of the NHF in improving housing affordability for households unable to access conventional mortgage finance.

Although the NHF has multiple structural advantages, its performance has historically been unsatisfactory. Between 1977 and 1990, the FMBN approved only 8,874 loans against more than 1,000,000 applications submitted (NHP, 1991). This considerable difference between applications and approvals illustrates the limited capacity of the mortgage system to translate housing demand into effective access to finance.

Recent reforms under the current administration have produced more encouraging results. In 2024, NHF collections exceeded ₦103 billion compared with ₦100 billion in 2023, while NHF loan approvals increased to ₦71.5 billion from ₦39.7 billion in 2023. The FMBN also recorded an operational surplus exceeding ₦11.58 billion for the first time in more than 30 years (Punch, 2025; Nairametrics, 2025). In addition, new loan offerings were introduced through the NHF to expand access, including the Rent-to-Own programme, Home Renovation Loan and Diaspora NHF Mortgage.

These recent financial improvements indicate progress in institutional performance. However,

increased collections, loan approvals and financial surpluses should be distinguished from actual housing delivery outcomes. Growth in institutional activity does not necessarily demonstrate that sufficient affordable housing units have reached low-income households. This distinction is particularly relevant to the present study because it provides a basis for examining whether institutional assessments of progress correspond with actual housing delivery outcomes.

Recent Policy Initiatives

The limitations of earlier housing programmes and mortgage mechanisms have prompted renewed government intervention through large-scale housing initiatives and public-private partnerships. Launched by President Bola Tinubu in February 2024, the Renewed Hope Cities and Estates Programme aims to build 50,000 housing units in Phase One across all six of Nigeria's geopolitical zones, including the Federal Capital Territory, with a longer-term goal of 100,000 housing units nationwide (Tinubu, 2025; FMHUD, 2024).

Construction is underway at several locations, including Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos, with 2,000 housing units; Karsana, Abuja, with 3,112 units; and Kano, with 1,500 units. The programme operates as a Public-Private Partnership (PPP), using ₦ 100 billion in off-taker guarantees provided by the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria and a partnership with Shelter Afrique Development Bank (SADB) to finance 5,000 units (Radarr Africa, 2025). As of early 2025, more than 10,112 housing units were reportedly under construction across 14 locations, with the programme expected to create approximately 252,800 construction jobs (FMHUD, 2024).

Although these programmes are significant in terms of ambition, analysts identify continuing structural constraints, including high construction costs arising from expensive building materials, inadequate infrastructure at project sites and limited depth of mortgage financing (Zawya, 2024). These concerns are consistent with previous findings on PPP housing projects in Nigeria. Ibem and Aduwo (2012), in their study of PPP housing schemes in Ogun State, found that houses constructed through such arrangements could cost considerably more than comparable alternatives, while beneficiaries remained unable to satisfy mortgage conditions.

The comparison between earlier PPP experiences and the Renewed Hope programme raises an important concern. While PPPs may expand the financial and institutional capacity available for housing production, they do not automatically guarantee affordability for low-income beneficiaries. Consequently, the success of the Renewed Hope initiative should be evaluated not only by the number of units constructed or financial resources mobilised but also by whether intended low-income households can actually access and afford the completed housing.

Unresolved Gaps in the Literature

The reviewed literature reveals several unresolved gaps. First, existing studies have largely examined Nigerian housing through policy, economic and programme-level perspectives, while limited attention has been given to the perceptions of officials directly responsible for implementing housing programmes. This institutional perspective is important because implementing officials can provide evidence on how policies, financing mechanisms and administrative arrangements operate in practice.

Second, few of the studies reviewed examine a single housing programme longitudinally from its original objectives through implementation to eventual outcomes. Most studies focus either on original programme goals or subsequent evaluations, but rarely examine both stages for the same programme. This makes it difficult to determine precisely where implementation problems emerge and how they change over time.

Third, the experiences of informal-sector and expatriate contributors regarding the NHF remain insufficiently examined because much of the existing literature focuses on formal-sector contributors and institutions. This is particularly significant in Nigeria, where a substantial proportion of economically active people operate outside formal employment arrangements.

Fourth, limited comparative research examines housing delivery outcomes across the different institutions and entities involved in Nigeria's housing sector. Such comparisons could reveal differences in institutional effectiveness, financing arrangements and implementation capacity.

Finally, although existing studies identify high

construction costs, weak mortgage systems, inadequate infrastructure and policy limitations, they provide limited empirical evidence on how these barriers interact from the perspective of officials responsible for housing administration. The present study addresses this gap by examining institutional, financial and policy barriers through first-hand evidence from staff of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in Abuja.

Theoretical Framework: Institutional Theory of Housing Delivery

The unresolved institutional and implementation gaps identified in the literature provide the basis for applying institutional theory to the study. This study adopts institutional theory grounded in the framework developed by North (1990), which proposes that economic and social outcomes are determined not merely by the availability of resources but also by the rules, organisations and enforcement mechanisms through which those resources are utilised.

Applied to housing, the continuing shortage of housing in Nigeria can therefore be understood not only as a consequence of inadequate funding and land but also as a product of weaknesses in the institutional environment. These include fragmented land administration under the Land Use Act, an underdeveloped mortgage system and weaknesses in the enforcement of housing regulations, including provisions such as the Employees Housing Schemes Decree.

Institutional theory distinguishes between formal institutions, such as laws, agencies and financial instruments, and informal institutions, including bureaucratic practices, political incentives and administrative culture (North, 1990). Nigeria's housing history demonstrates the importance of this distinction. Formally, the country has developed an increasingly sophisticated institutional architecture comprising the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, the National Housing Fund, the Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria and more recent interventions such as the Renewed Hope Cities and Estates Programme.

Informally, however, implementation has repeatedly encountered difficulties. This is illustrated by the Federal Housing Authority producing only approximately 30,000 housing units over a period of 33 years and by the limited

number of NHF-related loans approved compared with the volume of applications reported historically. The contrast between extensive formal institutional arrangements and limited delivery outcomes suggests that the existence of institutions alone does not guarantee effective housing provision.

This distinction provides an important theoretical explanation for the findings investigated in the present study. Institutional activity can increase through additional programmes, loan approvals, financial products and policy reforms while actual housing delivery remains inadequate relative to national need. From an institutional theory perspective, this reflects an implementation deficit in which formal institutional structures develop more rapidly than their capacity to produce intended outcomes.

Framing the study in this way also provides a basis for explaining the apparent contrast examined in the research: officials may perceive housing delivery as significant while simultaneously acknowledging substantial institutional, financial and implementation barriers. Their assessment may reflect institutional activity, including increased loan approvals, new financial products and housing programmes, rather than verified outcomes measured by the number, affordability and accessibility of housing units delivered to low-income households.

Institutional theory therefore provides the analytical lens through which the study examines the relationship between formal housing institutions, financing mechanisms, policy implementation and low-income housing delivery outcomes. It also complements the conceptual framework in **Figure 1** by explaining why institutional, financial and policy inputs may fail to produce expected housing outcomes when monitoring, accountability and implementation capacity remain weak.

Literature Review Synthesis

Overall, the reviewed literature demonstrates that Nigeria has developed numerous housing policies, financing mechanisms, institutions and programmes aimed at improving housing delivery. However, historical evidence shows a persistent gap between institutional activity and actual housing outcomes. While some studies emphasize

affordability, construction costs and mortgage constraints (Afolayan, 1987; Ogiato, 1987; Okupe & Windapo, 2000), others highlight weaknesses in housing policy, institutional implementation and PPP delivery (Ibem & Aduwo, 2012; Nubi, 2008). These perspectives are complementary rather than independent because financial constraints operate within institutional and policy environments that determine how housing resources are mobilised and delivered.

The literature further indicates that recent reforms have expanded NHF collections, mortgage products and large-scale housing programmes, but questions remain regarding whether these institutional improvements translate into affordable and accessible housing for low-income households. Most importantly, limited research has examined these issues from the perspective of officials directly involved in housing administration and implementation. By combining the multidimensional conception of housing with institutional theory and first-hand evidence from Federal Ministry staff, the present study addresses this gap and provides a basis for examining the institutional, financial and policy conditions shaping low-income housing delivery in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy, which was appropriate because the research sought to describe and statistically assess respondents' perceptions of low-income housing delivery using structured quantitative data. The philosophy supported the systematic measurement of respondents' opinions and the use of statistical procedures to determine patterns and the significance of responses.

A descriptive research methodology was chosen for this study, as the research aim was to describe the current situation relating to the delivery of low-income housing in Nigeria without manipulating any variables. The location for the study was Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, which is the governing centre for housing policy within Nigeria and the operating base for the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing.

The study population consisted of 32 employees from the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing

in Abuja, selected because of their institutional knowledge of housing policy and housing delivery. Because of the limited size of the available population, the census method of sampling was used; therefore, all 32 employees in the identified study population were included in the research. The census approach was considered appropriate because the small and specialised population could be studied in its entirety, thereby avoiding sampling error and ensuring that the perspectives of all available officials with relevant institutional knowledge were represented.

Data for this study were collected through structured questionnaires administered to all respondents, with their responses constituting the only source of primary empirical data. Before administering the survey, the questionnaire was carefully examined for content clarity and relevance by two experts in housing policy at the Ministry. The questionnaire was subsequently reviewed and adjusted according to their comments. The experts' assessment therefore helped establish face and content validity by ensuring that the questionnaire items were clear, relevant and adequately aligned with the objectives of the study.

Participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate. Their responses remained completely anonymous, and no personally identifiable information was collected. These procedures ensured that participation was voluntary and that respondents' confidentiality and anonymity were protected throughout the research process.

Secondary data were obtained from published policy papers, peer-reviewed literature and reports issued by the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN), Federal Housing Authority (FHA), and Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. The secondary sources were used to provide policy, institutional and historical context for interpreting the primary survey findings. The use of both primary and secondary evidence strengthened the contextual interpretation of the findings, although the questionnaire responses remained the study's primary empirical dataset.

The questionnaire consisted of two distinct sections. The first section focused on respondents' demographic characteristics, including age, sex/

gender, educational qualifications and years of experience, as presented in **Tables 1** through **4**. The second section consisted of attitudinal statements relating to the three objectives of the research, including respondents' opinions on the level of housing delivery, the seriousness of financial and institutional challenges affecting housing development, and prospects for improvement.

In the second section, respondents provided answers using a four-point Likert-type scale comprising Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, as presented in **Tables 5** through **7**. The use of a four-point scale required respondents to indicate either agreement or disagreement with each statement rather than selecting a neutral midpoint. This structure facilitated the assessment of the direction and distribution of respondents' perceptions regarding the principal issues investigated in the study.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis. Respondents' demographic characteristics and distributions of responses were analysed using frequencies and percentages. Chi-square goodness-of-fit tests were performed to determine whether the observed distributions of responses differed significantly from an equal distribution across the response categories for the major study measures concerning the level of housing delivery, challenges experienced by the housing bureaucracy and prospects for improvement.

The level of statistical significance was predetermined at $\alpha = .05$ for all tests. Where a chi-square test produced $p < .05$, the null hypothesis that responses were equally distributed across the categories was rejected. Such a result indicated that respondents' answers were significantly concentrated in particular response categories rather than being evenly distributed. This statistical procedure provided a basis for determining whether the observed patterns of responses were statistically significant.

Methodological Limitations

A key limitation of this study arises from the use of 32 respondents from a single federal institution. Consequently, the generalisability of the findings to all institutions involved in housing delivery across Nigeria is limited. The findings should therefore be interpreted primarily as representing

the perceptions and institutional experiences of the surveyed officials rather than as statistically representative of the entire national housing bureaucracy.

Another limitation is that the empirical findings are based on respondents' self-reported perceptions. Officials' assessments of housing delivery may reflect institutional experiences and perceptions of programme activity rather than independently verified housing outputs. This limitation is particularly important when interpreting respondents' assessments of the level of housing delivery and should be considered alongside available secondary evidence.

It should also be noted that the primary data for this study were collected in 2023. Subsequent developments within Nigeria's housing policy sector, including the launch of the Renewed Hope Cities and Estates Programme in 2024, have been incorporated into the paper only as contextual framing and are not treated as primary findings of the survey.

Future studies should therefore use larger, multi-institutional samples involving officials from other housing agencies, mortgage institutions and relevant state-level institutions. Such studies would improve the generalisability of the findings and permit comparisons of institutional perceptions and housing delivery experiences across Nigeria.

RESULTS

Respondent Profile

Of the 32 respondents sampled for this study, the majority, 65.6% ($n = 21$), were male, while 34.4% ($n = 11$) were female. Regarding age, the largest proportion of respondents fell within the 31–40 years category (31.3%), followed by those aged 41–50 years (25.0%). In terms of educational qualifications, the largest proportion held OND/HND/BSc qualifications (40.6%), followed by respondents with PGD/MSc/PhD qualifications (31.3%). Regarding work experience, 34.4% of respondents had 3–5 years of experience, while 31.3% had 6–11 years of experience. In terms of staff category, 62.5% were junior staff, while 37.5% were senior staff. The detailed demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in **Tables 1–5**.

Table 1 presents the sex distribution of the 32 respondents who participated in the study.

Table 3 presents the educational qualifications attained by the respondents.

Table 2 presents the age distribution of the respondents across the five age categories included in the study.

Table 4 presents the respondents' years of work experience within the specified categories.

TABLE 1

Sex distribution of respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
Male	21	65.6%
Female	11	34.4%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

TABLE 2

Age distribution of respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percent
Below 20 years	3	9.4%
21–30 years	6	18.8%
31–40 years	10	31.3%
41–50 years	8	25.0%
51–60 years	5	15.6%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

TABLE 3

Educational qualifications of respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
WASSCE/SSCE	4	12.5%
OND/HND/BSc	13	40.6%
PGD/MSc/PhD	10	31.3%
Others	5	15.6%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

TABLE 4

Years of work experience of respondents

Years of experience	Frequency	Percent
0–2 years	8	25.0%
3–5 years	11	34.4%
6–11 years	10	31.3%
Above 12 years	3	9.4%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

The distribution of respondents according to staff category is presented in **Table 5**.

Respondents' Views on Housing Delivery Levels

Respondents were asked to indicate their views regarding the level of low-income housing delivery in Nigeria. **Table 6** presents the distribution of their responses.

As shown in **Table 6**, 31.3% of respondents strongly agreed and 46.9% agreed that the level of low-income housing delivery was high. Combined, 78.2% of respondents therefore agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. In comparison, 15.6% were undecided, while 6.3% disagreed. The results indicate that agreement constituted the dominant response among the surveyed officials.

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test showed that

responses were not equally distributed across the four categories, $\chi^2(3) = 12.25$, $p = .007$. Since $p < .05$, the result indicates a statistically significant difference in the distribution of responses, with responses concentrated predominantly within the agreement categories.

Respondents' Views on Challenges to Low-Income Housing Delivery

Respondents were also asked whether the level of challenges associated with low-income housing delivery was low. Their responses are presented in **Table 7**.

Table 7 shows that 31.3% strongly agreed and 25.0% agreed that the level of challenges associated with low-income housing delivery was low. Together, these categories accounted for 56.3% of respondents. However, 40.6% disagreed

TABLE 5

Staff category distribution of respondents

Staff category	Frequency	Percent
Junior staff	20	62.5%
Senior staff	12	37.5%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

TABLE 6

Respondents' views on low-income housing delivery levels

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agreed	10	31.3%
Agreed	15	46.9%
Undecided	5	15.6%
Disagreed	2	6.3%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

TABLE 7

Respondents' views on whether housing delivery challenges are low

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agreed	10	31.3%
Agreed	8	25.0%
Undecided	1	3.1%
Disagreed	13	40.6%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

with the statement, while 3.1% were undecided. The findings therefore show a relatively divided distribution of responses regarding the severity of challenges, although agreement constituted a slight majority.

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test showed a statistically significant difference in the distribution of responses, $\chi^2(3) = 9.75$, $p = .021$. Since $p < .05$, responses were not equally distributed across the four response categories.

Respondents' Views on Prospects for Low-Income Housing Delivery

Respondents were further asked to assess the future prospects for low-income housing delivery in Nigeria. **Table 8** presents their responses to the statement that the future of low-income housing delivery is bright.

As shown in **Table 8**, 56.3% of respondents strongly agreed and 31.3% agreed that the future of low-income housing delivery was bright. Combined, 87.6% of respondents expressed a positive assessment of future prospects. A further 6.3% were undecided, while 6.3% strongly disagreed. Optimistic responses therefore constituted the largest proportion of responses recorded for this measure.

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test also showed a statistically significant difference in the distribution of responses, $\chi^2(3) = 22.00$, $p < .001$. The result indicates that responses were significantly concentrated in the agreement categories.

Comparative Results Across the Three Measures

To provide a clearer comparison of respondents' assessments across the three principal measures, **Figure 2** presents the response patterns for housing delivery levels, delivery challenges and

future prospects.

Figure 2 shows differences in respondents' assessments across the three measures. Agreement that low-income housing delivery was high accounted for 78.2% of respondents, while 56.3% agreed that the challenges associated with delivery were low. The highest level of agreement was recorded for future prospects, with 87.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the future of low-income housing delivery was bright.

Summary of Findings According to Research Objectives

To consolidate the results and demonstrate their relationship with the research objectives, **Table 9** summarises the principal findings and corresponding empirical evidence.

Overall Findings

Overall, the results show three distinct response patterns among the 32 surveyed officials. First, 78.2% assessed the level of low-income housing delivery as high. Second, respondents were more divided regarding the challenges associated with delivery, with 56.3% agreeing that the level of challenges was low and 40.6% disagreeing. Third, respondents demonstrated the strongest agreement regarding future prospects, with 87.6% indicating that the future of low-income housing delivery was bright.

The chi-square results were statistically significant for all three measures: housing delivery levels, $\chi^2(3) = 12.25$, $p = .007$; challenges to housing delivery, $\chi^2(3) = 9.75$, $p = .021$; and future prospects, $\chi^2(3) = 22.00$, $p < .001$. These findings provide the empirical basis for the subsequent discussion of institutional, financial and policy factors influencing low-income housing delivery in Nigeria.

TABLE 8

Respondents' views on prospects for low-income housing delivery

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agreed	18	56.3%
Agreed	10	31.3%
Undecided	2	6.3%
Strongly disagreed	2	6.3%
Total	32	100.0%

Source: Field survey, 2026

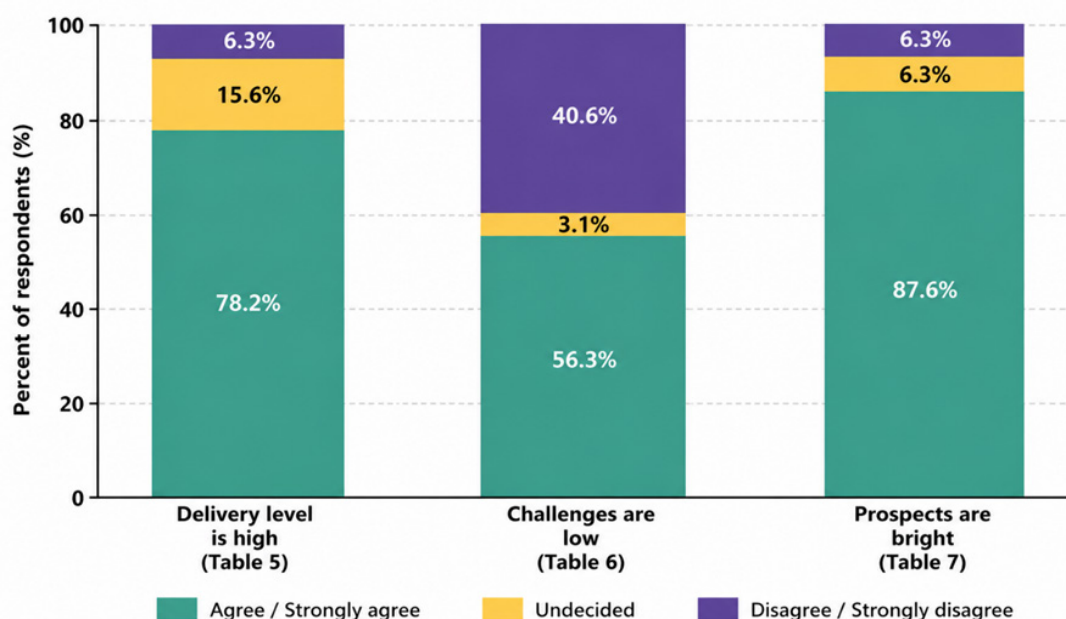


FIGURE 2

Respondents' views across three housing delivery measures

Source: Author, 2026

TABLE 9

Summary of findings according to research objectives

Research objective	Key finding	Empirical evidence
Investigate low-income housing delivery within Nigeria's contemporary policy and institutional context	Respondents generally assessed current low-income housing delivery positively	78.2% agreed or strongly agreed that delivery was high; $\chi^2(3) = 12.25$, $p = .007$
Identify institutional and financial barriers affecting low-income housing delivery	Respondents were comparatively divided regarding whether delivery challenges were low	56.3% agreed or strongly agreed that challenges were low, while 40.6% disagreed; $\chi^2(3) = 9.75$, $p = .021$
Evaluate opportunities and prospects for improving housing delivery outcomes	Respondents expressed a predominantly positive assessment of future delivery prospects	87.6% agreed or strongly agreed that future prospects were bright; $\chi^2(3) = 22.00$, $p < .001$

Source: Field survey, 2026

One correction I made deliberately: the original text said demographic information was in **Tables 1–5** but supplied only **Tables 1–4**. Since the text gives the staff-category figures as 62.5% junior and 37.5% senior, I added **Table 5** using the corresponding frequencies of 20 and 12 respondents. Consequently, the original **Tables 5–7** become **Tables 6–8**, and the new summary table becomes **Table 9**. I also removed the literature comparisons, explanations about institutional loyalty, Renewed Hope reforms, and other discussion material from Results so these can be

handled properly in the Discussion of Findings section.

DISCUSSION

The results highlight a long-standing tension in Nigeria's housing sector, where considerable confidence in government-led and public-private partnership (PPP) programmes exists alongside a historically poor delivery record. Of the 202,000 housing units planned between 1975 and 1985 and 200,000 units between 1985 and 1990, only

14.1% and 23.6%, respectively, were completed. Similarly, less than 5% of the 121,000 units planned under the 1994–1995 National Housing Programme were delivered (Thisdayonline, 2009). The Federal Housing Authority also produced approximately 30,000 units between 1973 and 2006 (Raji, 2008). These outcomes contextualise the finding that 78.2% of respondents considered current low-income housing delivery to be high.

This finding suggests a difference between institutional perceptions of progress and actual delivery outcomes. Ministry officials may assess progress through new programmes, expanded housing finance products and policy reforms, while actual delivery is reflected in completed, affordable and accessible housing. This supports Nubi's (2008) argument that Nigeria's housing challenge extends beyond policy formulation to institutional and economic conditions affecting implementation and Agbola and Olatubara's (2003) observation of persistent gaps between policy intentions and implementation.

Institutional and financial challenges remain significant. Although 56.3% of respondents considered the level of challenges low, 40.6% disagreed. High construction costs, inflation, professional charges and borrowing costs continue to affect affordability (Afolayan, 1987). Ogieto (1987) similarly identifies cost and quantity as major determinants of housing provision, while Okupe and Windapo (2000) highlight disparities between household incomes and housing affordability. Housing finance also remains constrained despite the National Housing Fund providing more favourable mortgage financing than conventional lending.

Respondents nevertheless demonstrated considerable optimism, with 87.6% agreeing that the future of low-income housing delivery was bright. Recent reforms, expanded NHF products and large-scale housing interventions provide some basis for this optimism. However, previous PPP experience indicates that increased private-sector participation does not automatically guarantee affordability. Ibem and Aduwo (2012) found that PPP housing could remain beyond the financial capacity of intended beneficiaries.

The findings support North's (1990) institutional theory by demonstrating that formal institutions,

policies and financing mechanisms do not necessarily guarantee corresponding housing outcomes. Implementation capacity therefore represents an important mechanism through which institutional arrangements translate into delivery. Weak monitoring, enforcement and accountability may allow institutional activity to increase without comparable improvements in affordable housing provision.

The findings consequently imply that housing institutions should strengthen monitoring and evaluation of completed and occupied units, affordability and beneficiary access rather than relying primarily on programme announcements or financing commitments. Overall, sustainable improvement requires stronger implementation capacity, monitoring, accountability and the effective translation of policy commitments into affordable and accessible housing for low-income households.

CONCLUSION

The research assessed the delivery of low-income housing in Nigeria by analysing the perspectives of officials from the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, while contextualising the findings within Nigeria's institutional and housing policy legacy. The findings confirm that the slow progress in housing provision is not necessarily due to a lack of institutional efforts, but because institutional activities often outpace actual delivery. This pattern is explained by institutional theory and supported by the empirical findings of the study. Respondents' optimism regarding ongoing housing programmes and interventions, although statistically strong, should therefore be considered against Nigeria's historical record of housing programmes in which actual delivery frequently fell below stated targets.

The contribution of the present study is twofold. First, it provides institutional-level empirical evidence to complement existing literature that has largely examined Nigeria's housing challenges through macro-level policy and economic analyses. Second, it demonstrates the relevance of institutional theory in explaining the persistent gap between housing policy ambitions and actual housing delivery in Nigeria. In this respect, the study provides a distinctive perspective by examining housing delivery through the

perceptions of officials directly involved in housing administration and relating these perceptions to documented institutional outcomes.

Closing this gap requires adequate financing, reforms in land administration and, importantly, stronger monitoring and accountability systems that require institutions to demonstrate actual delivery rather than programme intentions. The principal implication is that institutional confidence alone is an unreliable measure of housing performance. Housing delivery should instead be assessed through measurable outcomes, including completed and occupied units, affordability, beneficiary access and achievement of stated programme targets.

Future studies should test the application of institutional theory across other housing institutions to determine whether the identified implementation deficit occurs consistently across agencies. Longitudinal studies should also track individual housing programmes from their announcement and implementation through completion, allocation and occupancy rather than relying solely on one-time assessments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, the following recommendations are proposed according to their implementation timeframe:

Short-term recommendations (0–2 years)

- i. *Accelerate the recapitalisation of the FMBN:* The Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria and the Federal Ministry of Finance should expedite the ₦500 billion pilot recapitalisation programme of the FMBN. Increased capitalisation would strengthen the institution's capacity to provide mortgage financing and support mass housing delivery, particularly for low-income households.
- ii. *Establish a public housing delivery tracking system:* The Renewed Hope Programme Secretariat should establish a publicly accessible monitoring system showing units under construction, completion rates and beneficiary profiles. The system should report quarterly on the proportion of the first-phase target of 50,000 units completed, average time from land development to occupancy, and the number of qualifying low-income households

benefiting from completed projects.

Medium-term recommendations (2–5 years)

- i. *Expand participation in the National Housing Fund:* The National Housing Fund and FMBN should broaden eligibility and contribution mechanisms to accommodate informal-sector workers and Nigerians living abroad. Flexible contribution arrangements would expand the contributor base and increase access to housing finance among groups currently underserved by formal mortgage systems.
- ii. *Strengthen local production of building materials:* The Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment should support greater domestic production of cement, aluminium, steel and other essential construction materials. Reducing dependence on imported materials could lower construction costs and improve the affordability of housing delivered to low-income households.

Long-term recommendations (5+ years)

- i. *Reform land administration and titling:* The National Assembly and State Governments should review the Land Use Act of 1978 and simplify land titling and approval processes. Practical measures should include establishing maximum processing periods for governor's consent, digitising land-title records and improving institutional coordination to reduce delays and associated development costs.
- ii. *Strengthen multi-institutional and longitudinal research:* Academic and research institutions should undertake studies involving larger samples across the FMBN, FHA, state housing corporations and other housing institutions. Comparative and longitudinal studies should track programmes from policy formulation through implementation, completion, allocation and occupancy to establish whether institutional activities translate into sustainable housing outcomes.

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