

Challenges of Implementation of Neighborhood Layout Plans in Minor Towns: A Case of Mlowo Township in Songwe, Tanzania

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Abstract

In centuries, minor towns have played a great intermediate role between rural areas and urban areas in the world. Many worldwide literatures reveal that the settlements contribute much in economic development of both urban and rural areas. Land development in these settlements is guided by detailed layout plans including neighborhood layout plans (NLPs) and Regularization Schemes. In Tanzania, preparation of NLPs in these settlements is under Township Authorities and District Councils. However, the current trend shows that, most of the prepared NLPs in minor towns remain only on the office papers and contradict to what is developed on the ground. The situation has been contributed by unique planning challenges and approaches used in planning of these settlements. Therefore, this paper examines the planning challenges associated with implementation of the NLPs in minor towns. The study employed both primary and secondary data collection methods. The primary data methods were interview and survey while secondary data were obtained through published documents such as population and housing census reports. Thereafter, the data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel. It comes out from the findings that most of the designated plots in minor towns are not reaching up to the stage of being surveyed and issuing of title deeds as the prepared NLPs focus only on one or few clients who are able to finance the layout preparation process while the rest are partially involved in the process. This creates unwillingness of the other large group of land owners and developers in the project areas to support preparation and implementation of the NLPs. In this case, it is important to improve inclusiveness of all stakeholders as well as economic stabilization of the community in minor towns through investments prioritization.

Keywords

Minor Towns, Neighborhood Layout Plans and Implementation Process

1. Introduction

Synonyms of the word “Minor Towns” are Small Towns and Township. Schneidewind et al. (2006) terms these settlements as medium sized towns with the minimum of 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants. Moreover, these are also termed as settlements with population less than 50,000 inhabitants (Shauri, 2018). However, in Tanzania, Section 7(2) of the Urban Planning Act, 2007 and the human settlements development policy of 2002 define minor towns as centres in the district councils with population range of 30,000 people and with services like health centre, primary court and being a district headquarter. Minor towns have specific roles in the economic development due to fact that they possess intermediate position between big cities and rural settlements. This has gone further up to the extent that, the role and position of local development is strongly rooted to the level of integration of these settlements to the neighbouring rural areas (Bernadett & Megyesi, 2016). Heffner and Solga (2006), argues that minor towns have a strong integration with the rural areas. Due to their potentials in the global context, these settlements have to be considerably and well developed by applying various planning tools to enhance their spatial development and management.

The idea of neighborhood planning has roots that take us back to over one hundred years. The neighborhood planning in those days was seen as the means not only to rebuild the congested neighborhoods of the poor immigrant but also to reconstruct the entire city (Keating & Krumholz, 2007). Moreover, Gillette (2016) argues that the concept was the result of American efforts toward revitalizing older urban areas in 1950s and 1960s years simultaneously with redevelopment which had the main goal of providing every American citizen with a decent home. In the early century, many large American cities were experiencing the effects of lack of comprehensive planning, public regulation of private development and public investment in open spaces and other amenities. Cities were also exposed to variety of social problems which many social reformers believed were related to these physical problems, including social isolation and alienation. In the year 1923, Clarence Perry presented his “neighborhood unit formula” as a means of addressing these pressing social problems (William, 2009).

At the early years of 1900s, planners proposed neighborhood civic centres comprising of grouped public and private institutions that would encourage neighborhood pride and betterment. Such effort was initiated as part of a general effort at city beautification in 1907, such as St. Louis, Chicago, Atlanta, and other cities that were experimented with neighborhood planning and zoning (Silver,

1985). According to William (2009), Neighborhoods are places where people live and spend most of their time. They are places that urban dwellers know best and are most concerned with and for what happen in their neighborhoods that affect direct their quality of life. Due to this direct connection of the neighborhood and the residents, planners and other public officials have come to see the NLP as an important and crucial plan in urban planning.

Moreover, the objectives of neighborhood planning are found to go beyond achieving good physical design or improving aesthetics to include larger social objectives such as creating healthy social communities, empowering neighborhood residents, developing neighborhood economies, or preserving environmental quality, and are made possible through altering the physical environment in ways that influences social and political processes (William, 2009). Despite of all the portrayed positive expected outcomes of neighborhood planning, still the implementation of these plans in minor towns worldwide is poorly done meaning that some of the stated objectives are not fully achieved.

Neighborhood planning in developing countries is of urgent importance due to the rapid urbanization trend observed in previous two decades. For example, Africa is projected to have the fastest population growth rate whereby the urban population of this region is projected to triple in size by 2050 (Visagi & Turok, 2020). This will create an additional of 950 million people especially in small and medium sized towns in African countries (Burak, 2017). Despite of the high population increase in urban areas which shows the high demand of NLPs, the situation is vice versa to the side of implementation of these NLPs. To portray the consequence of this, it is found that more than three-quarter (78%) of residential area developed between 1990 and 2014 were informal and unplanned (Mabogunje, 2014). This means that though NLPs are prepared but most are not achieving their goals once implemented on the ground.

Tanzania has experienced rapid increase of population in urban areas whereby the population has become five times since 1967 up to 2022. According NBS (2022), the population has increased from 12.3 million in 1967 to 61.7 million in 2022 which reveals the high demand of planned residential plots in the country to accommodate the population change. Moreover, the planning procedures in Tanzania are guided by the urban planning legislations such as the Urban Planning Act No. 8, 2007; regulations such as Government Notice No. 93 published on 9/3/2018: The Urban Planning (Planning Space Standards) Regulations, 2018; guidelines such as guideline for preparation of general and detailed schemes of 2007, etc. (William, 2009). In addition, the current adjustments have observed technicians and consultant firms collaborating with the government in preparing and implementing these NLPs to create the better living environment of the community (Kimbi et al., 2001; Ram et al., 2017). Despite of these facts about Tanzania, it is found that more than 75% population live in unplanned settlements in urban areas which is contributed by the failure to effectively implement the prepared NLPs (Ram et al., 2007).

Therefore, this study is designed to fulfill mainly two specific objectives which are; Mapping the prepared NLPs in Mlowo township of the past 10 years and determining implementation status of the mapped NLPs in Mlowo township.

2. Implementation Process of the Neighborhood Layout Plans

There are eight implementation processes or stages toward complete implementation of the prepared NLPs in Tanzania. These processes are derived from guideline for preparation of general and detailed planning scheme of 2007 part 3.4 and Sections 15 - 22 of the Urban Planning Act of 2007. By listing the processes in consecutive order include; 1) approval of the prepared NLP 2) plots Surveying 3) approval of the survey plan 4) provision of the basic services (water, electricity, roads etc.) 5) selling and allocating the surveyed and serviced plots 6) acquisition of the building permits 7) development of the plots and 8) monitoring of the developments. However, according to [Chalmers et al. \(2018\)](#), most of the prepared NLPs in the minor towns experiences incomplete implementation processes which accelerates informal land use changes.

Researchers such as [Middlesex, 2021](#); [LPH, 2022](#); [Land id, 2021](#); [UNCTD, 2022](#); [Mohsen, 2012](#); [Ole-Mungaya, 2016](#); and [DCP, 2019](#) discuss on the applicability of the processes in NLPs implementation. The found facts were that; duration set for each stage has positive or negative impacts to successful NLPs implementation. For instance, [Mohsen \(2012\)](#) found that the early the development or construction of basic infrastructures in the prepared neighborhood plans influences the effective implementation of the NLPs. [Table 1](#) summarizes the recommended time-duration for various NLPs implementation processes.

3. Research Methodology

The research applied descriptive research design. In descriptive research design the scholar explains the situation or a specified case in depth in the research materials. According to [Pawar \(2020\)](#), descriptive research employs observation method, survey method and case study method. In doing so, Mlowo township was the case study of this research. Mlowo townships is among the two townships found in Mbozi district, Songwe-Region in Tanzania as shown in [Figure 1](#). The township covers a total 6839 Ha and is located along the international infrastructures; TANZAM road and TAZAMA pipeline running from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to Zambia. According to [NBS \(2022\)](#), the population of the township is 66,446 people whereby 31,154 are males and 35,292 are females. Furthermore, the settlement has a total of 17,920 households and 3.7 persons as an average household size. However, land development control in Mlowo township is under Mbozi district council.

The study included the collection of different spatial and non-spatial data in Mlowo township. First category of data collected were data describing the spatial location and number of the prepared NLPs (Name, Tp. drawing numbers,

Table 1. Duration for NLP’s implementation stages.

SN	Implementation Stage	Time-duration
1	Plan approval	30 days
2	Plots surveying	-
3	Survey plan approval	30 days
4	Services provision	-
5	Plots selling and allocation	-
6	Acquiring building permits	-
7	Plots development	36 months
8	Monitoring developments	Every 12 months

Source; URT, 2007.

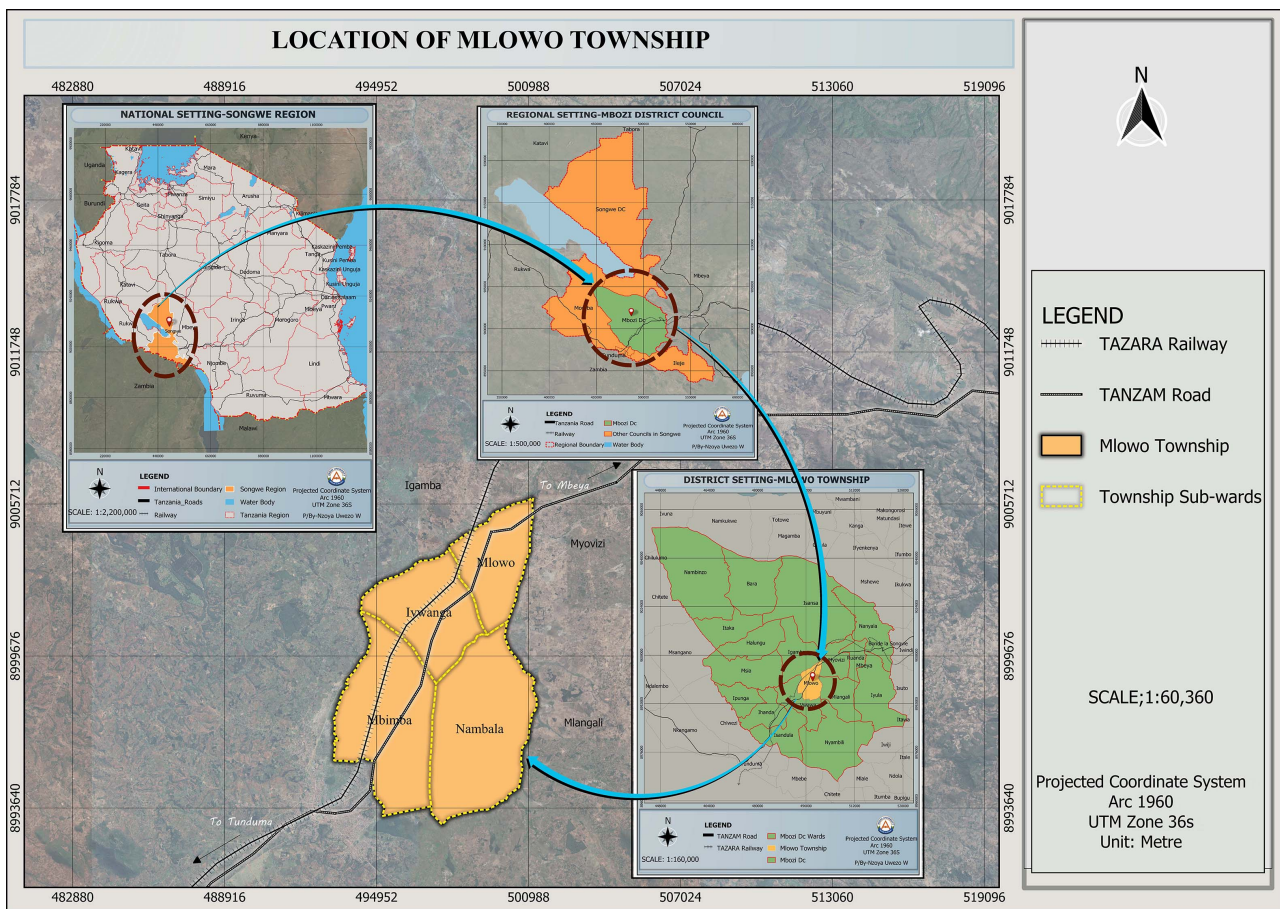


Figure 1. Location of Mlowo Township. Source; Tanzania administrative shapefiles, 2022 & Google earth, 2023.

softcopies of the layouts, and their implementation statuses). However, implementation status included collecting the data on time duration used for various implementation stages, number of designed versus surveyed plots, and the changes made on the planned plots (looking how far the proposed plans differ from existing land use). To make the mapping easy, secondary data were used

where the shapefiles of 2022 of existing land use mapped during the master plan preparation of proposed Mbozi town council were used and overlaid with the proposed plans to analyze changes. Second category of the data collected were concerning with affordability of the prepared planned plots; selling price and buying price of the plots in relation to the income of the land owners and developers found in the township.

The methods used in data collection were official interviews which included the interview with four Town planners, one land officer, one cartographer and one surveyor of Mbozi district council. The second method used was interview with 81 land owners and developers to get their responses on failure of implementation of the prepared NLPs in Mlowo township. Cluster sampling as the sub-type of probability sampling was used in sampling of the representative in this study. This is due to fact that, the randomly selection was done from already-existing cluster which were three sub-wards in which the prepared NLPs were spatially located. The three sub-wards acted as the clusters for sample selection area are Ivwanga, Mbimba and Nambala. From the clusters, the simple random sampling was employed to have the representatives from each sub-ward. This method used helped to avoid the bias in obtaining the representatives from the available strata in Mlowo township.

The sample size was estimated with the help of Cochran formulae for finite population which are; $no = Z^2 p(1 - p)/e^2$ & $n = N/1 + N(e)^2$ whereby; n is the required sample size, no is required return sample size according to Cochran's formula, P is the percentage occurrence of a state or condition, e is the percentage maximum error required, Z is the value corresponding to level of confidence required and N is the ward population size (Table 2, Figure 2).

The process of data collection, involved Open Data Kite (ODK) application installed in android phone that was used with the assistance of its data base which is Kobo Toolbox. The collected data were then processed and analysed using Microsoft excel for quantitative data and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for qualitative data as shown in Figure 2. To prepare maps for the collected data in this part, the Quantum GIS (QGIS) and ArcGIS soft-wares were used. Moreover, the outputs produced were graphics such as maps, figure, and tables and texts.

4. Research Findings

4.1. The Prepared NLPs in Mlowo Township 2013-2022

For period of ten years (2012-2022), Mbozi district council has managed to prepare a total of eleven NLPs for Mlowo township as shown in Table 3 and Figure 3.

According to the interview done with district town planners, all prepared 11 layouts plans have a total of 5974 plots in the township. It is averaged that each supplied planned plot serves one household then only 5974 households out of 17,920 households found in Mlowo township are accommodated in these

Table 2. Sample size estimation.

	Z score	3.84	
Z ²	Confident interval	95%	3.84
	Alpha divided by	0.025	
	P	0.7	
	Error	0.05	
	Study population	66446	
	No	322.6825	
	Denominator	1.004856	
	Non-respondent sampe (5%)	321.1231	
	Sample population	328	328
Sample land owners and developers	Sample Population/3.7	81 Land owners and developers	

Source: Author’s estimation, 2023.

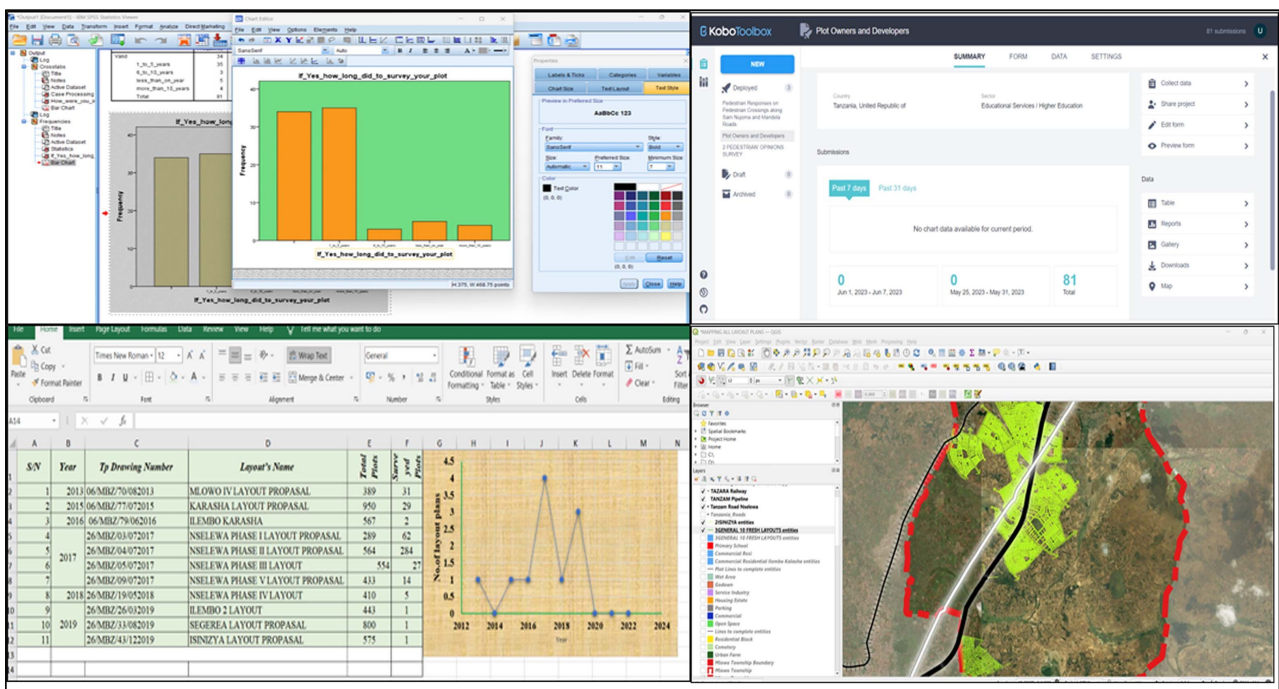


Figure 2. Data processing and analysis. Source: Spatial Software windows, 2023.

prepared layout plans while leaving 11,946 households (44,200 people) in unplanned areas. In addition, quoting one of the Town planners said “Despite of having these 11 prepared layout plans in new areas with a total of 5974 supplied plots, still their implementation on the ground is a challenge. In some of the areas such as Segerea, and Ilembo, land development is contrary to the prepared layout plan leading to development of unplanned settlements”.

Table 3. Prepared NLPs in Mlowo township 2012 to 2022.

SN	TP Drawing Number	Layout's Name
1	06/MBZ/70/082013	Mlowo IV Layout Proposal
2	06/MBZ/77/072015	Karasha Layout Proposal
3	06/MBZ/79/062016	Ilembo-Karasha Layout Plan
4	26/MBZ/03/072017	Nselewa Phase I Layout Proposal
5	26/MBZ/04/072017	Nselewa Phase II Layout Proposal
6	26/MBZ/05/072017	Nselewa Phase III Layout Proposal
7	26/MBZ/09/072017	Nselewa Phase V Layout Proposal
8	26/MBZ/19/052018	Nselewa Phase Iv Layout Proposal
9	26/MBZ/26/032019	Ilembo 2 Layout
10	26/MBZ/33/082019	Segerea Layout Proposal
11	26/MBZ/43/122019	Isinizya Layout Proposal

Source: Mbozi DC, 2023.

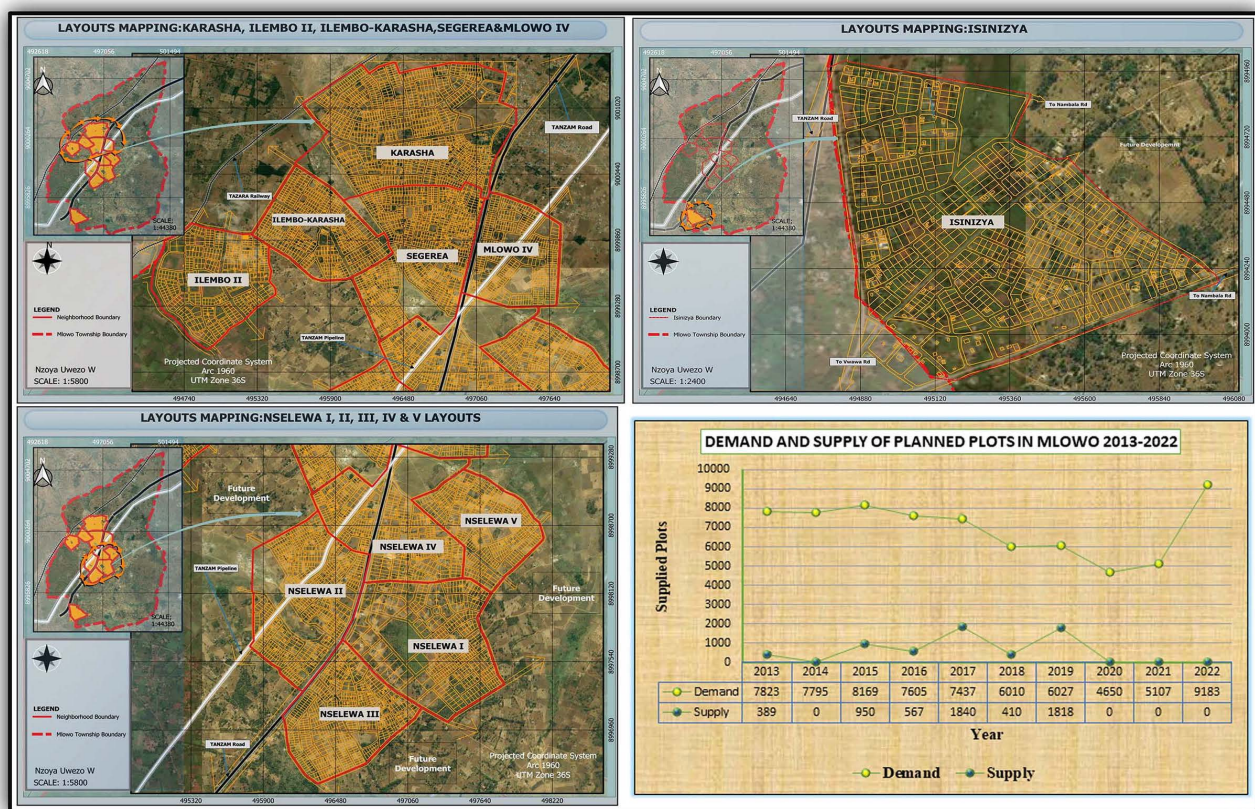


Figure 3. Prepared NLPs in Mlowo Township 2012-2022. Source: Mbozi DC & Google Satellite image, 2023.

These 11 NLPs consist different land uses namely 4996 residential plots, 686 commercial residential plots, 10 primary schools, 29 open spaces, 27 commercial plots, 32 public buildings' plots, 22 religious' sites, 7 dispensaries, 10 local mar-

ket areas, 89 service industries/service trades, 1 urban farm, 18 nursery schools, 15 hotel sites, 7 petrol stations, 4 go-downs, 23 office plots, 9 Housing estates, 2 parking, 1 cemetery site, and 1 college. Furthermore, the planned plots were overlaid on the existing land use shapefiles to map the changes as summarized in **Table 4** and **Figure 4** and **Figure 5**.

By referring **Table 4**, **Figure 4** and **Figure 5**, the number of planned residential plots exceeds their respective existing plots (positive gap) due to dissatisfaction of most land owners and developers on the plot sizes whereby most of them were found to demand more than the supply. It was also found to be contributed by the fact that most of the land owners and developers in Mlowo township prefer having home-based farms which is not supported by the sizes of plots supplied to them. This is the same to some other uses such as Commercial-residential. However, there is a remarkable gap between planned and existing number of urban farms which was found to be contributed by the fact that land owners and developers do not prefer to buy the designated plots for this use instead they tend to cultivate to other areas designed for other uses.

From the discussion done with the town planner, the standards used in Mlowo township are the sub-set of the recommended plot sizes by the urban planning space standards of 2018. The applied standards in Mlowo are 450 - 600 Sqm for high density plots, 601 - 800 Sqm for medium density plots and 801 - 1200 Sqm for low density plots. The town planner added that, the reason behind in starting with 450 Sqm as a minimum plot-size in Mlowo is due to fact that the township has arable land hence no need to plan it by congesting people as how 301 Sqm recommended in the standards could be.

The changes in plot sizes between the recommended sizes and what is developed on the ground by the developers is contributed by dissatisfaction of plot owners and developers on the recommended standards in the township. The interview done with these plot owners and developers in three sub-wards (Ivwan-ga, Nambala and Mbimba) revealed that 53.1% of them are not satisfied with the sizes of plots while only 46.9% of them are satisfied with their plot sizes. By quoting one of the plot owners interviewed said: *“I would like to have more than the plot I have though it is the one recommended by an authority. This is due to fact that i would like to have more space for livestock keeping within the same plot”*. Another one from Nambala sub-ward responded that *“I am currently dealing with tree nurseling (growing and caring small trees) and i would prefer to have the larger plot than this at least twice to expand my economic bark-borne activity”*.

In addition, **Table 5** reveals that most of the plots with size 301 - 600 sqm receives more dissatisfaction than other plots due to nature of economic activities in the township.

4.2. Number of Designed Plots versus Surveyed Plots

Comparing the number of plots in prepared layout plans and surveyed ones,

Table 4. Changes between planned and existing uses per plot.

SN	Land Use	Planned no. of plots	Existing no. of plots	Gap
1	Residential	4996	4760	236
2	Comm-residential	686	371	315
3	Primary school	10	9	1
4	Open spaces	29	23	6
5	Commercial plots	27	28	-1
6	Public building	32	66	-34
7	Religious site	22	4	18
8	Dispensary	7	3	4
9	Market	10	4	6
10	Service industry	89	13	76
11	Urban farm	1	668	-667
12	Nursery School	18	9	9
13	Hotel Sites	15	3	12
14	Petrol Station	7	2	5
15	Go-down	4	0	4
16	Office Plots	23	23	0
17	Housing Estate	9	1	8
18	Parking	2	1	1
19	Cemetery	1	1	0
20	College	1	0	1
	Total	5989	5989	0

Source: Fieldwork, 2023.

Mlowo township has a total of 5974 supplied planned plots while those managed to be surveyed are only 552 plots in number. This is estimated to be 9.24% of the total designed plots in the township. The facts behind the gap created between the number of designed plots on the layout plan versus the surveyed plots lies on the purpose of preparing the respective layout plan. In some cases, it was found that only one or few owners/developers/investors drove the preparation of the whole neighborhood plan. The result is that other surrounding land-holders fail to support the implementation of the layout through not paying required surveying cost.

The town planner confirmed that Mlowo IV and Segerea layout plans preparation was influenced by the petrol stations that were to be introduced after investors applied for the need to introduce them on the sites. Similarly, to Ilembo II preparation which was influenced by the urban farm whereby a farm owner applied for his farm to be surveyed hence caused preparation of the NLP.

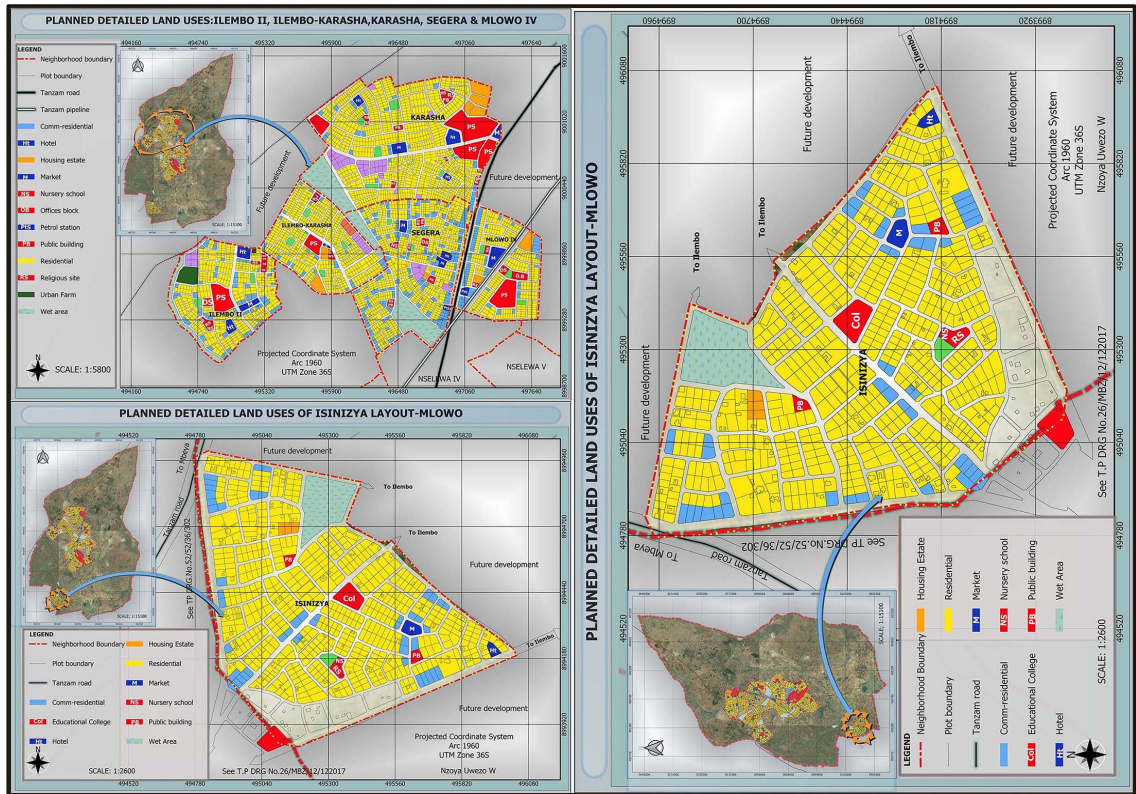


Figure 4. Planned plots per use. Source: Field work, 2023.

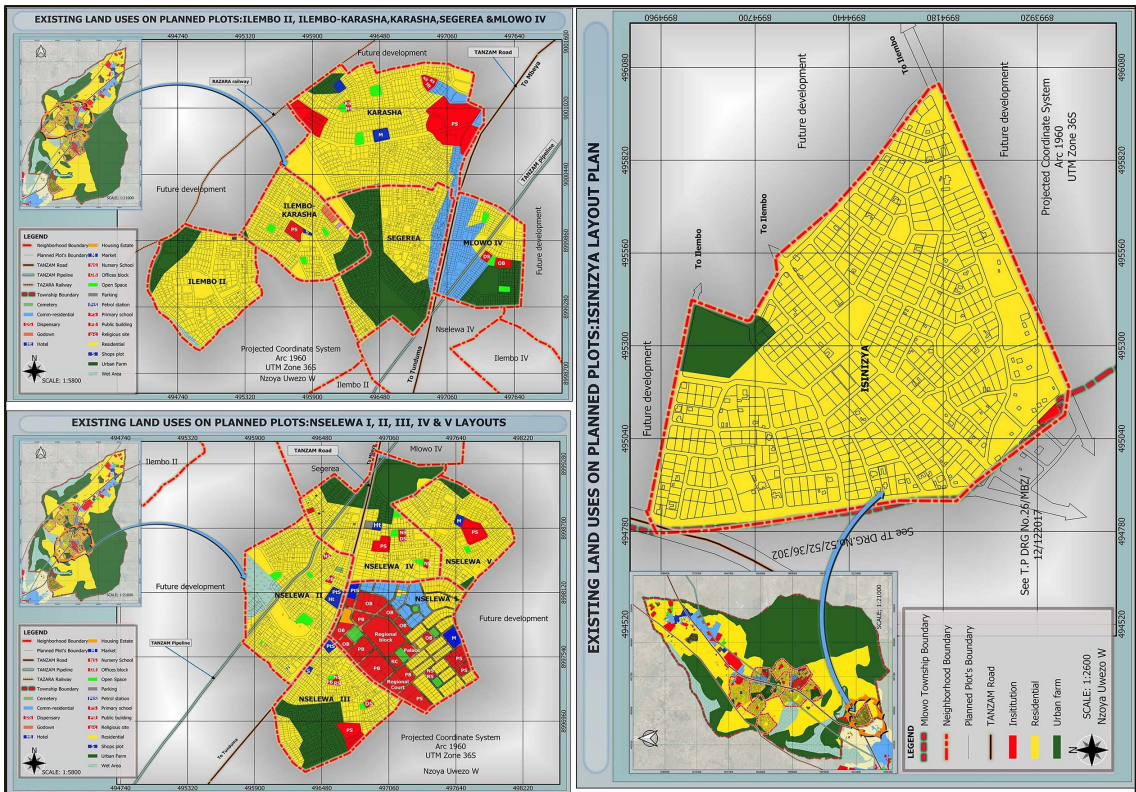


Figure 5. Existing land uses on prepared planned plots. Source: Field work, 2023.

Table 5. Crosstabulation of plot sizes versus satisfaction.

Plot Sizes	Does the plot size satisfy your demand?		
	No	Yes	Total
200 sqm	1	0	1
301 - 600 sqm	20	7	27
601 - 800 sqm	16	19	35
801 - 1200 sqm	4	10	14
3010 sqm	0	1	1
3600 sqm	1	0	1
4047 sqm	1	1	2
Total	43	38	81

Source: Fieldwork, 2023.

Moreover, Karasha layout plan preparation was influenced by the single person whose demand was to subdivide his parents' large land into 8 plots (2 plots for hotels and 6 for residential uses). Isinizya layout plan was influenced by few organized large plot owners who paid for all preparation cost of the layout and were designed 96 plots. Ilembo-Karasha layout was influenced by the establishment of "Dreams English medium school". Furthermore, due to presence of the regional headquarters in Mlowo influenced the preparation of Nselewa I, II, III, IV and V layout plans. In all cases narrated above, in most cases only the targeted plots were the one which were surveyed (**Table 6**).

4.3. Time-Period for Various Implementation Processes

A) Plan Approval

Basing on the data acquired from the town planner, Mlowo IV layout plan had the longest duration for its approval which took 18 months to be approved followed by Nselewa I, II, III and V phases layout plans whose approval took 15 months. Others are Karasha, Ilembo-Karasha and Isinizya layout plans whose approval interval was 3 months each, Nselewa phase V whose approval took 5 months, and Ilembo 2 and Segerea layouts whose approval took 1 month each (**Table 7**).

B) Services Provision

Through the interview done with the plot owners and developers in three sub-wards in Mlowo township (Ivwanga, Nambala and Mbimba) discovered that the services in 56 sampled plots (69%) were provided after developing their plots, 23 sampled plots (28%) were provided after all plots in their respective neighborhood were developed while only 2 plots (3%) were provided with services before the plot development. Also, it was revealed that 30 respondents (37%) argued that their plots were supplied with the services especially roads and electricity for the duration ranging from one to five years after developing

Table 6. Planned plots versus surveyed plots in Mlowo township 2013-2022.

Layout's Name	Total designed plots	Surveyed Plots	Percentage (%)	Remark
Mlowo IV	389	31	8.0	The target was petrol station
Karasha	950	29	3.1	The target was petrol station
Ilembo-Karasha	567	2	0.4	The target was Dreams English medium school
Nselewa I	289	62	21.5	
Nselewa II	564	284	50.4	Prepared under the influence of regional of-fice establishment nearby the area.
Nselewa III	554	27	4.9	
Nselewa V	433	14	3.2	
Nselewa IV	410	5	1.2	
Ilembo 2	443	1	0.2	The target was the urban farm
Segerea	800	1	0.1	The target was petrol station
Isinizya	575	96	16.7	Influenced by few plot owners who financed the project.
Total	5974	552	9.24	

Source: Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 7. Duration between plans' preparation and approval.

SN	Layout's Name	Date of preparation 9 Month-Year	Approval Date	Duration (Months)
1	Mlowo IV	August-2013	16/02/2015	18
2	Karasha	July-2015	23/09/2016	3
3	Ilembo-Karasha	June-2016	23/09/2016	3
4	Nselewa I	July-2017	16/10/2018	15
5	Nselewa II	July-2017	16/10/2018	15
6	Nselewa III	July-2017	16/10/2018	15
7	Nselewa V	July-2017	16/10/2018	15
8	Nselewa IV	May-2018	16/10/2018	5
9	Ilembo 2	March-2019	24/04/2019	1
10	Segerea	August-2019	03/10/2019	1
11	Isinizya	December-2019	21/04/2020	3

Source: Mbozi DC, 2023.

their plots, 11 respondents (14%) their plots took less than one year to be provided with these services, 10 respondents (12%) their plots took six to ten years to be provided with these services, and 7 respondents (9%) their plots took more than ten years to be supplied with these services. Furthermore, 23 respondents equal to 28% of the total sampled population forgot when the services were provided to their plots after they had developed their plots.

The findings above mean 97% of all sampled land owners and developers developed their plots before services provision including roads. This created the high chance of informal land use development. Developing plots before roads provision and other services creates a plan on the ground that will never conform the prepared layout. Every attribute including road sizes and other utility way leaves won't be taken into consideration.

C) Plots Development

According to the interview done with the town planner, the recommended duration for developing the allocated planned plot in Mlowo township is maximum 3 years. However, the responses obtained from the sampled population reveals that 59.3% equals to 48 respondents confirmed that they developed their plots within the duration of less than one year, 39.5% equals to 32 respondents confirmed to develop their plots in the duration range of 1 to 5 years, 34.57% equals to 28 respondents in number confirmed that they developed their plots in the duration range of 6 to 10 years while only 6.17% (5 respondent) confirmed to develop their plots for the duration of more than 10 years. This means that more than half of the developed plots were developed out of the recommended duration by the Authority.

D) Plots Allocation and Selling

According to the interview done with the land officer, the recommended duration for selling prepared planned plots in Mlowo township is 90 days equal to 3 Months. This was only successfully met during the plot allocation of the updated Nselewa I layout plan in the year 2022. Its succession was drove by the special demand of the regional facilities such as referral hospital, regional offices and other high order institutions nearby the project's area.

4.4. Affordability of Planned Plots in Mlowo Township

The interview with the land officer revealed that the current price for the planned plots in Mlowo township are; T.Shs. 4500/= for residential plots, T.Shs. 8000/= for commercial plots, T.Shs. 6100/= for commercial residential, T.Shs. 20,000/= for industrial plots, T.Shs. 3500/= for institutional plots, and T.Shs. 10,000/= for recreational plots. In addition, the interview with the sampled land owners and developers revealed that 6.2% (5 in number) of the sampled land owners and developers bought their plots with the price ranging from T.Shs. 2,500,000/= to 5,000,000/= 35.8% (29 respondents) bought their plots with the price range of T.Shs. 1,000,000/= to 2,500.000/=, 38.3% (31 respondents) bought their plots with price range of T.Shs 5,00,000/= to 1,000,000/=, and 19.8% (16 respondents)

bought their plots with the price less than T.Shs 5,00,000/=.

Furthermore, it was found that most of the people bought their plots directly from the indigenous owners. This covers 87.7% of the total sampled land owners and developers which is equal to 71 respondents. Only 12.3% of the respondents were found to buy their plots from the local government authority which is equal to 10 respondents. Buying the plots from indigenous owners portrays high possibility of not conforming with the development condition. Also, it portrays that the planned plots prepared by the authority are afforded by few people in the Township.

5. Discussion

This study explores the challenges of implementation of NLPs in minor towns using Mlowo township as a case study. It was designed to answer the main three specific objectives which are: mapping the prepared NLPs in Mlowo township for the past 10 years and the second was determining the implementation status of the mapped NLPs in the township. The discussion of this section has focused on four major discussed aspects which are changes between planned and existing uses per plot, number of designed plots versus surveyed plots, time-period for various implementation processes, and affordability of planned plots in townships.

A) Changes between planned and existing uses per plot

The obtained data in the field reveals that there is a remarkable change between the dedicated uses of the plots by NLPs and the existing uses in the townships. This is contributed by high demand of the plot sizes by majority of the plot owners and developers of which is not within their affordable range. It was found that majority of them acquire land informally from indigenous land owners which seem to be of more affordable rather than making formal moves to obtain the planned plots from the authorities. The planning legislations in Tanzania give mandate the LGA to determine the planning space standards in their areas of jurisdiction in accordance with the set of national standards. This is observed in section 38 of the urban planning Act of 2007 (URT, 2007). The developed standards by the district councils and township authorities to lead planning in minor towns are not taking into account the community demand and economic status of which lead to informal land use change by majority of the land owners and developers. This is also depicted by Maruani and Amit-Cohen (2011) who reveal that the probability of influencing the plot size, density, timing and spatial distribution of the land is under the plot developers.

Lekwot et al. (2016) portrays that making land developers satisfy with the prepared plan is an important stage toward effective implementation of the NLPs. In supporting this study's findings, this author also found that 90% of the sampled people in his case study were unsatisfied with the prepared plans which contributed to poor implementation of the plans.

B) Number of Designed Plots versus Surveyed Plots

The analysis of the data obtained reveals that large number of the designed plots in townships is not surveyed. This was found to be contributed by the purpose or the fact behind preparation of most of NLPs in minor towns. Always the prepared neighborhood is influenced by the specific target weather a certain investment to be introduced or a public institution. This make the focus of the authority be on the intended plots and leaving the large group of land owners and developers found within a parcel of land covered by the planpartial involved in the plan preparation and implementation. Referring the planning frameworks in Tanzania, Section 15(2) of the Urban Planning Act 2007, empowers land owners and developers to drive the preparation of the detailed plan (URT, 2007). This has been found to have negative impact in Mlowo township basing on the nature of the land owners and developers' present. The focus is who may finance the preparation of the layout and not its implementation. Most of the townships in Tanzania experience this challenge. The problem creates a number of non-implementable layouts which then propels informal land use developments.

C) Time-Period for Various Implementation Processes

By looking to the plan's approval, URT (2007) section 17 (3) reveals that the approval duration for NLPs is one month. Therefore, only Ilembu 2 and Segerea layouts' approval duration in Mlowo township met that recommended time. The prolonged duration of the approval of the plans was found to contribute in poor implementation of the layouts since the long the approval was the more the changes on ground happened. However, the challenge is currently over since the approval has been dedicated at regional level.

Planning frameworks such as URT (2007) and different literatures such as DCP (2019), Mabogunje (2014) and William (2009) portray that providing the basic services such as access roads, electricity and water to the planned neighborhood creates high chance of effective implementation of the plans. From this study 97% of all sampled land owners and developers developed their plots before services provision including roads. This created the high chance of informal land use development. Developing plots before roads provision and other services creates a plan on the ground that will never conform the prepared layout. Every attribute including road sizes and other utility wayleaves won't be taken into consideration.

The duration for plots development in Mlowo township is three years (36 months). This is similar to the recommended plot development duration provided by the planning frameworks in Tanzania such as section 33 (1) of the urban planning act of 2007. Referring to the analysis of the obtained information, more than half of the landowners and developers in Mlowo township developed their plots out of the recommended development duration (URT, 2007). Generally, this portrays that one of the challenges threatening implementation of the prepared NLPs in minor towns is prolonged plots development took by majority of the land owners and developers. Majority of the people buying the plots in

minor towns do so for making reserve for future use or selling. This ends by having poor implemented NLPs in these settlements. This was also portrayed by the authors [Schneidewind et al. \(2006\)](#), [Mohsen \(2012\)](#) and [Ole-Mungaya \(2016\)](#).

D) Affordability of planned plots in townships

The affordability of the planned plots is another challenge in minor towns. Majority of the developed price of planned plots in minor towns are not within the economic status of most of the land owners and developers. Majority of the people living in a minor town depends on agriculture as their source of income. [Ruben et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Sambuo & Mbwaga \(2017\)](#) portray that depending on agriculture has indirect influence on successful implementation of the prepared plans. The fluctuation the market of the agricultural products will also affect the market of the planned plots in the minor towns.

6. Summary of Findings

Implementation of the prepared NLPs in minor towns is a challenge. Through this study, the following are key findings obtained supporting the fact.

- The NLPs preparation in Mlowo township is influenced by the specific target and not set to be implemented as whole. An investor or few landholders who are able to afford the NLPs' preparation costs are the ones whose plots are targeted to be surveyed and follow all other implementation processes. Other remaining land owners and developers within the plan's coverage remain uninformed about the plan preparation, existence and implementation. This creates less response of the landowners and developers on financing the plan implementation in minor towns.
- Legal systems in Tanzania guiding plans' preparations and implementation process are general in nature. They are designed to guide both minor towns and major urban centres without taking into account the nature of the land owners and developers in each case. The interpretation of the sections of planning frameworks gives power land owners and developers to influence the NLPs preparation.
- Time duration for different implementation processes in Mlowo township is a challenge. Most of the mapped NLPs in the township were found to take longer time than the recommended one by the authority and planning frameworks in Tanzania. For instance, the recommended time frame for developing the plots is 36 months, however the land owners and developers in Mlowo take up to 10 years in developing the plots which creates a high chance of informal land use change.
- Majority of the land owners and developers in Mlowo township are not able to afford the planned plots from the Authority of their demand. Most of them end by buying the plots from the indigenous land owners of which creates high chance of non-complying to the designated use of the plots.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1. Conclusion

Speaking of planning and plans' implementation in minor towns is like sealed box that is yet to be fully opened and discover the contents. The reality is, rural planning authorities are much constrained with many challenges that pull-back the preparation and implementation of the prepared NLPs. The plans are there, authorities are keeping producing more and more of them but yet they are not revealed on the ground. Most of the prepared NLPs in the townships experience incomplete implementation whereas the implementation goals are not attained. This is caused by having many plans whose preparation is influenced by only one or small group of people with a specific target (such as petrol stations, urban farm, education facilities, health facilities etc.) and leaving the large population who are part of the planning area with no interest of the prepared NLP.

Similarly, the implementation duration of different NLPs (approval, plot selling and allocation, surveying, services provision, and plot development) is found to delay the normal recommended duration which provides the chance of many informal land use changes in the townships. Moreover, there is no implementation guide (action plan) in the minor towns which could define activities, resources, and time-frame for their implementation.

7.2. Recommendations

A) Reforming Legal Systems Guiding Preparation of NLP in Minor Towns

Some of the acts and statements of the legal frameworks guiding land development are wrong interpreted in the minor towns. Therefore, the statements should be clearly stated to allow only those landholders whose land fits the recommended size for NLP preparation to initiate its preparation and not otherwise. Otherwise, the proper consultative procedure should be involved to step-wisely consult all land holders in which the plan is intended to be prepared to develop commitment of each one to have a stake and ownership of the project for easy implementation; this was also recommended by [Arnstein \(2018\)](#).

B) Preparation of Implementation Action Plan for the Prepared NLPs

Action plan breaks down and clarifies all things embedded to the project implementation. The study observed that minor towns have no Action plan for implementation of the prepared NLPs and thus lack proper guidance in implementation monitoring. Therefore, the study recommends that land experts (Town planners and Land officers) in the township authorities should prepare implementation action-plan for the prepared NLPs. This approach is supported by [URT \(2018\)](#). Moreover, this will define resources, time framework, activities and stakeholders to implement the NLPs so as to accomplish the projects' goals.

C) Economic Stabilization of the Township Authorities

As revealed that a good number of land developers fail to afford the plots from

the Township Authorities. This is contributed by fact that the land sector is less weighted by many governments compared to other sectors such as health and education which make it receive less priority in the annual budget. However, even large share of the government budget on land development is directed to major urban centres and leaving the townships unstable financially. Therefore, the study recommends that the township authorities should be stabilized economically through prioritizing them in the approved annual government budget especially on land development and investments. This will create more employment opportunities to the local community in these settlements and then high chance for them to afford plots.

Conflicts of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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