

# PARTICIPATORY SLUMS UPGRADING IN KABONG COMMUNITY IN JOS, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*Slums upgrading is a desirable activity in urban areas. It does not only upgrade the status of the area but improves the quality of life of its residents. Kabong community is a neighbourhood in Jos, Nigeria which has a substantial area with slum characteristics. The infrastructural facilities are decayed or deteriorating, the environmental conditions are not palatable and the housing is in squalor conditions. Of recent, however, attempts have been made to upgrade some of these facilities. The government has upgrade a large portion of its inner roadways and electricity has been restored in many portions. This study examines the extent to which residents of the community have participated in this upgrading activities. The study administered 410 questionnaires to residents and had focus group discussions and interviewed the leadership of the community development association in the community. Results indicated that most residents in the community, though aware of the existence of the community development association, are not actively involved in its activities. Only a few pay the annual dues to the association. With the relatively meagre amount of finances available to it, the community development association has renovated the public primary and secondary schools and the primary health care facility situated in the community. They have also provided electric poles and constructed culverts as well as embark on community waste disposal efforts. Individuals in the community have also constructed culverts to lead to their houses or link their sections of the community to other parts. These activities show that the community is becoming more involved in the slum upgrading project of their community. A lot still needs to be done with community mobilization to ensure more commitment of more residents in this activity.*

**Keywords: Slum upgrading, Public participation, Project services, Community development**

## INTRODUCTION

The problem of slums in urban centres has subsisted for a long time. Cherry (1970) observed that housing conditions started depleting in quality due to rapid growth in population, increased urban net influx and decline in the national productivity output. Bradbury and Downs (1987) noticed that houses have become spontaneous, dilapidated and severely overcrowded especially in the developing countries. Slums, shacks, squalors, substandard houses and illegal structures started emerging in the urban centres that inhabited crime, appalling environment, diseases and poor hygiene (Timms, 1978). The most enduring physical manifestation of social exclusion in African cities is the proliferation of slums and informal settlements. Arimah (2009) claimed that people who live in slum settlements in the urban areas experience the most deplorable living and environmental conditions.

These dwellers are excluded from participating in social, economic, political and cultural spheres of the city. All this creates a low economic capacity whereby the dwellers that are poor in the first place are made poorer by the various forms of exclusion. UN-HABITAT (2010a) declared that 828 million or 33% of the population of cities in Less Developed Countries (LDC's) resides in slums. Such settlements have life threatening conditions that impose heavy burden on city planners caused by cash-strap with fear and violence (Bloom *et al*, 2008). These appalling situations probably necessitated the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Goal 7, which sought to improve the living conditions of at least 100million slum dwellers by 2020 (UN-HABITAT, 2003a).

Currently, many African cities are battling to tackle the problem of slums. UN-HABITAT (2010b) revealed that more than 60% of sub-Saharan African residents dwell in

slums neighbourhoods. The weak political will for planning has resulted to the deterioration of housing conditions and subsequent emergence of mushroom slums areas. Practical Action (2012) iterated that slums are spreading fast and are characterised by poor livelihood, poor service provision and poor security. Slums are growing just as immigrants are increasing, causing growth in slums and the expansion of its formations. Slums have been of great concern based on their conditions, yet the slums dwellers are not always aware of the poor living conditions around them. Migrants strive for urban employment and better livelihoods for themselves and their families but have not been keen on how their urban life may be. Hence, transit abodes are negotiated and the migrants are forced to accept the unpleasant environment. The shortfall in housing provision has continued to increase alongside with alarming increase in poverty.

The World Bank introduced slum upgrading project in Least Developed Countries, which marked a radical change in the official attitude of governments from slum demolition to slum improvement. Cronin and Guthrie (2012) acknowledged that rehabilitation of slums, upgrading infrastructure and housing programmes affect their sustainability. Improvement in the environment involves the aspect of housing, infrastructure, employment and other urban fundamentals still have much to address the “backlog of urban neglect”. It is in this view that Werlin (1999) advocated improvement of the environment, sanitation, security of tenure, access to credit and housing quality.

Nigeria’s population growth has continued to impose great pressure on housing, urban infrastructure, facilities, and employment opportunities. This has resulted to slums emergence at the central sections and the fringes of cities (Agbola, 2006). Hence, many housing structures in major cities have slums presences simultaneously with modern structures (Macpherson, 2014).

The World Bank slum upgrading approach emerged by the propagation of John F. C. Turner and was applied for urban development projects in the 1970’s and 1980’s (Werlin, 1999). Researches undertaken in this regard in Nigeria were on comprehensive urban renewal in slums affected areas of Maroko, Lagos (Agbola & Jinadu 1997; Alagbe 2006;

Gbadegesin 2011; Arimah 2005; and Okpala 1999). These researches view urban renewal in the perspective of complete demolition carried-out without the communal participatory involvement in both the pre and post planning benefits. Turley *et al* (2013) and Walnycki *et al* (2013) reviewed the nature of slum upgrading conducted in cities of developed countries such as Cardiff, Oxford, Harvard, Munich and Birmingham and found that they were conducted without resettling the urban poor. In Nigeria slum residents were dispossessed of their homes. Slum upgrading approach should be community-based. This is the critical issue that this study examines in regards of Kabong area of Jos, Nigeria.

### Concept of Participatory Slums Project

Between 2001 and 2004 the United Kingdom Department of International Studies initiated a “*Binding in Partnership*” themed “*Participatory Urban Planning Project*” (BIP-PUP). BIP-PUP project comprised representatives of all stakeholders involving county/local government practitioners and the communities, and were able to identify two major problems confronting residents (Majale, 2008). These problems were economic restrictions in enterprising productivity and the limit of employment creation within small scale enterprises. The project enabled the residents to state their needs with regard to a range of issues defined by problems of inaccessibility to land resources, infrastructure and housing, social services and urban governance (Macpherson, 2014). That is why participation is a crucial means of poverty reduction. It enabled partnership, holistic focusing and project planning amongst stakeholders as an index to improving living conditions.

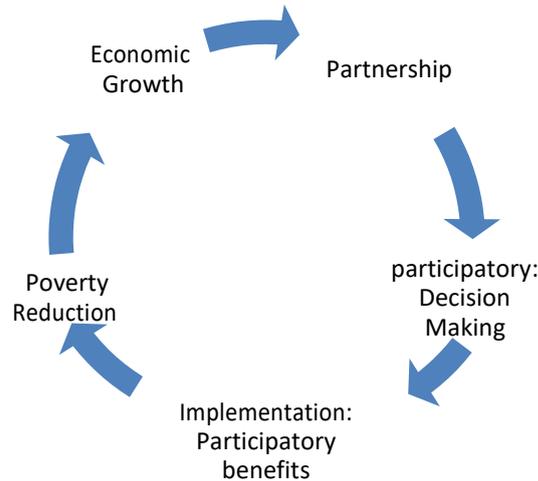
Participatory Urban Planning Project (PUP) allows for residents to be included in decision making processes. Another advantage includes the alleviation of individual sectoral weaknesses by taking advantage of other sectoral strengths (Otiso, 2003). Thus it fosters efficiency and allows for resources to be distributed during decision making process. This highlights why participation of slum dwellers in decisionmaking, inspite of their poor economic and intellectual bases, is vital to poverty reduction (Sen, 1999).

The relationship existing between public, private and civic society has become

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salient to the successes of slums upgrading. According to Majale (2009) participation allows harnessing of local human capital and artisan skills in the construction/implementation stage. Beneficiaries developed resilient, unique and exploded applicable strategies for the survival of their needs for durable, viable and affordable shelter. Locatelli and Nugent (2009) stressed

that this was shared amongst development practitioners and local government personnel who have the resources to scale up or advocate these methods. Or at the very least, the human capital could be able to shed light on community issues that were previously neglected or unknown to the development practitioners and government officials, as seen in figure 1.



**Figure 1** Slums Upgrading Participatory Cycle  
Source: Macpherson, 2014; 89

Figure 1 explains the community involvement in the actualisation of slums upgrading in cities. The five basic tenets of economic growth, partnership, participatory, decision making, implementation; participatory benefit and resultant urban poverty reduction are the highlighted. Economic growth indices centre on employment, income, rent and access to land by the affected migrants vis-a-vis the occupants. Partnerships involve collaboration with relevant organisations on the conceived burden to achieve targeted objectives. Partnerships open-up spectrum of stakeholders to ensure the execution from the on-set to the off-set in project assurance that includes collaboration, sensitisation, discussion and construction. By this act a reliable and formidable planning perception changes the orientation of project plan to the beneficiaries. Participatory role can be the democratic activities undertaken such as collaboration, voting and provision of the housing units. This shifts the urban poverty reduction impact that result from accomplishment of Slum Upgrading Programme (SUP).

Participation is unlikely to guarantee a means of poverty reduction and slum sustainability. Top-Down planning has emphasised on restricted understanding of poverty reduction as realistic in African cities (Mansuri & Rao, 2013). It does not take into account the fact of housing multifaceted problems in socioeconomic, political, environmental and heritage transformation. Therefore, appropriate government reform ought to be community-based as its results to a realistic sustainable poverty reduction (Cox & Negi, 2010). Arandel and Wetteberg (2012) noticed that local communities are egalitarian in nature with different interest and capabilities, all these factors must be captured in both the planning design and implementation. The Kisongo community presented and utilised many local organisations such as NGO, churches and the traditional leaders, which were able to keep check on the development of BIB-PUP projects (Majale, 2008) Hence in implementing participatory upgrading programmes, strong local organisations must be

coherent and active in tackling social issues and resolving conflict.

### Overview of Slum Upgrading Features

This consists of physical, social, economic, organisational and environmental improvements within the slum neighbourhood and its associated appalling conditions. These projects enumerated by Field and Kermer (2006; 12) include:-

- i. Regularising security of tenure through property mapping, titling and registration
- ii. Installing or improving basic infrastructure, including water, waste collection, storm drainage, electricity, security lighting, and public telephones
- iii. Removal or mitigation of environmental hazards
- iv. Providing incentives for community management and maintenance
- v. Constructing or rehabilitating community facilities such as nurseries, health posts, community centres, market and court.
- vi. Home improvement materials, new construction and expansion of the existing structures which includes cement, roofing sheet, housing design, and others to cope with changes in family size, improved income status and environment
- vii. Improving access social support programmes to address community issues such as crime control and substance abuse,
- viii. Enhancement of income-earning opportunities through training and micro credit.

Many interventions bundle these services and provisions, so it is critical for evaluators to have an understanding of each project component (Bamberger *et al*, 1882 and, Bamberger and Eleanor, 1986). Furthermore in many cases, subprojects grow out of initial interventions such that evaluators must monitor with keen interest/concern the objective of the project as it expands its services and programmes components. To do so, Ghafur (2001) and Kapoor *et al* (2004) suggest that evaluators should conduct in depth interviews with central and field level project administrators at the start of the process as opposed to relying on intervention blueprints.

### Slum Upgrading Paradigm

Slum upgrading fundamental has experienced a gradual shift in the past 30 years in Africa (UNDP, 2003; and, Gulyani & Bassett, 2007):

- a) It has shifted from an intervention in housing to focus on access to infrastructures and services.
- b) The scale and the scope have changed; from multi-sectoral projects that involve social and economic objectives to modest specified projects composed of fewer objectives on a particular sector.
- c) Difference in the inherited planning tradition of former colonial masters also explained the incidences of slums; authority of British colonies maintained zero tolerance policy towards slums.

Colonial planning regulations still form the basis for urban development in Africa. Teddal and Ray (2001) observed that the British had low tolerance towards slums to the extent of demolition and resettlement as observed in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Payne (2005) acknowledged the bureaucratic regulatory framework governing the delivery of planned landuse in urban area is affected by both residential and land ownership. The standard procedures and regulations, made planned land unaffordable and unavailable to low income households leading to the development of informal settlements. The provision of urban infrastructure can better the lives of slum dwellers. Arimah (2009, 14) illustrated that the effect of infrastructure may be examined in three variables: "percentage of paved roads, the numbers of telephones mainline per 1000 people, and the public expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP". The first two variables are measurement of the stock of the existing infrastructure. The third variable is a proxy measurement of infrastructural expenditure and investment.

## MATERIALS AND METHOD

### Study Area

Kabong is located in the NW of Jos , Nigeria, which is situated between Latitudes 09° 55' E and Longitude 08° 54' N. It has an elevation of about 1400 metres above sea level (Ofune, 1981). The total annual rainfall is 2,476 mm. The mean temperature is about 22° C. The vegetation is the Montane type made of shrub, herb and grasses.

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Some areas within Kabong, such as Rock Haven, Angwan Alheri and Utan were planned, due to the influence of missionary residents. Today some patches of these areas have haphazard unapproved built structures. The central area of the district has a modern market of over 200 shops with bank, court, police station, parking bay and malls and 2 spotted local markets in the west and the east of the area respectively. Kabong has some reputed secondary and mission colleges in the nursery, primary and secondary levels. It has a catholic convent, many churches, a modern stadium, the city graveyard, hotels and many bars.

This involves the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and questionnaire administration.

*Focus Group Discussion (FGD) approach*  
There is always a variety of ideas when stakeholders are assembled to discuss the slum upgrading issues existing in an area. The diverse ideas explored the various perceptions and orientation of pressure groups in the slum upgrading project. The research methodology is based on focus group discussion (FGD) technique. There were 4 FGD workshops undertaken. Table 1 showed the nature of the stakeholders invited to start the first phase of the FGD.

**Data Collection Methods**

**Table 1** Stakeholders composition and their number

S/No	Stakeholders	Number
1	Ward Head or Representative	1
2	Slum residents	8
3	Church leaders	3
4	Hotel/Restaurant	2
5	Planning authority	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

*Questionnaire administration*

This is structured into 2 sections: socioeconomic characteristics and the community-based effects of SUP. The socioeconomic characteristics included age, sex, marital status, occupation, income and house location, while the community-based

participation included strength of Community Association (CA), project services, organisational provision and an evaluation of services provision/benefits derived. A total of 410 questionnaires were administered based on stratified random sampling to the slum dwellers in these areas.

**Table 2** Kabong neighbourhood areas

S/N	Slum-prone	Areas	Type
1	Yes	Kabong CBD, Yow and Angwan Suya,	3
2	No	Utan,	2
3	No	Rock Haven	1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

Grade: 1 – Planned area, 2 – Fairly Planned area and 3 - Unplanned area

The researcher recruited and trained 4 field assistants. Questionnaires were administered to

residents of these neighbourhood areas for a period of 8 consecutive days.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**  
**Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents**

This affects socioeconomic characteristics and the community compositional set-up for projects. The socioeconomic characteristics

considered in this research include income and occupations of residents. Ranges of income

levels per month were also collected and presented in table 3.

**Table 3** Income level per month

Income monthly range	Freq	Percent
0-25,000	105	25.61
25,001-50,000	85	20.73
50,001-75,000	72	17.56
75,001-100,000	66	16.10
100,001-125,000	43	10.49
125,001-150,000	18	04.39
>150,001	21	05.12
Total	410	100

Table 3 shows that about 70% earned above the income minimum wage of N30,000 per month. About 20% of respondents earned N100,000 and above. About 95% of the respondents, however, earn less than N150,000 per month. In the current dispensation of high

inflation, the statistics indicate a low income earning power for most residents of the neighbourhood. The other socioeconomic characteristic is the occupation of resident respondents (Table 4).

**Table 4** Occupation of residents

S/N	Occupation	Freq.	Percent
1	Artisan	75	18.29
2	Trading	120	29.27
3	Farming	42	10.24
4	Civil servant	122	29.76
5	Retired	40	09.76
6	Professional	11	02.68
	Total	410	100

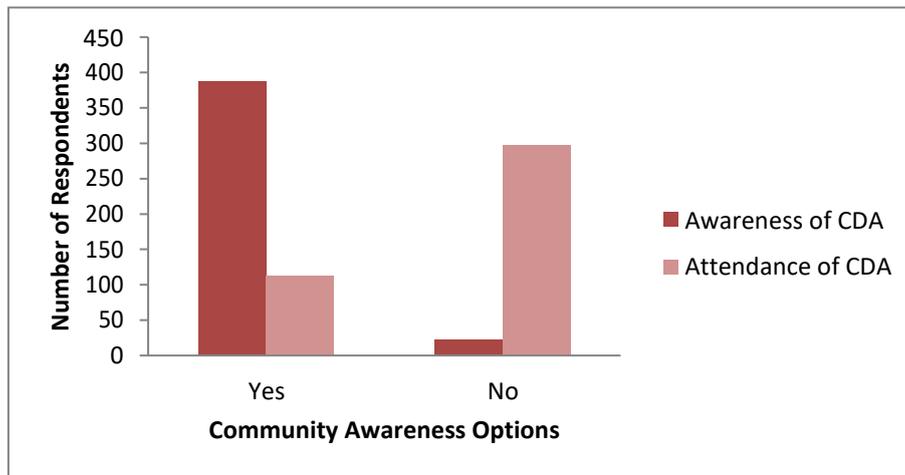
Table 4 showed high proportion of traders and civil servants who together make up nearly 60% of the respondents. There is also a sizeable number of artisans (18%) in the community. This may explain the low income status of most residents in the neighbourhood (Table 3). Most of the civil servants are low cadre and most of the traders are equally petty traders or shop owners who are into retail servicing. These groups earn only enough income for sustenance. Professionals make up only a small fraction (2.68%) of the respondents. Most of them live in Rockhaven

quarters of the neighbourhood, which is the upscale section of the community

**Community Association**

The neighbourhood has a community development association (CDA), which has the responsibility of representing the community's needs to the government and acts as the platform for self-help community development efforts, security and safety concerns. It is also the liaison between the community and the security outfits. However, not all residents appear to be active in its deliberations (Figure 2)

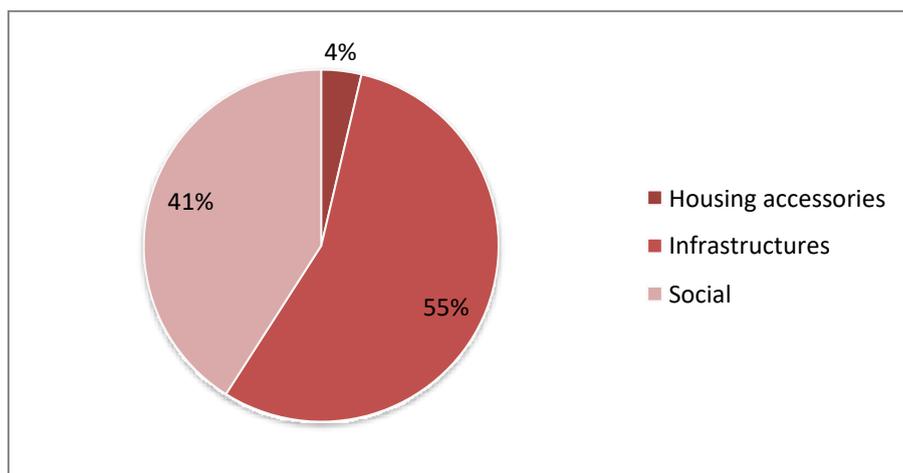
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**Figure 2** Community Association Awareness

In Figure 2, 387 respondents with a proportion of 94.39% were aware of the existence of the Kabong Community Development Association in the neighbourhood while 23 respondents with a proportion of 5.61% were not aware of its existence. In the subsequent related inquiry 297 respondents with 72.44% had never attended any meeting held by CDA while 113 respondents with a proportion of 27.56% attended and participated in the programmes. Apparently, many residents have a carefree concern and nonchalant attitude towards the association. This has many implications for participation in community development

efforts. Although many of the respondents claimed they remitted their dues to the association despite the fact that did not attend any meetings, their active involvement in the association would have been a more welcome development. Many respondents however indicated that they attended meetings especially when there were issues of security concerns in the community or in Jos town. At such meetings, they explained, more credible information and updates are obtained from officials of the association who have better access to security and community information than most residents have.



**Figure 3** Project Services Needs in the Community

The provision of project services (PS) is vital to community livability. Project services

consist of infrastructural services (IS), social services (SS) and housing accessories.

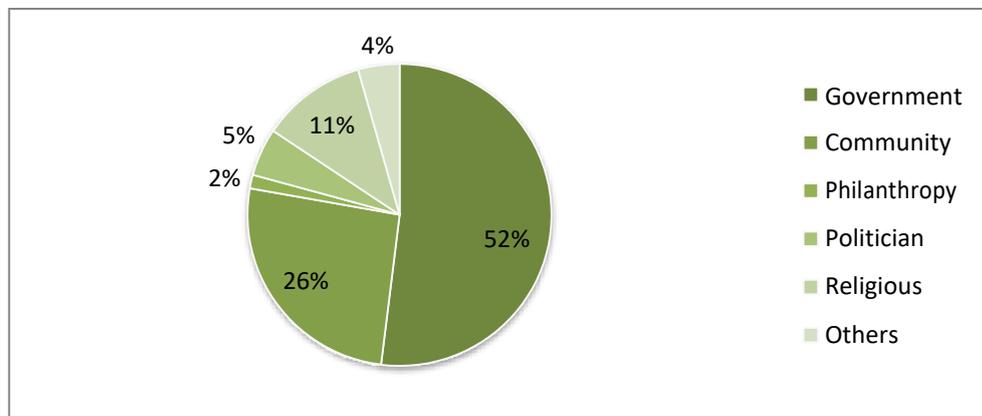
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Infrastructural services include bridges, tarred roads, culverts, tap/pipe-borne water and electricity, among others; while social services include clinics, schools, markets, churches clubs and parks/gardens and open spaces. Housing accessories include woods, sand, stone, zinc sheets, windows/doors and rods.

Figure 3 showed that 227 respondents (55.37%) identified infrastructural services as the most pressing project services needed in the community, while social services had 168 respondents (40.97%) and the least is housing accessories with 15 respondents (3.66%). This exhibited the greatest need for slum upgrading because the IS and the SS had a sum of 96.34%. In the community, IS were more needed as they

are required in everyday life and living of residents. They would provide better livelihood and confer higher quality of life as well. For example, the water, roads and electricity are needed at all times by the people for domestic and commercial uses. These are among the primary human needs. It is when IS are available that SS can be utilised. Housing accessories are individualized services provided, mostly, by the people themselves for their own needs. Individual preferences and affordability are important considerations.

Figure 4 presents the results of the respondents' perception of responsibilities for the provision of project services in the community.



**Figure 4** Organisational Provision of Project Services in Community.

Most respondents indicated that the government has the greatest responsibility to provide project services in the neighbourhood (213 respondents) (51.95%), while the community-based association had 106 respondents (25.85%) and religious bodies had 46 respondents (11.22%). The least is philanthropy with 6 respondents (1.46%).

### Community Upgrading Effort

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the neighbourhood of Kabong has a population that exceeds 50,000 people. However, only 1,200 (0.024%) are actively registered members of the community development association. Indeed, the high rate of artisans, traders and civil servants (77.12%) as residents of the

neighbourhood indicate the poor/handicap financial conditions of residents, which will affect the strength of the CDA. Most of them live on daily wages therefore they leave their homes early and return late from work even on weekends. Attendance at community meetings therefore is not regular for most of them. The association, however, still needed to keep to its responsibility of intervening to provide essential services that the community may need, even in the face of strained financial resources. The study examined the project services in the community, their agency that provided the project services, the status of the project and whether it has been upgraded or not (Table 6).

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**Table 6** Infrastructural provision

S/N	Infrastructure	Financier	Type	Status	Remark
1	Road	G <sup>1</sup>	42.6km	Constructed 28km Renovated 14km	Upgraded
2	Water supply	G <sup>1</sup>	>300,000Ltrs	Constructed	Upgraded
3	Electricity	G/C	National grit	Constructed	Not upgraded
4	Telephone	PO	Antennas	Constructed	Not Upgraded
5	Culvert and cutter	C/R	7 culverts, >500m	Resident Constructed	Upgraded
6	Bridges	G <sup>1</sup>	3	Constructed	Upgraded

C – Community      G<sup>1</sup> – State Government  
 PO – Private Organisation      R – Residents

Table 6 detailed the IS provided in the neighbourhood. The government is the largest benefactor of the community having provided the most essential services (roads, bridges, water and electricity). The community provided culverts and some of the electricity poles require to run the grid in some parts of the community. The telecommunication antennae were provided by private telecommunication providers. The community also assisted in providing land to the government and private organizations at ceiling discount rates to facilitate provision of project services. Land being under the control of the community is provided no matter its size for governments services (state and local) because of the need for basic services in the community. The

community cooperate to curtail the erosion if government did not intervene immediately. The IS provides a multiplier effect to urban development and residents of community. It is the infrastructure that enable the upsurge in liveability and personal economic status, which are important to bringing out the community out of its slum predicaments. The SS is detailed in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that community has upgraded markets and schools (both public primary and secondary schools). The modern market has more than 360 stalls within its premises, with a police post, a bank with Automated Teller Machines (ATM) and a market administrative office. The open market has only 125 stalls but has 2 ATMs.

**Table 7** Social amenities/services provision

S/N	Social services	Financier	Type	Status	Remark
1	Market	G <sup>1,2</sup> ,C	3	Community gave land (>6 Hactares)	Upgraded
2	Schools-	G <sup>1,2</sup> ,C	1 Primary 1 secondary	Community gave land (>7 Hactares)	Upgraded
3	PHC	G <sup>2</sup> ,C	1, >4	Not functional	Not Upgraded
4	Court	G <sup>1</sup>	1	Functional	Not Upgraded
5	Bank	Co	1	Functional	Upgraded
6	Police post	Po	2	Functional	Upgraded
7	Fast food	PB	1	Not functional	Upgraded
8	Refuse	C/G <sup>1</sup> /R		Poor dustbins adherence, Flithy central collection	Not Upgraded

C – Community      CO – Corporate organisation  
 G<sup>1</sup> – State Government      G<sup>2</sup> – Local Government  
 PB – Private Businesses      Pol - Politicians  
 PO – Public organisation      R – Residents

**CONCLUSION**

It is this upgrading principle that is key in transforming shelter, environment and

liveability conditions in urban planning. The Kabong community development association has done quite a bit to uplift the living

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conditions of the neighbourhood. As an association, it has provided and upgraded several project services in the community including markets, schools, primary health centre and refuse disposal activities and constructed culverts, paid for and installed electricity poles for the benefit of the community. As an association, the CDA appears to be fully involved in upgrading the slum conditions of the neighbourhood. Residents have also provided culverts that lead to their homes or even that link parts of the community to other sections.

However, there are several challenges to greater achievement of its goals. First is the challenge of a large urban area, most part of it with slum conditions. This is an intimidating feat to challenge by the association on its own. Most of the infrastructure demanded to uplift the status of the community are capital intensive and out of the reach of a community association to finance. Consequently, there is need for government intervention. Secondly, most of the area is occupied by people of low income status who live on daily wages. Their levels of participation and contribution to the association is therefore weak. The association does not have enough people mobilized to respond to active individual participation in community project efforts. There is either a lukewarm attitude being exhibited by most residents towards the association or they are unable to fulfil their commitments to the association as a result of other more pressing personal needs. With a low and inactive membership and low financial base, there is only so much the community association can do. Within the context of these and other problems being faced by the association, it may not be only a charitable pronouncement to assert that the community, led by its association, is involved in upgrading the slum status of the community through its project services and its partnership with the government and private organizations to also provide services to the community that would help alleviate its living conditions and therefore its standard of living and quality of life.

There is still much to be done to bring the neighbourhood out of its slum conditions and there is still room for greater community participation. One of the major challenges that the community association needs to undertake presently to surmount some of its challenges is

to initiate and sustain a deliberate sensitization and orientation campaign to mobilize the mass of its community towards more proactive participation in community activities and development.

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