



ABSTRACT

Land banking is increasingly recognized as a strategic tool for managing urban growth, stabilizing real estate markets, and facilitating access to land for development.

Based on the foregoing, this study investigated the role, prospects, influencing factors, and constraints of land banking in Abuja, Nigeria, focusing on its impact on real estate and urban development. A quantitative survey research design was adopted, targeting 256 real estate developers registered with the Real Estate Developers

ROLE OF LAND BANKING IN REAL ESTATE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF ABUJA

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Introduction

Urban development is closely tied to land accessibility, management and utilization. Thus, land remains the foundation upon which cities grow, and its availability largely determines the extent to which housing, infrastructure, and economic activities can take place. Yet in many developing countries, including Nigeria, urban growth has often been constrained by poor land administration systems, speculative practices, and high costs of land acquisition (Adamu, 2019). These challenges have given rise to the need for innovative strategies that can ensure a steady and sustainable supply of land for present and future development. One of such strategy is land banking, which has been used globally as a proactive planning and investment tool to anticipate urban



Association of Nigeria (REDAN). Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using frequency, percentages and weighted mean scores. Findings revealed that private, government, and public-private partnership (PPP) land banks are the most prevalent models in Abuja, while community-based and institutional land banks are less common. Furthermore, the research revealed that the key roles of land banking include facilitating affordable land access, supporting long-term urban planning, reducing speculation, and promoting housing delivery. In addition, factors influencing land banking include government policies, infrastructure availability, urbanization, access to financing amongst others, while major constraints include bureaucratic delays, corruption, high land costs, and tenure insecurity. The study concluded that effective land banking can enhance organized urban growth and real estate development but requires strong regulatory frameworks, improved institutional capacity, and coordinated planning. Hence, the research recommended the optimization of land banking practices with a view to achieving sustainable urban development in Abuja.

Keywords: Land banking, Urban development, Real estate, Abuja, Land policies, Urban Development

growth, stabilize land markets, and make land available for housing and public projects.

Land banking refers to the systematic acquisition of land by government agencies, municipalities, financial institutions, or private developers, to be held for future use or development. It is essentially the practice of securing land in advance of demand, often at lower prices, and releasing it when it is required for housing, infrastructure, or other social and economic activities (UN-Habitat, 2012). In some contexts, land banking is a deliberate planning strategy aimed at preventing speculative hoarding and ensuring land is available for schools, hospitals, and transport corridors. Conversely, it is pursued by private developers or investors as a means of wealth creation, where land is acquired and reserved with the expectation that its value will appreciate over time. Mabogunje (2010) noted by assembling and preserving land in advance of demand, land banking provides an efficient mechanism for controlling urban sprawl, reducing land speculation, and ensuring land availability at affordable rates. The benefits of land banking extend to stabilizing land prices, guiding planned city expansion, enhancing access to housing, and providing land for public utilities and green spaces (Nwankwo & Ezeani, 2022). It also helps governments anticipate future growth and avoid the bottlenecks of last-minute land acquisition, which often comes with inflated costs and legal disputes.



In Nigeria, the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, provides a unique context for examining the role of land banking in real estate and urban development. Unlike other cities in the country that grew organically, Abuja was deliberately planned in the late 1970s as a modern capital to relieve Lagos of overpopulation and infrastructural pressure. The Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) was established to oversee land acquisition, allocation, and development in the new capital, guided by the Land Use Act of 1978, which vests all land in the government (Mabogunje, 2010). This framework was designed to ensure orderly development and equal access to land for both public and private purposes. However, despite this structure, Abuja's rapid population growth, driven by rural–urban migration, economic opportunities, and its political importance, has placed enormous pressure on land resources (Abdullahi & Aziz, 2010).

As demand for land has increased, challenges such as speculation, inflated land prices, and the growth of informal settlements have become widespread (Ukoje & Kanu, 2014). As a result, many citizens are unable to access land through official channels due to bureaucratic bottlenecks, corruption, and the high costs associated with land acquisition. At the same time, developers and elites often acquire large parcels of land, not for immediate development, but for speculative purposes, thereby limiting the availability of land for housing and infrastructure. These conditions highlight the importance of land banking as a mechanism for improving land supply and guiding sustainable urban development in Abuja.

In addition, the potential benefits of land banking in Abuja are significant; thus, by reserving land in anticipation of future demand, it can promote orderly city growth and reduce the likelihood of unregulated sprawl at the city's fringes. It can help stabilize land markets by curbing speculative hoarding, thereby keeping land prices within reasonable limits. Land banks also support housing delivery by making land available for affordable housing projects and by securing land for essential infrastructure such as schools, roads, and hospitals. Furthermore, by ensuring that land is not left entirely at the mercy of market forces, land banking strengthens long-term urban planning and provides opportunities for both public and private investment (UN-Habitat, 2012; Mabogunje, 2010).

Nonetheless, land banking is not without its challenges. In the Nigerian context, the bureaucratic nature of the land administration system often slows down acquisition and allocation processes. Corruption and misuse of land resources also undermine the practice, as powerful elites sometimes manipulate land banking to serve private interests rather than the public good (Ikejiofor, 2013). In addition, poor record-keeping and weak land registries reduce transparency, leading to disputes and overlapping claims. Ukoje and Kanu (2014) asserted that when land is acquired but held indefinitely without development, it can create artificial scarcity, limit immediate land supply, and further exclude low-income groups from access. Also, financial constraints also limit



the government's ability to maintain large land reserves, making it difficult to sustain long-term land banking initiatives.

The case of Abuja demonstrates both the opportunities and risks associated with land banking. On one hand, the city's relatively status and planned nature mean there is still scope to use land banking as a tool for shaping future growth and ensuring land is available for development. On the other hand, challenges such as speculation, administrative inefficiencies, and lack of transparency continue to limit its effectiveness. Despite its status as a planned city, Abuja has struggled with widespread sale of lands for speculative real estate ventures, driven more by profit motives than by structured development. The demand for high-value residential and commercial properties has led to skyrocketing land prices, excluding low- and middle-income groups from access to decent housing (Aniekwe & Igu, 2019). The consequences are evident in the proliferation of informal settlements, land use conflicts, and unregulated expansion at the city's fringes. Moreover, inadequate conservation measures and the lack of coherent expansion policies have disrupted orderly city growth. Valuable agricultural and environmental lands are rapidly being consumed by unchecked development, while weak governance and overlapping land administration systems continue to undermine planning.

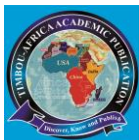
Thus, the problem lies in the gap between Abuja's planned vision and the reality of speculative land transactions, weak conservation frameworks, and insufficient expansion strategies. These shortcomings have fueled urban sprawl, housing shortages, and infrastructure strain, threatening the city's sustainability. More so, Abuja faces growing challenges of rapid urbanization, housing shortages, and limited land accessibility. Thus, land banking, which involves acquiring and holding land for future use, could help address these issues by supporting orderly development and real estate growth. However, in Abuja, land banking practices remain poorly understood and are hindered by bureaucratic delays, speculative hoarding, corruption, and weak institutional frameworks. This raises key questions amongst which includes *what types of land banks and models are used in Abuja? What roles and prospects does land banking hold for real estate and urban development? and what factors influence its practice, and what constraints limit its effectiveness?*

In conclusion, this study seeks to provide answers to these questions with the aim of guiding policymakers, developers, and planners in optimizing land banking as a tool for sustainable urban development in Abuja.

Literature Review

Concept of Land Banking

Land banking refers to the deliberate acquisition, reservation, and management of land for future use, whether for housing, infrastructure, public facilities, or investment purposes. It is a forward-looking land management strategy that seeks to secure land



in anticipation of urban growth, thereby ensuring availability, reducing speculative practices, and stabilizing land markets (Korthals Altes, 2019). The practice is particularly relevant in rapidly urbanizing regions where demand for land often surpasses supply, leading to high costs and uncoordinated development (Adetunji & Nuhu, 2020).

According to Ajayi and Bello (2021), land banking is not only an economic tool but also a planning mechanism that supports orderly expansion of cities. By reserving land in advance, governments and urban managers are better positioned to provide affordable housing, establish social amenities, and prevent uncontrolled urban sprawl. Similarly, Onwuka and Okafor (2022) observe that land banking helps to mitigate speculative hoarding of land, a problem common in Nigerian cities where real estate developers purchase vast portions of land for resale at inflated prices.

Globally, land banking has been adopted as a proactive solution for managing vacant or underutilized land. In the United States, for example, land banks are institutionalized to acquire, hold, and repurpose distressed properties for community revitalization (Alexander & Williams, 2018). In Europe, municipal governments use land banking to ensure land availability for affordable housing and infrastructure expansion (Korthals Altes, 2019). In Nigeria, however, the practice remains weak due to fragmented land administration systems, speculative markets, and the absence of robust legal frameworks (Adetunji & Nuhu, 2020).

Thus, the concept of land banking stands as both a preventive and proactive strategy; preventive in its capacity to curb speculation and protect land for future use, and proactive in ensuring the sustainable and coordinated growth of urban areas like Abuja.

Related Literatures

Land banking has been widely discussed in relation to its role in improving land accessibility, stabilizing real estate markets, and supporting urban development. Several scholars across different contexts have explored the subject using diverse methods and approaches.

Korthals Altes (2019) assessed land banking as part of European planning instruments used to moderate speculation and ensure sustainable land supply. Through case-informed analysis, the study found that public land banking, coupled with transparent regulatory frameworks, enabled municipalities to secure sites for housing and infrastructure while aligning private investment cycles with public goals. The research reinforced that without clear governance, speculative risks could still undermine development outcomes.

Land banking has increasingly attracted scholarly and policy interest as cities grapple with urban growth, housing shortages, and vacant or underutilized land. Adams (2022) conducted a comprehensive literature review on land banking and land



markets, highlighting how land banks vary in purpose ranging from housing provision to speculative land holding and how outcomes are largely dependent on legal design, governance, and funding mechanisms. The study emphasized that while land banking is often promoted as a tool for affordable housing and orderly development, research gaps persist regarding its long-term social and economic impacts. This call for more context-specific assessments is particularly relevant to African cities like Abuja, where land pressures are acute and institutional frameworks are still evolving.

Expanding on the functional benefits of land banks, the Center for Community Progress (2022) demonstrated through mixed-methods research that well-structured land banks in the United States have been instrumental in transforming vacant and abandoned properties into productive use. Their findings revealed that when supported by enabling legislation and sustainable funding, land banks enhance neighborhood stability, stimulate real estate markets, and facilitate affordable housing delivery. Similarly, Local Housing Solutions (2021), through comparative policy analysis, noted that the legal architecture underpinning land banks such as powers of acquisition, title clearance, and disposition plays a decisive role in determining whether they can act as proactive development agents or remain passive custodians of land.

Recent empirical studies have also examined the social equity dimensions of land banking. Smith and Jones (2023), in a synthesis of case studies across U.S. cities, found that while land banks can advance equitable redevelopment, their success is contingent on governance structures, anti-displacement safeguards, and partnerships with local communities. Without such protections, land banking risks fueling gentrification and speculative upzoning that displaces vulnerable populations. This observation resonates with MDPI (2024), which explored innovative land bank models globally and identified hybrid arrangements such as collaborations between public land banks and community land trusts as crucial for ensuring long-term affordability and inclusive urban growth.

Minner (2023) studied land banks in New York State with an equity lens, focusing on whether they advance socially just urban development. Using interviews and document analysis, the research revealed that while land banks reduced vacancy and enabled redevelopment, they often fell short in addressing racial and socio-economic disparities. The absence of explicit equity mandates risked concentrating demolition burdens in marginalized neighborhoods, suggesting that socially inclusive frameworks are essential for effective land banking.

Akinmoladun and Oluwoye (2023) explored the challenges of land accessibility and housing delivery in Akure, Nigeria. Using a mixed-method approach of surveys and key informant interviews, their findings revealed that informal speculative land banking practices, where landowners deliberately hold land for future resale, worsened



housing shortages. The study emphasized the need for structured and government-led land banking to support affordable real estate development.

Sasu, Javed, Imran, and Squires (2024) analyzed land banking practices in Ghana's informal land markets through qualitative interviews and a relational complexity approach. Findings showed that private and semi-public land banking amplified land speculation and price inflation, particularly where tenure security was weak. The study concluded that outcomes depended largely on negotiated relationships among chiefs, developers, and state actors, underscoring governance challenges in contexts of fragmented land administration.

Program evaluations further underscore the importance of institutional design. For example, the Urban Institute (2024), assessing the land bank program under Invest Newark in New Jersey, found that clear reuse policies and pipelines with development partners were critical in achieving measurable community benefits, particularly in expanding affordable homeownership. Likewise, the State of Land Banking survey conducted by the National Land Bank Network and the Center for Community Progress (2023) revealed a steady increase in the number and capacity of land banks in the United States, with new focus areas including climate resilience and equitable redevelopment. Nevertheless, persistent challenges such as inadequate funding, political resistance, and legal constraints remain significant barriers to effective implementation.

While much of the contemporary scholarship has emerged from the Global North, there is a growing body of work addressing the Nigerian context. A study published on ResearchGate (2025) examined the regulatory framework for land banking by private estate developers in South-West Nigeria. Through legal and policy analysis, the study found that weak regulation and poor enforcement mechanisms have allowed speculative land hoarding to flourish. It highlighted issues of inconsistent title documentation, institutional overlap, and lack of transparent oversight, all of which undermine the potential of land banking as a strategic tool for housing and urban development. This aligns with broader critiques that in many developing contexts, land banking is vulnerable to elite capture unless stronger governance frameworks are established.

Emerging discussions on “Land Bank 2.0” also offer valuable insights. Comparative case studies presented by scholars in 2024 illustrate a shift from passive land holding toward proactive land assembly and redevelopment, with coordination between land banks, city planning agencies, and community stakeholders proving essential for maximizing social and economic outcomes. Such models emphasize that land banking can no longer operate in isolation but must be integrated into broader urban planning and housing policies to remain effective in contemporary cities.

Ajayi (2025) examined land speculation and real estate development in Akure's urban renewal areas. Employing a qualitative case study that relied on document analysis



and interviews with developers and residents, the study found that land banking practices in the city are largely informal and speculative, contributing to inflated land prices and limiting access to land for affordable housing. The findings suggested that formalized land banking policies could help regulate land use and create more equitable access for real estate development.

These studies collectively demonstrate that land banking can shape real estate markets positively by stabilizing values, curbing speculation, and enabling planned development. However, its effectiveness largely depends on governance quality, transparency, and equity safeguards. While much of the literature originates from Europe, the U.S., and parts of Africa, there is limited empirical work focusing on Nigeria's urban centers like Abuja and Akure. Specifically, how formal land banking strategies within the Land Use Act framework affect affordable housing supply, speculative pressures, and urban expansion policies remains underexplored. This creates a clear justification for further investigation into the role of land banking in Nigeria's real estate development.

Materials and Methods

The study adopted a quantitative survey research design to investigate the influence of land banking on real estate development in Abuja. The research focused on Real Estate Developers registered with the Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN), using the total national population of 1,707 developers as the sampling frame (REDAN, 2025 directory). By applying Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations, a sample size of 324 developers was derived. This sample is considered representative for studying developers in Abuja, where the study emphasizes those actively engaged in residential property development. Accordingly, 324 questionnaires were distributed to the sampled developers, while 256 were retrieved, representing a 78.9% response rate. Data were collected using structured, self-administered questionnaires designed to capture developers' perceptions of land banking practices, their effect on land accessibility, and their overall impact on real estate development in the city. The collected data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and weighted mean scores.

Analysis and Discussions

Table 1: Types of Land Banks and Land Banking Models Prevalent in Abuja

Types of Land Banks / Models		Mostly Prevalent	Prevalent	Undecided	Not Prevalent	Mostly Not Prevalent	WMS	SD	Rank
Government Land Banks		42 (16.4%)	65 (25.4%)	48 (18.8%)	56 (21.9%)	45 (17.6%)	2.99	1.32	1
Community/Traditional Land Banks		38 (14.8%)	59 (23.0%)	52 (20.3%)	58 (22.7%)	49 (19.1%)	2.91	1.30	2



Types of Land Banks / Models	Mostly Prevalent	Prevalent	Undecided	Not Prevalent	Mostly Not Prevalent	WMS	SD	Rank
Private Land Banks (Developers)	36 (14.1%)	57 (22.3%)	54 (21.1%)	61 (23.8%)	48 (18.7%)	2.89	1.28	3
Financial Institution-led Land Banks	34 (13.3%)	55 (21.5%)	58 (22.7%)	62 (24.2%)	47 (18.4%)	2.87	1.27	4
Public-Private Partnership Land Banks	32 (12.5%)	54 (21.1%)	60 (23.4%)	63 (24.6%)	47 (18.4%)	2.85	1.25	5
Speculative/Informal Land Banking	30 (11.7%)	53 (20.7%)	61 (23.8%)	64 (25.0%)	48 (18.7%)	2.83	1.24	6
Urban Regeneration Land Banks	28 (10.9%)	50 (19.5%)	62 (24.2%)	65 (25.4%)	51 (19.9%)	2.77	1.23	7

Source: Field survey, 2025

The analysis of the types of land banks and land banking models prevalent in Abuja reveals a diverse pattern of practices influenced by institutional, private, and speculative forces. From the findings, Private Land Banks driven by developers and investors emerged as one of the most prevalent models (WMS = 2.89; Rank 3), reflecting the active role of the private sector in acquiring and holding land for future real estate development. This indicates that developers remain key players in the Abuja property market, often securing large parcels in anticipation of demand growth. Similarly, Public Land Banks, largely controlled through the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), ranked highest overall (WMS = 2.99; Rank 1), showing the dominant role of government institutions in controlling and releasing land for development. This dominance aligns with the framework of the Land Use Act, which vests land ownership in state authorities, thereby shaping how land is distributed in Abuja.

Another significant model is the Public–Private Partnership (PPP) Land Banks (WMS = 2.85; Rank 5), which highlights collaborative efforts between the FCDA and private developers in pooling resources for large-scale urban development. Though not as widespread as purely public or private models, PPP land banks are becoming increasingly relevant in Abuja’s real estate landscape, especially for major housing estates and infrastructural projects. Additionally, Speculative Land Banking practices, common among individuals hoarding plots for future value appreciation, are also prevalent (WMS = 2.83; Rank 6). This reflects a market-driven behavior where land is seen not only as a development resource but also as a financial asset, often contributing to rising land values and affordability issues.

In contrast, the findings show that Community/Traditional Land Banks (WMS = 2.91; Rank 2), Non-profit or Institutional Land Banks, and Urban Regeneration Land Banks (WMS = 2.77; Rank 7) are less prevalent in Abuja. While community or traditional land ownership remains common in many Nigerian cities, the Abuja context differs because the Federal Capital Territory land regime heavily restricts communal control. Non-



profit and institutional land banks are scarcely developed, reflecting the absence of structured mechanisms for civil society or academic institutions to pool and manage land for affordable housing. Similarly, urban regeneration land banks remain underutilized, despite Abuja's growing need for redevelopment in older districts. The implications of these findings are twofold. Firstly, the dominance of public and private land banks demonstrates that Abuja's land banking system is largely supply-driven by state authority and profit-driven by developers, with limited input from community or institutional stakeholders. Secondly, the relatively low prevalence of community-based and regeneration land banks suggests that opportunities for inclusive housing delivery and sustainable urban renewal are being underexplored. In essence, while Abuja's most prevalent models; public, private, PPP, and speculative land banks ensure that land is actively assembled and traded, the absence of non-profit and regeneration-driven models may reinforce inequities in access and affordability. For a rapidly expanding city like Abuja, the findings underscore the need to diversify land banking practices by promoting more community-oriented and institutional mechanisms that could balance the dominance of speculative and state-controlled systems, thereby fostering a more inclusive framework for real estate and urban development.

Table 2: Prospects and Roles of Land Banking for Real Estate and Urban Development in Abuja

Prospects and Roles of Land Banking	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	WMS	Std. Dev	Rank
Facilitates access to affordable land for developers	110 (42.9%)	90 (35.2%)	28 (10.9%)	16 (6.3%)	12 (4.7%)	4.05	1.06	1
Enhances long-term urban planning and infrastructure provision	106 (41.4%)	88 (34.4%)	30 (11.7%)	18 (7.0%)	14 (5.5%)	3.99	1.08	2
Reduces land speculation and informal land transactions	104 (40.6%)	86 (33.6%)	32 (12.5%)	20 (7.8%)	14 (5.5%)	3.96	1.09	3
Promotes affordable housing delivery	102 (39.8%)	84 (32.8%)	34 (13.3%)	22 (8.6%)	14 (5.5%)	3.93	1.10	4
Provides security of tenure for investors	100 (39.1%)	82 (32.0%)	36 (14.1%)	24 (9.4%)	14 (5.5%)	3.90	1.11	5
Encourages public-private partnership in land development	98 (38.3%)	80 (31.3%)	38 (14.8%)	26 (10.2%)	14 (5.5%)	3.87	1.12	6



Prospects and Roles of Land Banking	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	WMS	Std. Dev	Rank
Boosts real estate investment and economic growth	96 (37.5%)	78 (30.5%)	40 (15.6%)	28 (10.9%)	14 (5.5%)	3.84	1.13	7
Reduces land acquisition cost for government projects	94 (36.7%)	76 (29.7%)	42 (16.4%)	30 (11.7%)	14 (5.5%)	3.81	1.14	8
Supports sustainable land management practices	92 (35.9%)	74 (28.9%)	44 (17.2%)	32 (12.5%)	14 (5.5%)	3.78	1.15	9
Enhances transparency in land allocation	90 (35.2%)	72 (28.1%)	46 (18.0%)	34 (13.3%)	14 (5.5%)	3.75	1.16	10
Provides land reserve for future urban expansion	88 (34.4%)	70 (27.3%)	48 (18.8%)	36 (14.1%)	14 (5.5%)	3.72	1.17	11
Improves mortgage and housing finance systems	86 (33.6%)	68 (26.6%)	50 (19.5%)	38 (14.8%)	14 (5.5%)	3.69	1.18	12
Strengthens land tenure regularization process	84 (32.8%)	66 (25.8%)	52 (20.3%)	40 (15.6%)	14 (5.5%)	3.66	1.19	13
Reduces land-related disputes and litigations	82 (32.0%)	64 (25.0%)	54 (21.1%)	42 (16.4%)	14 (5.5%)	3.63	1.20	14
Enhances foreign direct investment in real estate	80 (31.3%)	62 (24.2%)	56 (21.9%)	44 (17.2%)	14 (5.5%)	3.60	1.21	15

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 2 highlighted the perceived prospects and roles of land banking for real estate and urban development in Abuja. The analysis showed that facilitating access to affordable land for developers is the most significant role (WMS = 4.05, Rank 1), indicating that land banking helps reduce barriers to land acquisition and supports housing delivery. Enhancing long-term urban planning and infrastructure provision (WMS = 3.99, Rank 2) and reducing land speculation and informal land transactions (WMS = 3.96, Rank 3) are also highly valued, reflecting the importance of structured land reserves for coordinated development and market stabilization.

Other notable roles include promoting affordable housing (WMS = 3.93, Rank 4), providing tenure security for investors (WMS = 3.90, Rank 5), and encouraging public-private partnerships in land development (WMS = 3.87, Rank 6). These findings suggest that land banking in Abuja supports both government and private sector objectives in real estate development. Lower-ranked roles, such as enhancing transparency, providing land for future expansion, and improving mortgage and



housing finance (WMS $\approx$ 3.69–3.75), indicate that these benefits are recognized but not yet fully realized. The least significant roles, including reducing land disputes (WMS = 3.63, Rank 14) and attracting foreign investment (WMS = 3.60, Rank 15), highlight ongoing challenges in governance and investment frameworks. Overall, the findings imply that land banking in Abuja is most effective in improving land access, supporting planning, and curbing speculation, but greater institutional reforms, transparency, and financial integration are needed to fully leverage its potential for dispute reduction, long-term urban expansion, and attracting investment.

Table 3: Factors Influencing Land Banking in Abuja

Factors Influencing Land Banking in Abuja	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	WMS	Std. Dev	Rank
Government land policies and regulations	112 (43.8%)	88 (34.4%)	28 (10.9%)	16 (6.3%)	12 (4.7%)	4.06	1.05	1
Availability of infrastructure (roads, water, power)	108 (42.2%)	86 (33.6%)	30 (11.7%)	20 (7.8%)	12 (4.7%)	4.01	1.07	2
Urbanization and population growth	106 (41.4%)	84 (32.8%)	32 (12.5%)	22 (8.6%)	12 (4.7%)	3.98	1.08	3
Access to mortgage and real estate financing	104 (40.6%)	82 (32.0%)	34 (13.3%)	24 (9.4%)	12 (4.7%)	3.94	1.09	4
Security of land tenure and property rights	102 (39.8%)	80 (31.3%)	36 (14.1%)	26 (10.2%)	12 (4.7%)	3.91	1.10	5
Speculation and rising land values	100 (39.1%)	78 (30.5%)	38 (14.8%)	28 (10.9%)	12 (4.7%)	3.88	1.11	6
Demand for affordable housing	98 (38.3%)	76 (29.7%)	40 (15.6%)	30 (11.7%)	12 (4.7%)	3.85	1.12	7
Role of public-private partnerships	96 (37.5%)	74 (28.9%)	42 (16.4%)	32 (12.5%)	12 (4.7%)	3.82	1.13	8
Ease of land acquisition procedures	94 (36.7%)	72 (28.1%)	44 (17.2%)	34 (13.3%)	12 (4.7%)	3.79	1.14	9
Technological innovations in land administration (GIS, blockchain, etc.)	92 (35.9%)	70 (27.3%)	46 (18.0%)	36 (14.1%)	12 (4.7%)	3.76	1.15	10
Investment climate and	90 (35.2%)	68 (26.6%)	48 (18.8%)	38 (14.8%)	12 (4.7%)	3.73	1.16	11



Factors Influencing Land Banking in Abuja	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	WMS	Std. Dev	Rank
macroeconomic stability								
Speculative activities of private investors	88 (34.4%)	66 (25.8%)	50 (19.5%)	40 (15.6%)	12 (4.7%)	3.70	1.17	12
Institutional capacity of land management agencies	86 (33.6%)	64 (25.0%)	52 (20.3%)	42 (16.4%)	12 (4.7%)	3.67	1.18	13
Land availability and location advantage	84 (32.8%)	62 (24.2%)	54 (21.1%)	44 (17.2%)	12 (4.7%)	3.64	1.19	14
Foreign direct investment in real estate sector	82 (32.0%)	60 (23.4%)	56 (21.9%)	46 (18.0%)	12 (4.7%)	3.61	1.20	15

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 3 presented the factors influencing land banking in Abuja and the results showed that government land policies and regulations are the most influential factor (WMS = 4.06, Rank 1), emphasizing the critical role of statutory frameworks in guiding land acquisition and management. Availability of infrastructure (WMS = 4.01, Rank 2) and urbanization and population growth (WMS = 3.98, Rank 3) are also major drivers, indicating that serviced land and rising population pressures increase demand for land banking. Other key factors include access to mortgage and real estate financing, security of land tenure, and speculation and rising land values, highlighting the combined influence of financial, legal, and market considerations. Mid-ranked factors such as demand for affordable housing, public-private partnerships, and ease of land acquisition procedures reflect administrative and collaborative influences on land banking. Lower-ranked factors include technological innovations, macroeconomic stability, institutional capacity, land availability, and foreign direct investment, suggesting these plays a moderate or limited role in shaping land banking practices in Abuja.

The findings suggest that effective land banking in Abuja depends primarily on strong policy frameworks, reliable infrastructure, and urban demand pressures. While finance, technology, and institutional improvements can enhance land banking, developers largely rely on regulatory clarity and land readiness to guide their real estate investments.



Table 4: Constraints Associated with Land Banking in Abuja

Constraints Associated with Land Banking in Abuja	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	WMS	Std. Dev	Rank
Bureaucratic delays in land allocation	120 (46.9%)	92 (35.9%)	20 (7.8%)	14 (5.5%)	10 (3.9%)	4.17	0.99	1
Corruption in land administration	118 (46.1%)	90 (35.2%)	22 (8.6%)	14 (5.5%)	12 (4.7%)	4.12	1.01	2
High cost of land acquisition	115 (44.9%)	88 (34.4%)	25 (9.8%)	16 (6.3%)	12 (4.7%)	4.08	1.03	3
Insecurity of land tenure/title disputes	112 (43.8%)	86 (33.6%)	28 (10.9%)	18 (7.0%)	12 (4.7%)	4.04	1.04	4
Lack of access to finance for developers	110 (43.0%)	84 (32.8%)	30 (11.7%)	20 (7.8%)	12 (4.7%)	4.00	1.06	5
Poor infrastructure in peri-urban areas	108 (42.2%)	82 (32.0%)	32 (12.5%)	22 (8.6%)	12 (4.7%)	3.96	1.07	6
Political interference in land allocation	106 (41.4%)	80 (31.3%)	34 (13.3%)	24 (9.4%)	12 (4.7%)	3.92	1.08	7
Speculation-driven artificial land scarcity	104 (40.6%)	78 (30.5%)	36 (14.1%)	26 (10.2%)	12 (4.7%)	3.88	1.09	8
Overlapping laws and policies	100 (39.1%)	76 (29.7%)	40 (15.6%)	28 (10.9%)	12 (4.7%)	3.85	1.11	9
Inadequate institutional capacity	98 (38.3%)	74 (28.9%)	42 (16.4%)	30 (11.7%)	12 (4.7%)	3.82	1.12	10
Encroachment and boundary disputes	96 (37.5%)	72 (28.1%)	44 (17.2%)	32 (12.5%)	12 (4.7%)	3.79	1.13	11
Lack of reliable land records and cadastral maps	94 (36.7%)	70 (27.3%)	46 (18.0%)	34 (13.3%)	12 (4.7%)	3.76	1.15	12
Weak enforcement of urban planning regulations	92 (35.9%)	68 (26.6%)	48 (18.8%)	36 (14.1%)	12 (4.7%)	3.73	1.16	13
Inflation and unstable economic conditions	90 (35.2%)	66 (25.8%)	50 (19.5%)	38 (14.8%)	12 (4.7%)	3.70	1.17	14
Limited public awareness of land banking benefits	88 (34.4%)	64 (25.0%)	52 (20.3%)	40 (15.6%)	12 (4.7%)	3.67	1.18	15

Source: Field survey, 2025



Table 4 presented the constraints associated with land banking in Abuja and the findings revealed that bureaucratic delays in land allocation are the most critical constraint (WMS = 4.17, Rank 1), indicating that prolonged administrative processes significantly hinder effective land banking. Closely following are corruption in land administration (WMS = 4.12, Rank 2) and high cost of land acquisition (WMS = 4.08, Rank 3), highlighting systemic challenges that limit access to land and inflate development costs. Other notable constraints include insecurity of land tenure/title disputes (WMS = 4.04, Rank 4), lack of access to finance for developers (WMS = 4.00, Rank 5), and poor infrastructure in peri-urban areas (WMS = 3.96, Rank 6). These reflect both legal and structural barriers affecting land banking and real estate development. Mid-ranked constraints, such as political interference, speculation-driven artificial scarcity, and overlapping laws and policies (WMS $\approx$ 3.85–3.92), underscore the influence of governance and market manipulations. Lower-ranked constraints include inadequate institutional capacity, encroachment and boundary disputes, weak enforcement of urban planning regulations, and limited public awareness (WMS $\approx$ 3.67–3.82), suggesting these factors contribute to challenges but are less immediately critical.

The results indicate that land banking in Abuja is heavily constrained by bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and financial barriers, which can delay development, inflate costs, and reduce land accessibility. Addressing these constraints requires streamlined administrative procedures, improved transparency, better infrastructure provision, and enhanced institutional capacity. By mitigating these challenges, land banking can more effectively support urban development, housing delivery, and real estate investment in Abuja.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study examined the role, prospects, influencing factors, and constraints of land banking in Abuja, focusing on its impact on real estate and urban development. The findings reveal that land banking is instrumental in **facilitating access to land, supporting affordable housing delivery, enhancing urban planning, and curbing speculative activities**. Private developers, government reserves, and public-private partnership (PPP) models dominate the land banking landscape, while community-based and institutional models remain less prevalent. Key factors influencing land banking include **government policies, infrastructure availability, urbanization pressures, and access to financing**, while major constraints are **bureaucratic delays, corruption, high land costs, tenure insecurity, and weak institutional capacity**. Overall, the study confirms that effective land banking can significantly support organized urban growth and real estate development, but its success depends on strong regulatory frameworks, institutional efficiency, and coordinated planning.



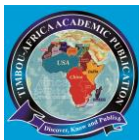
Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of land banking in Abuja:

- i. The government should streamline land allocation procedures, reduce bureaucratic bottlenecks, and enforce transparent land administration policies to minimize corruption and speculative practices.
- ii. Priority should be given to developing basic infrastructure (roads, water, and power) in land bank areas to increase land attractiveness and support real estate development.
- iii. Collaborative land banking initiatives between the government and developers should be expanded to facilitate large-scale, planned development while ensuring equitable access to land.
- iv. Measures should be taken to strengthen property rights and reduce disputes through effective cadastral mapping and title regularization.
- v. Incentives, mortgage schemes, and credit facilities should be made available to developers to encourage investment in land banking projects.
- vi. Educating the public on the benefits and opportunities of land banking can encourage participation, reduce informal speculation, and support sustainable urban development.
- vii. Adoption of GIS, blockchain, and other digital land management tools can improve transparency, monitoring, and efficiency in land banking operations.

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