

# Regulatory Reality in Improvised Urban Spaces Within Planned Settlements in Dar–Es–Salaam, Tanzania: Awareness & Compliance

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## Abstract:

This paper explored urbanites' awareness and compliance (i.e., adherence and non–adherence) with planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations in improvised urban spaces within planned settlements in Dar–es–Salaam city, Tanzania. The paper employed a case study strategy with a sequential explanatory mixed–methods approach, i.e., qualitative and quantitative methods. Multiple data collection methods were employed, i.e., questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), non–participatory observations, photographic documentation, and sketches for primary data, as well as documentary review for secondary data. It also employed a descriptive case study strategy, focusing on Sinza “A” in Dar–es–Salaam. A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed via stratified random sampling to building owners, tenants, and officials from LGAs, CGAs, and MDAs, with 106 (i.e., 96.4%) correctly filled and returned. The collected data were cleaned, coded, and processed, and quantitative data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 25 for descriptive and inferential statistics (one–sample *t*–test). Meanwhile, the qualitative data employed content and thematic analysis. This paper revealed that awareness of existing urban planning regulatory framework was low among the majority of respondents. The main reason revealed was a lack of adequate urban planning, housing professionals, and financial resources to create awareness. Again, adherence to planning standards was low, with reasons for non–adherence being mainly due to bureaucratic delays, the complex and lengthy process of obtaining permits, and a lack of public awareness of urban planning regulatory framework. The adherence and application were mostly in land acquisition, and the application of development control when applying for a building permit. All 5–Likert scaled factors, were statistically significant (*p*–value < 0.05). The study concludes by recommending strengthening institutional frameworks by reviewing and enacting existing and proposed regulatory instruments; increasing the number of trained staff at all administrative levels, down to the “Mtaa” level; and providing better funding, equipment, and ICT tools for central and local authorities. It insists on reducing bureaucratic barriers, enhancing public awareness, and involving urban residents early through a bottom–up planning approach. It also emphasizes long–term monitoring of informal development by combining GIS, remote sensing, and field surveys to track spatial improvisation and changes in informality in planned settlements.

**Keywords:** Urban Space, Improvisation, Urban Planning, Regulatory Framework, Planned Settlements, Dar–es–Salaam.

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

Cities are unique, and they differ from one another (van Nes & Yamu, 2021). Their uniqueness is resulted from the fact that each is composed of a unique and complex dense collection of diverse human agents and objects interacting in a limited space (Boeing, 2018 and Madanipour, 2019), and has its own ways in which urban planning regulations are understood, applied, and complied with. This uniqueness also enhance them in playing multifaceted functions (Kuddus *et al.*, 2020); as they act as laboratories of trial and error, failure, and success (Jacobs, 1961), due to a large constellation of miscellaneous socio–economic activities (Tesha *at el.*, 2025a; 2025b). Likewise, these conducted socio–economic activities make them centers and heart of exchange, economic growth, and places of boundless opportunity and miracles, hence meeting all human basic needs (Daniel, 2016; Dell, 2019; Kuddus *et al.*, 2020; and Mbee & Tonte, 2022). Consequently, this results to rapid growth population and the urban space to be used for such activities (Msangi, 2011). The need and high demand for space, pushes urbanites into informally undertaking these socio–economic activities<sup>1</sup> in planned urban spaces through improvisation, by adhering or without adhering to urban planning regulatory framework, intended to control space use and ensure orderly spatial development (Omollo, 2020). It is impossible to tell, whether their decision to improvise the planned spaces, is layered by limited or full awareness of, or capacity to comply or not to comply with, urban planning regulations; hence the conduction of this study. Moreover, their improvisation or34 planned urban spaces to host and

<sup>1</sup> **Socio–Economic Activities** definition in this paper, refers to the integrated set of social and economic activities undertaken by individuals within improvised urban spaces, to meet daily basic human needs. They include social interactions and connections, arising from community engagements (i.e., participation in cultural, religious, and social events like funerals, weddings, sports, work–related interactions, etc.), and economic activities related to the production, exchange, and consumption of goods and services, operating formally or informally, like; vegetables and food products from urban agricultural activities; retail shop; butchery; workshop; tailoring activities, boutiques or fabric sellers; barbershop, saloon & spa; stationeries; food and drinks from fast–food restaurants, bars, and pubs; public transportations; financial services; car dealers & cleaners; products from shop keeping activities; different kind of meets from animal grazing activities; building hardware materials and steel for construction activities, furniture production, door and window burglar proofs or grills production; rental rooms and houses; etc., (Tesha *at el.*, 2025a; 2025b). Moreover, the nature and informality of these activities significantly affect how planning regulations are understood, adapted, or resisted within planned urban settlements (UN–Habitat, 2013; World Bank, 2015).

operate these activities, affect urban spaces both positively and negatively, leading to informal modifications, transformations, and recreations (Wojciuk *et al.* 2016). The changes also make it impossible for the local government authority (LGA) officials to enforce planning regulations and achieve orderly urban development. The impossibility is fueled by its “help–yourself” approach to space production (Lefebvre, 1991 in Gallico, 2016), which generates spontaneous, unregulated production of urban space through improvisation (Dell, 2019; Kloeckl, 2020). Basically, at its core, improvisation is a creative process – a means by which people generate original and practical solutions (Fisher & Barrett, 2017) to compensate for inadequate provision of regulated and compliant urban spaces to host their socio–economic activities. This happens because, the approved plans fail to accommodate the existing and projected population as well as their needs, amid rapid urbanization.

Bearing this in mind, issues of non–compliance or non–adherence with urban planning regulatory framework, have been reported in many developing countries with increased population growth and urbanization (Abrabba, 2023). By 2018, more than half of the world population (i.e., 4.2 billion or 55%) lived in cities; the figure is projected to rise to 6 billion, i.e., 66% of the world’s population, by 2041 (UN–Habitat, 2014; Lamond *et al.*, 2015; Daniel, 2016; UN–Habitat, 2016; Kloeckl, 2017; UN, 2019; Sanga & Mbisso, 2020; and Kuddus *et al.*, 2020). By 2050, it will raise to 6.7 billion i.e., 69% of the world’s population (UN, 2019). This influx into cities, is resulted from a search for something that exceeds expectations, i.e., the unexpected and the unforeseen, due to cities being primary centers of opportunity and employment (Kloeckl, 2020). As a result, the increase in population will pressure and intensify the demand for urban spaces, significantly straining the limited available planned spaces, and the existing urban planning regulatory frameworks, particularly in terms of enforcement, awareness, and compliance (UN–Habitat, 2014; Lamond *et al.*, 2015). Again, this pressure has led to what Simone (2002), in Babere (2013), describes as the inability of African cities to adequately absorb and harness the needs, aspirations, and resourcefulness of the urbanites living within formal planning systems. Consequently, this has left urbanites with no option but to turn to informal activities in improvised urban spaces. Likewise, Tanzania, like many countries in Sub–Saharan Africa, is experiencing rapid urbanization driven by economic growth, resulting in fast–growing cities characterized by expanding informal settlements, particularly in major cities such as, Dar–es–Salaam (Nguluma, 2003; and Moshi *et al.*, 2018). Besides, the country’s urban population is projected to exceed 50% by 2050 (Limbumba, 2010; Locke & Henley, 2016). This projected growth suggests that, without improved awareness of, and compliance with, urban planning regulatory framework, the improvisation of urban spaces is likely to intensify, further distorting city morphology. Therefore, immediate and effective regulatory interventions are required to accommodate urban growth sustainably and to strengthen compliance with planning frameworks, thereby restoring and maintaining orderly urban development.

In doing so, more attention has to be on awareness and compliance, looking into ways in which people organize their lives, engage in socio–economic activities, organize space and produce places (Omollo 2020; and Rakodi, 2006 in Abrabba 2023) in relation to existing urban planning regulatory framework. Besides, despite the existence of comprehensive planning laws and regulatory frameworks, evidence from cities across the globe indicates widespread disdain and neglect of physical urban planning regulatory framework (Mbee & Tonte, 2022; Tesha *et al.*, 2025a; 2025b). Additionally, poor realization and monitoring of these existing urban planning regulatory framework in planned settlements against improvisation of urban spaces, is very much witnessed in these areas, as highlighted by Mbee & Tonte (2022); and Tesha *et al.* (2025a; 2025b). But again, we should remember the writings by Trotter *et al.* (2013), which insist that; improvisation requires a system that allows for bottom–up solutions sensitive to local conditions, rather than imposing top–down rules. On the other side, most arguments on the informalization of settlements are pegged and weighed with the urban planning and space standards regulations<sup>2</sup> in the planned settlements, by most researchers, academician, and even planners, who, in most aspects, consider these urban planning and space standards regulations in the planned settlements, as a mirror. The city planned using these planning and space standards regulations, which are considered as “a clean city planning model”. This model is expected to develop and deliver a well–planned city, but unfortunately, it is not the case when we look at the cities in developing countries, where most of them develop informally as an extension of the planned settlements, which, in one way or another, informalization has also leapfrogged into planned settlements via urban space improvisation. This creates a need to explore the urbanite’s awareness and compliance with urban planning regulatory framework. Of all the studies by Lupala (2002); Nguluma (2003); Mushumbusi (2011); Babere (2013); Kiunsi (2013); URT (2016); Mosha (2017); Kiondo & Mosha (2017); Msuya *et al.* (2017); Mbisso & Kalugila (2018); and Kikwasi & Mbuya (2019), none highlight on the urbanite’s awareness and compliance of urban planning policies, legislations (acts), standards and regulations, within informally utilized or improvised urban spaces in planned settlement. But, apart from a study by Kironde (1992) which reports on mismatch between what is planned for, and what happens, and another one Rweyemamu & Mrema (2013), on informalization within planned settlements; scant information exists in the context of Tanzania, on; the residents’ awareness and compliance on urban planning policies, legislations (acts), standards and regulations, in improvised spaces in planned settlements.

Awareness and compliance (i.e., adherence and non–adherence) with urban planning regulatory framework remain a significant

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<sup>2</sup> **Urban Planning and Space Standards;** includes standards for plot size or density, skylines, building lines and setbacks, plot coverage and plot ratio, health and education facilities, golf courses, passive and active recreation, public facilities by planning levels, public facilities by population size, parking, residential areas and agricultural show grounds, standard for electric supply and its way leave for water supply, road width, communication pylons, sewerage treatment plants, ponds, transportation terminals, stream or rivers valley buffer zone, beaches and industrial plots and recommended colors for land uses, (URT, 2011; Tesha *at el.*, 2025a; 2025b).

challenge in many urban areas, with implications not only for non-compliant residents but also for law-abiding residents. In the processes of urbanization, public urban space plays a crucial role in the creation of socio-economic value for settlements, cities and regions, (UN-Habitat, 2018); however, rapid urbanization, population growth, and densification in major African cities have intensified competition, forcing inhabitants to struggle for the available inadequate urban spaces (Nyarko & Adu-Gyamfi, 2012). As a result, residents increasingly improvise and informally appropriate planned urban spaces to meet basic livelihood needs, a practice that has embedded itself in everyday urban life (Kumar, 2021). This widespread improvisation often creates a tag of war with existing urban planning regulatory framework due to inadequate provision of planned spaces for socio-economic activities; the demand to operate within prime urban locations; and the failure in addressing human settlement problems resulted by “too many plans without planning any” as per Nnkya, (1999) in Kiondo & Mosha (2017); and Babere (2013). Although urban planning regulations are crucial tools intended to safeguard planned settlements from informal land use practices, their enforcement is frequently undermined, as observed during visits to these settlements, evidenced by unauthorized extensions and land use changes that contravene established urban planning regulatory framework. This informal use of planned urban spaces in planned settlements, driven by both unplanned settlements and regulatory non-compliance, accelerates improvisation within them. Thus, aiming to identify regulatory gaps, to improve compliance mechanisms, and promote orderly and sustainable urban development; this paper explores residents’ awareness, adherence and non-adherence to existing urban planning regulatory framework, within improvised spaces in planned settlements.

## 2.0. LITERATURE

This section uncovers urban spaces, improvisation, awareness and compliance with urban planning regulatory frameworks (i.e., policies, legislation (acts), standards and regulations) governing improvised urban spaces within planned settlements. This is important because it sets the scene for understanding what has been established and what has not by other scholars in this field. It is essential to do so because these concepts build the paper’s foundation.

### 2.1. Space, Improvisation and Space Improvisation in Relation to Urban Planning Regulations

In-line with writing by Tesha *et al.* (2025a; 2025b); “*space*” in urban theory is understood as a dynamic and socially produced public realm that accommodates diverse users, activities, exchanges, and interactions across multiple spatial scales, ranging from rooms and streets to neighbourhoods and entire cities (Hornby, 2005 in Mbisso, 2014; Zevi, 1957 in Bahendwa, 2013; Gür, 1996 in Özkan *et al.* 2019). It is normally governed by a number of existing urban planning regulatory framework. Urban space is not merely physical or fixed, but is continuously shaped through everyday practices, flows and informal appropriations (Relph, 1983; Lefebvre, 1991 in Gallico, 2016; Amin, 2013; Dell, 2019). Its functional flexibility allows multiple activities to coexist within the same setting, enabling both occupation and movement (Hillier, 1999 in van Nes & Yamu, 2021). In improvised urban spaces, this openness enables residents to informally adapt planned urban spaces for socio-economic purposes, often extending beyond formally designated land uses. Meanwhile, “*improvisation*” refers to a real-time, adaptive and creative situational response to unforeseen urban conditions and informally reworking space, in order to attend to unmet everyday needs (Holdhus *et al.* 2016; Kloeckl, 2020). Unlike regulated urban development processes, improvisation operates outside predefined planning frameworks and relies on experience, intuition and contextual awareness, which constantly challenge rigid urban planning regulatory frameworks (Trotter *et al.*, 2013; Cambridge Dictionary, 2018). In urban settings, it commonly appears through informal additions, alterations and temporary occupations of existing space that compensate for gaps within formal planning systems (Kleidonas, 2012; Kloeckl, 2020). While such practices introduce a productive disorder that can enhance vitality, resilience and inclusiveness (Magerko *et al.* 2009; Sendra, 2015), they simultaneously expose tensions between everyday urban practices and statutory planning controls. Thus, “*space improvisation*” specifically refers to the informal re-organization, subdivision and embellishment of planned urban spaces to host activities not anticipated by formal planning (Dell, 2019; and Tesha *et al.* 2025a; 2025b). It emerges where rigid regulations, incomplete plans and ineffective policies fail to respond to residents’ realities (Hentschel, 2015 in Müller & Trubina, 2020). Through intuitive and spontaneous actions, planned public spaces are transformed from mono functional to multifunctional environments, and repurposed to meet emerging needs (Montuori, 2003 in Holdhus *et al.*, 2016; Silver, 2014 in Kumar, 2021). In relation to adherence and non-adherence to urban planning regulations, space improvisation reveals partial compliance with the physical existence of planned spaces. Basically, space improvisation in urban cities reflects Lefebvre’s notion that urban space is produced not only through formal planning instruments but also through everyday practices that operate beyond official regulatory actors (Lefebvre, 1974). Urban form is continuously reshaped through residents’ adaptive use and reinterpretation of planned spaces, generating persistent tensions between fixed, regulated structures and lived, improvised practices (Dell, 2019; Amin, 2013; Müller & Trubina, 2020). While formal urban change is guided by the urban planning regulatory framework and urban design dimensions (Elshater, 2012; Cesarin *et al.* 2018), informal spatial transformations frequently occur with limited awareness of, partial compliance with, or deliberate non-adherence to urban planning regulations. Weak enforcement, complex approval procedures and limited public understanding of planning rules further reduce compliance and encourage space improvisation within planned settlements. Consequently, informal spatial practices have become a dominant feature of many cities (Ghosh, 2015). This reality challenges conventional urban design approaches and highlights the need to reconsider urban design as both a regulatory process and a lived

outcome shaped by varying degrees of awareness and compliance among users (Cesarin *et al.* 2018). In cities such as Dar–es–Salaam, urban growth increasingly contradicts established planning theories, suggesting the emergence of alternative, informal spatial logics driven by residents' responses to regulatory constraints and unmet spatial demands. This is even evidenced by the shocking scenario when looking at the city's Google map axonometric glimpse, which offers cacophony caused by the lack of; (a) clear urban fabric<sup>3</sup>, (b) pattern of space or buildings, (c) space connectivity, and (d) clarity of private and public space. This depiction raises questions about the residents' awareness and compliance with urban planning regulatory framework. Furthermore, long–standing critiques of urban planning regulations in many African cities reveal that inherited standards are often elitist, unrealistic, and disconnected from local socio–economic realities (Okpala, 1987; Awotona, 1988 in Kironde, 2005). These conditions make compliance difficult, especially for low–income households, and foster a climate in which space improvisation becomes a pragmatic response rather than a deliberate act of non–compliance. Consequently, understanding space improvisation in planned settlements requires not only examining spatial outcomes but also assessing residents' awareness of planning regulations, their compliance, and the effectiveness of institutional monitoring and enforcement.

## 2.5. Urban Planning Regulatory Framework in Planned Settlements

The urban planning regulatory framework as per URT (1999–2000; 2011; 2014–2015; 2018–2019); Kironde (2005; 2009); Mushumbusi (2011); Mwiga (2011); Kombe (2022); and UN–Habitat (2024), comprises a comprehensive system of policies, legislations (acts), standards, regulations, and administrative procedures established to guide orderly planning, development, management, and functioning of the built environment, including settlements, districts, and cities. Beyond legal instruments, frameworks also include organizational structures, key actors and stakeholders, and clearly defined roles, norms, and responsibilities that shape socio–economic activities and behaviour within urban areas (Chigudu, 2019; and Tomažević, 2019). Moreover, it provides structure and direction to the urban planning system for addressing urban development challenges, offering purposeful strategies for tackling challenges related to the planning, development, and management of urban spaces (Chigudu, 2019). As far as improvisation of urban spaces is concerned in terms of informally hosting socio–economic activities on planned settlements, they may be discussed in three (03) categories: i.e., (1) policies; (2) legislations or acts or laws; and (3) regulations.

### 2.5.1. Urban Planning Policies in Tanzania

These provide a formal framework for developing, planning, managing, and regulating urban spaces, and they are formally approved, and context specific (Kombe, 2022). He adds that their implementation, when operating at both levels, i.e., macro (national) and micro (local), depends heavily on political will, administrative capacity, and the commitment of decision–makers. Moreover, they include some of the policies which recognize informal socio–economic activities, and adaptive use of urban space, advocating inclusive as well as participatory planning by involving all actors, including; professionals, government agencies (i.e., LGAs, MDAs, CGAs), NGOs, and residents. The includes the like of; the “*National Human Settlements Development Policy (NHSDP) of 2000*”, which promotes sustainable, organized, settlements and affordable housing (URT, 2000; 2014); the “*National Land Policy of 1995*”, supporting equitable land access (URT, 1995; 1997; 2014;); and the “*National Environmental Policy of 1997*”, supporting integrated land use planning and development, urban green spaces, pollution control, and public awareness (URT, 1997). The policy also oversees all matters related to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA). Another one, is the “*National Antiquities Policy of 2008*”, which oversees the protection, management, preservation and conservation of cultural heritage. e.g., buildings (URT, 2008); the “*Urban Development and Management Policy (UDMP) (Draft) of 2011*” which is aimed at promoting adaptable, equitable, and resilient urban spaces (URT, 2011).

### 2.5.2. Urban Planning Legislation (Acts) in Tanzania

These, as highlighted by UN–Habitat (2024), comprise a number of laws designed to guide and regulate the use of space, its planning, development, and management, to ensure organised and sustainable growth. They shape Tanzania's urban development and planning landscape by establishing frameworks and principles for transparent, inclusive, and participatory planning involving communities, stakeholders, developers, and the private sector. Also, they support the formulation, sizing, mapping, and implementation of cities while addressing socio–economic issues to meet the required needs. The key legislations (acts) include the “*Land Act No. 04 of 1999 and its Amendment No. 01 of 2004*”, providing legal foundation for land use and ownership and it is essential for managing informal socio–economic activities in planned urban areas (URT, 1999; 2004; 2014). The Act supports orderly urban redevelopment, relocation, and fair compensation, recognizing land's economic value (Mwiga, 2011). It governs land classification, ownership, transactions, and dispute resolution, all of which are critical to integrating informal activities into formal planning systems. It also allows transfers, co–occupancy, and crop rights before eviction, ensuring protection for occupants. This legislation (acts) works together with the “*Land Acquisition Act No. 47 of 1967*”, as both recognize that land is publicly owned and

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<sup>3</sup> **Urban Fabric** is a morphological composition of physical elements or characteristic within an urban area which includes streetscape; open space and squares; the plots; buildings; constructed space; hard landscape e.g., roads, pedestrians, paved car parking, etc.; soft landscape, vegetations or gardens, water ways, etc.; signage; street lightings; building's texture; texts e.g., graphics; etc., (Kloeckl, 2020; and Baruti, 2022). It can be understood by regarding the building as an “object” and space as the “background” (Baruti, 2022).

vested in the President, as trustee on behalf of all citizens (URT, 1967; 1999; 2014). These grants the President “powers of eminent domain”, enabling land acquisition for public use, i.e., infrastructure. The process includes survey rights, notice issuance, valuation, and compensation due to land having value. However, URT (1967; 1999; 2014) adds that; compensation excludes re-settlement or alternative land. It also includes the “*Urban Planning Act No. 08 of 2007*”, which regulates land use, planning approvals, development controls, and dispute resolution (URT, 2007; 2014). Importantly, it promotes integration of the informal sector (URT, 2007). The act also ensures equitable access to serviced land, including for vulnerable groups. The “*Court (Land Dispute Settlements) Act No. 02 of 2002*” addresses land related disputes or conflicts (URT, 2002). The “*Unit Title (Condominium) Act No. 16 of 2008*” enables mass housing through multi-unit buildings, which promote efficient land use and reduce urban sprawl (URT, 2008; Mwiga, 2011). It supports affordable urban living and environmental quality, key to accommodating informal socio-economic activities in planned areas. Also, the “*Mortgage Finance (Special Provision) Act No. 17 of 2008*” streamlines mortgage processes, supporting housing development and improving access to both high-end and low-cost housing (URT, 2008; 2014). Others are; the “*Water Supply and Sanitation Act No. 05 of 2019*”, ensuring sustainable, regulated water and sanitation services, particularly (URT, 2019); the “*Architect and Quantity Surveyors (Registration) Act No. 04 of 2010*”, and the “*Engineers Registration Act No. 24 of 2007*”, both overseeing, regulating, monitoring, protecting, and promoting professionalism and high standards in the construction industry, among architects (AQRB) and engineers (ERB) (URT, 1967; 2010); the “*National Environmental Management Act No. 20 of 2004*”, for comprehensive legal framework for sustainable environmental management (URT, 2004), by establishing environmental bodies that regulates land use, pollution control, EIA or ESIA processes, and hazardous waste management; and the “*Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 05 of 2003*” which ensure worker’s safety, health, welfare, and protection by mandating safety measures, training, inspections, and penalties (URT, 2003). Through the Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA), it regulates diverse informal activities in planned areas, such as auto mechanical garages, carwashes, construction, etc., by enforcing standards for safety gear, workplace fencing, etc. Moreover, other legislation (act) is the “*Antiquities Act No. 10 of 1964*” (amended in 1979), which provides legal protection for heritage sites and restricts informal socio-economic activities (URT, 1964). It prohibits unauthorized alterations, sales, or use of heritage resources and empowers authorities to penalize violations. Other key planning legislation (acts) includes the “*Water Supply and Sanitation Act No. 05 of 2019*” and the “*Land Dispute Settlements Act No. 02 of 2002*”.

### 2.5.3. Urban Planning and Space Standard Regulations in Tanzania

Urban planning standard regulations<sup>4</sup> refer to rules, regulations and guidelines that allow or disallow activities on and along the plots, shape development and management of urban spaces, as well as how and the way in which a plot may be developed or used (Kironde, 2005). They may be regularly reviewed as needs arise. The few specific regulations related to this paper, includes; the “*Urban Planning (Planning Space Standards) Regulations of 2018*” which set strict controls on land use, allocation of adequate functional spaces; plot sizes, ratio, coverage, setbacks, building density, types of building, storey (i.e., skyline or building heights), and infrastructure standards in planned areas. It enforces rigid setbacks, designated land uses, and spatial buffers, thus potentially marginalizing informal actors in urban development (URT, 2011; 2018). It also includes the “*Local Government (Urban Authorities) Development Control Regulations of 2008*”, which establish formal procedures for building permits, technical standards, and construction approvals in urban areas (URT, 2008; and Mushumbusi, 2011). Operating parallel with the Urban Planning Act No. 08 of 2007 and the Urban Planning (Planning Space Standards) Regulations of 2018, they reinforce strict compliance and limit unauthorized or informal construction. Besides, the “*Urban Planning (Zoning of Land Use) Regulations of 2018*”, as per URT (2018), define strict land use categories, i.e., residential, commercial, industrial, public utilities, etc., under the Urban Planning Act No. 08 of 2007. While promoting orderly urban growth, it excludes specific provisions for urban agriculture or informal economies, imposing restrictions. Likewise, it includes the “*Urban Planning (Control and Management of Public Open Spaces) Regulations of 2018*” and, as detailed in URT (2018), governs how individuals or groups may apply to manage public open spaces on behalf of the LGA. While aiming to protect and regulate shared spaces, these rules impose formal procedures and permit requirements that may hinder improvised socio-economic activities by limiting spontaneous access, use, or modification of open spaces, often vital to informal urban livelihoods. The “*Urban Planning (Urban Farming) Regulations of 2018*” regulate urban agriculture through strict permit systems that limit activities to designated zones (URT, 2018). Likewise, it restricts farming and livestock rearing without a permit or outside approved areas. Although urban agriculture zones are not clearly stated in the 2018 urban planning (zoning of land use) regulations. The “*Urban Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations of 2018*” regulate all forms of advertising to ensure public safety and preserve urban aesthetics (URT, 2018). Lays strict permit requirements and conditions for displaying or removing advertisements. This regulation covers: various forms of ads; where they may be placed or posted in view of any street; procedures for applying for and renewing advertisement permits; the conditions for displaying advertisements and removing them; and the

<sup>4</sup> **Urban Planning and Space Standards**; includes standards for plot size or density, skylines, building lines and setbacks, plot coverage and plot ratio, health and education facilities, golf courses, passive and active recreation, public facilities by planning levels, public facilities by population size, parking, residential areas and agricultural show grounds, standard for electric supply and its way leave for water supply, road width, communication pylons, sewerage treatment plants, ponds, transportation terminals, stream or rivers valley buffer zone, beaches and industrial plots and recommended colors for land uses (URT, 2011).

penalties for non-compliance. Another one is the “*Environmental Management (Standards for the Control of Noise and Vibrations Pollution) Regulations of 2015*”, which, as per URT (2015), set strict limits on noise and vibrations, with licensing, enforcement, and penalties for non-compliance. These controls, while promoting environmental health, may restrict improvised socio-economic activities, such as pubs, entertainment, or small-scale workshops, etc., which often generate noise.

Again, it also includes the “*Water Supply and Sanitation Regulation of 2019*”, which, as per URT (2019), formalize water service provision, including quality standards, pricing, access, and penalties for misuse. While enhancing this regulation, it may unintentionally exclude informal urban populations relying on public taps or shared connections. The Act also establish water authorities e.g., RUWASA and EWURA, alongside covering various aspects of water supply services, e.g., water quality standards, pricing, rates or charges, use, public taps by water authority, accessibility, connection, suspension, and restrictions, stop valves, depth of pipes, prevention of misuse, repairs, tempering with meters, recovery of overdue debts, offences, fines, etc. Another regulation is the “*Antiquities Rules and Regulations of 1981, 1991, 1995, and 2002*”, established to safeguard and protect the heritage resources, i.e., objects, monuments, and conserved areas. These includes the Antiquities (Protected Objects and Monuments) Rules, of 1981; the Antiquities (Conduct of Excavations and Access to Monuments) Rules, of 1991; the Antiquities (Declaration of Conservation Areas) (Dar–es–Salaam City) Notice, of 1995; and the Antiquities (User Fees) Rules, of 2002 (URT, 1981; 1991; 1995; and 2002). These antiquities regulations (1981, 1991, 1995, 2002) restrict cultivation, construction, and residence near heritage sites, while imposing access controls and user fees (Moshi *et al.* 2018). They limit informal socio-economic activities around protected zones. It also includes the “*Urban Planning (Buildings) Regulations of 2018*”, which, as per URT (2018), provide strict guidelines for building design, construction, occupation, and maintenance. While promoting safety and sustainability, the requirements for permits, compliance inspections, and adherence to zoning and infrastructure standards may marginalize informal builders and home-based entrepreneurs. Key provisions include: development controls, accessibility, zoning, utility and drainage standards, and building permits. It also covers structural, ventilation, accommodations for people with special needs, environmental compliance, and occupancy conditions, inspections, and penalties for non-compliance. All these regulations limit the flexibility needed for improvised socio-economic activities. As noted by Moshi *et al.* (2018), all relevant policies, legislations, standards, and regulations related to urban development have a direct impact on city space use and planning; the key challenge is the lack of timely review to keep pace with urban development.

**2.6. Awareness of the Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations.**

Awareness plays a critical role in determining the level of compliance with urban planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations. Where residents and developers lack adequate knowledge on urban planning laws, non-compliance becomes more prevalent, particularly in improvised or informal urban spaces. Planned settlements are designed to follow established zoning laws, building standards, and development controls to ensure orderly growth and efficient service provision. However, when residents and developers lack adequate awareness of these regulations, compliance tends to decline, leading to informal modifications in terms of spatial improvisation, such as; unauthorized building extensions, land-use changes, and encroachment on public spaces. Text by Arimah & Adeagbo (2000) argues that; limited awareness weakens adherence to urban planning frameworks, contributing to spatial improvisation, unregulated development and urban planning challenges in rapidly urbanizing areas. The reasons for the lack of awareness could be as indicated below in Table 2.01:

**2.01: The reasons for the lack of awareness on the planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations.**

SN.	The Reasons for the Lack of Awareness on the Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations	Authors
01.	Absence of information,	Ola (2011); URT, (2017); van Helmond & Kok (2022).
02.	Inaccessibility of information,	URT, (2017); van Helmond & Kok (2022)
03.	Lack of enough urban planning and housing professionals up to the Mtaa level,	Ola (2011); Mbee & Tonte (2022); Abrabba (2023)
04.	Lack of sufficient financial resources in creating awareness,	Abrabba (2023); van Helmond & Kok (2022)

Source: Author’s Own Construct (2024).

**2.7. Adherence with Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations by Urbanites.**

Adherence to urban planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations is fundamental to effective urban development and implementation, as these frameworks derive their authority from existing national laws and must be enforced by urban planners and relevant government agencies (Mbee & Tonte, 2022). Adherence or compliance generally refers to development activities that conform to established physical urban planning regulations (Omollo, 2020). The reasons for urbanites to adhere to or comply with and apply any urban planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations are as indicated below in Table 2.02:

**Table 2.02: The reasons for urbanites to adhere to or comply with and apply planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations.**

SN.	The Reasons for Urbanites Not to Adhere to or Apply Any Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations	Authors
01.	Land acquisition,	Kironde (2006); Ola (2011)
02.	Land transfer,	Kironde (2006)
03.	Adherence of development controls when applying for a building permit e.g. plot coverage, plot ratio and setbacks vs. plot density or plot size; skyline; colour codes and building textures; etc.,	Arimah & Adeagbo (2000); Ola (2011); Omollo, (2020); Konadu <i>et al.</i> (2025);
04.	Change of use,	Arimah & Adeagbo (2000); Ola (2011)
05.	Environmental impact assessment certification from NEMC,	Omollo (2020); Legishion <i>et al.</i> (2025).
06.	Project registration to professional registration bodies, e.g., AQRB, CRB, ERB,	Omollo, (2020)
07.	Application of a building occupancy certificate,	URT, (2017)
08.	Adherence to urban planning by laws and regulations,	Arimah & Adeagbo (2000); Mbee & Tonte (2022); Konadu <i>et al.</i> (2025);

Source: Author’s Own Construct (2024).

### 2.8. Non-Adherence with Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations by Urbanites.

Non-adherence or non-compliance to urban planning standards is a persistent and widespread challenge in many developing countries, particularly evident in improvised or informally developed spaces that emerge within formally planned settlements (Arku *et al.* 2016 in Abrabba, 2023; Fuladlu, 2019 in Omollo, 2020). Moreover, non-compliance with planning standards or planning violations occurs when buildings, layouts, or development projects violate approved planning standards, zoning regulations, master plans or land-use plan standards (Sundaresan, 2017 in Abrabba, 2023). Such violations commonly manifest as deviations from prescribed plot sizes, road widths, frontages, depths, and permitted land uses, ultimately altering the intended physical character and functional efficiency of planned settlements (Adamolekun *et al.* 2017 in Abrabba, 2023). These patterns of non-compliance point to critical gaps in awareness, understanding, and enforcement of planning regulations, which facilitate the proliferation of improvised urban spaces within planned areas. Scholars have therefore called for deeper investigation into non-compliance of urban planning regulations, including societal, institutional, and behavioural influences, as well as the failure to adhere to principles of social complexity that shape urban development processes in developing countries (Poku–Boansi, 2021 in Abrabba, 2023). Overall, the literature underscores that limited regulatory awareness and weak compliance mechanisms significantly contribute to persistent planning violations and spatial disorder in planned settlements (Omollo, 2020; Arku *et al.*, 2016; Abrabba, 2023). The reasons for urbanites not to adhere to or comply with any urban planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations are as shown in Table 2.03

**Table 2.03: the reasons for urbanites not to adhere to or comply with planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations.**

SN.	The Reasons for Urbanites Not to Adhere to or Apply Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations.	Authors
01.	As a tenant (living within the settlement), there is a lack of public awareness on urban planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations	Mbee & Tonte (2022)
02.	Bureaucracy, complex and lengthy process in obtaining building permits, EIA certificates, building occupancy certificates, etc.	Omollo (2020); Abrabba (2023)
03.	Bribery or corruption,	Omollo (2020); Ola (2011); Mbee & Tonte (2022); Abrabba (2023)
04.	Lack of coordination between the land agency and LGAs, as well as CGAs	Mbee & Tonte (2022)
05.	Lack of willingness,	Omollo (2020); van Helmond & Kok (2022)
06.	Insufficient resources in the LGA’s planning department,	UK, (2025)
07.	Lack of an integrated central database management system in issuing building permits and occupancy,	Arimah & Adeagbo (2000)
08.	An increase in the cost of construction,	Legishion <i>at el.</i> (2025).

Source: Author’s Own Construct (2024).

### 3.0. METHODOLOGY

The paper’s methodology and research design involved a sequential explanatory mixed–methods approach, guided by Yin (2011), Kombo & Tromp (2014), and Kothari & Garg (2019), combining both quantitative and qualitative data for triangulation. It focused on the urbanites’ awareness and compliance (i.e., adherence and non-adherence) of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations in improvised urban spaces, within planned settlements in Dar–es–Salaam city, Tanzania; targeting residents and non–

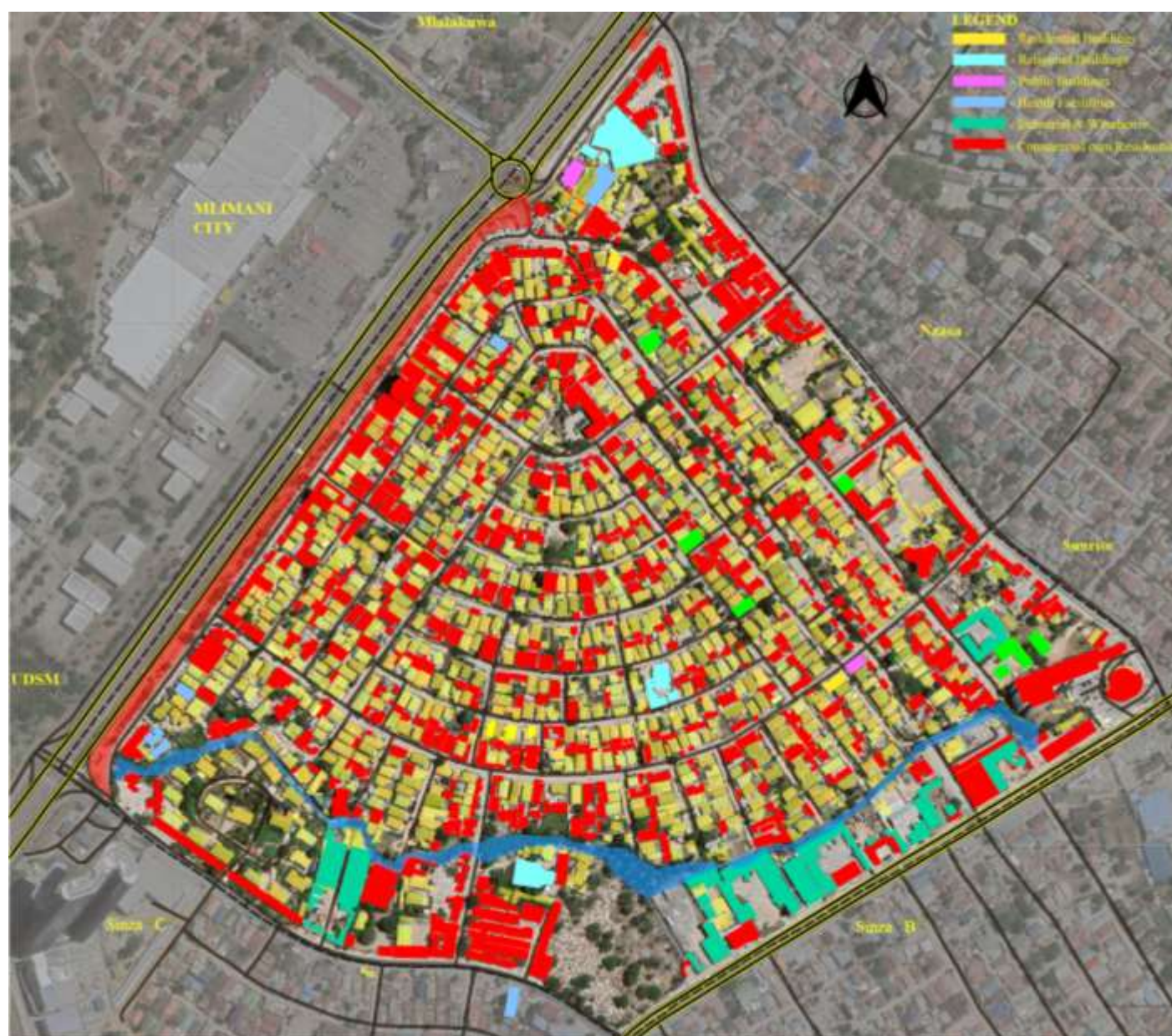
residents in–terms of building owners, tenants, and government officials from Local Government Authorities (LGAs), Central Government Authorities (CGAs), and Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). The unit of analysis is urbanites using urban spaces within the Sinza “A” planned settlement in Dar–es–Salaam, Tanzania. Given the limited prior information on the studied issues, a descriptive case study strategy was used, as suggested by Edmonds & Kennedy (2017). This involves the use of a single case study design to gain an in–depth understanding of the issue, consistent with the arguments of Yin (2009), Creswell (2013), and Flyvbjerg (2011), thereby highlighting its ability to provide rich, context–specific insights. Again, opting for a case study was due to the fact that; the option is likely to produce the best theory, following findings being generated using real life experiences and practices, as denoted by Flyvbjerg (2011). Also, its results can be generalized given that knowledge is transferable to similar contexts (Tesha *et al.* 2025a; 2025b). Generally, Sinza “A” was selected as a case study area due to its relevance in providing sufficient information and an in–depth, detailed depiction of the studied issue. Moreover, based on QUAN. and qual. strategy as per Maro (2019) and Tesha *et al.* (2025a; 2025b), quantitative data were highly emphasized, while qualitative data played a supplementary explanatory role, in clarifying urbanites’ awareness and compliance with urban planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations in improvised urban spaces. Furthermore, the paper employed multiple data collection instruments; i.e., questionnaire, interview, and focus group discussion (FGD), non–participatory physical observations, photographic documentation, sketches, and documentary review. The questionnaire with both close–ended and open–ended questions, was prepared in accordance with research objective, based Kumar (2011); and Saunders *et al.* (2019), and it consisted two sections; i.e., demographic information in Section A, and Section B covering urbanites’ awareness, and compliance (i.e., adherence and non–adherence) of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations in improvised urban spaces. It included both closed–ended questions for their ease in gathering factual data and for simplicity in analysis (Alinaitwe & Ayesiga, 2013), and open–ended questions for their detailed feedback.

A pilot study to enhance the quality of the questionnaire and increase the reliability of the questions, identified five (05) factors on lack of awareness, and eight (08) factors on adherence and non–adherence of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations, were measured on a on a five–point Likert scale, and by using Kothari & Garg (2019) writings in scaling (Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Moderate (M) = 3, Disagree (SD) = 2, or Strongly Disagree (D) = 1). A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed via stratified random sampling to building owners, tenants, and officials from LGAs, CGAs, and MDAs, with 106 (i.e., 96.4% response rate) correctly filled and returned. The data collected were cleaned, coded, processed, and later analyzed by using IBM SPSS version 25, with reliability for quantitative data tested using Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient values ensured to be above 0.70, assuring an internal consistency of the information, which suggested the scale is accurate. This is due to the fact highlighted by Maro (2019) that a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient value of 0.70 is considered the minimum for an appropriate test, and any value below 0.70 suggests poor reliability. Likewise, a one–sample t–test ( $\mu = 3.5$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was conducted to determine the statistical significance of awareness, adherence, and non–adherence regarding the research issue. Likewise, the face–to–face semi–structured interviews were conducted in–line with writings by Yin (2011); Magigi (2016); Saunders *et al.* (2019), and Tesha *et al.* (2025a; 2025b), using nine (09) key respondents from LGAs and CGAs. During the interview, respondents were given the opportunity and flexibility to re–phrase, ask, as well as freely discuss on the adherence and non–adherence of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations, by urbanites living in improvised spaces, to attain reliable and comparable qualitative data, without missing any. Moreover, it extracted the respondents’ experiences and opinions (Abdul–Aziz 2007, cited in Maro 2019). Again, the respondents were selected using purposive sampling, based on their availability, easiness of reaching them, willingness to participate, as well as experience and expertise on urban planning and informality issues. The interview session lasted between an average of twenty–five (25) and forty (40) minutes, depending on the respondents' time availability. Time spent on each interview was reasonable; it matched Abdul–Aziz (2007) in Maro (2019), who recommends a thirty (30) to sixty (60) minute (i.e., one–hour) interview to be a reasonable interviewing time.

Similarly, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held based on Kumar (2011), Saunders *et al.* (2019), Magigi (2016) and Tesha *et al.* (2025a; 2025b), by employing thirteen (13) participants from LGAs, residents and non–residents from Sinza “A”, (*as seen in figure 3.01*), and it took approximately 45 minutes. The number and time coincide with Kumar (2011) and Saunders *et al.* (2019), that; the recommended number in a single FGD is between three (03) and twelve (12), and it should last for not more than 90 minutes, out of consideration for the participants' time, to capture robust information. A polite and tactful moderation was done by the researcher while managing dominant participants, and assisted by the research assistant who took notes and recorded the discussion, tallying a proposal by Maro (2019). Stimulation and encouragement of quieter participants (e.g., by throwing kind jokes), and the control of overtalkative discussion, without biasing the discussion, were achieved as insisted by Magigi (2016) and Yin (2011). Additionally, Graham & Bryan (2022) add that one well conducted FGD may be better than two or more that are less effective. For the non–participatory physical observations as detailed by Kumar (2011), Magigi (2016), Saunders *et al.* (2019), data were collected via watching, listening, and recording activities, interactions, and physical characteristics of improvised urban spaces in Sinza “A”. The employed data collection method was carried out with the assistance of the prepared observation–guiding instrument, which covered the researched issues. The study also employed photographic documentation and sketches, providing visual evidence of ongoing improvisation in urban space, consistent with Yin (2011). In addition, documentary reviews included secondary data such as government reports, census data, theses, reference books, journals, newspapers, and policy documents to complement primary findings, focusing on urban planning standards, space use, and improvisation. By integrating these methods,

the research provided a comprehensive, context-rich understanding of the awareness, adherence and non-adherence of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations.

Again, the study population and sample size were attained by aiming at achieving results that can be generalized via a study population sample that at least shares one characteristic or similar traits that can be observed, identified, and studied as insisted by Kumar (2011), Kombo & Tromp (2014), and Edmonds & Kennedy (2017). Expounding, the sample which was also the unit of analysis, included; residents (i.e., building owners and tenants living within the area), and non-residents (i.e., building owners, tenants, real estate or property developer, living insides and outside the settlement), as well as government officials from LGAs, CGAs, and MDAs (i.e., ward counselors, ward chairman, WEO, MEO, ten-cell leaders, municipal and ministerial official e.g., Town Planners, Engineers etc., officials from MDAs e.g., TARURA, NEMC, TANESCO, TANROADS, etc.), as shown in Table 3.01. Thus, it was essential to identify the sample size from the existing buildings, which represented a respondent from each selected existing building within the case study areas (Sinza “A”) as shown in Table 3.01. The sample size was determined using stratified random or probability sampling, based on the writings by Yin (2011), Flyvbjerg (2011), Kumar (2011), and Edmonds & Kennedy (2017), with respondents being separated into homogeneous subgroups. Technically, the sampling selection aimed at (a) keeping the sampling error to a minimum, (b) avoiding systematic biases in the sample, and (c) the study’s intention on generalizing its findings numerically to the entire population of units (Flyvbjerg 2011; Yin 2011; Tesha *et al.* 2025a; 2025b).



**Figure 3.01:** the study areas location and existing buildings within the case study area (i.e., Sinza “A”); the settlement’s building typologies; the settlement’s permeability and accessibility; existing seasonal river; existing cemetery; and location of different socio-economic activities conducted on improvised urban spaces, **Source:** Author & Google Earth (2023).

From Figure 3.01, a total of 1,879 existing buildings in Sinza “A” were identified as the targeted population within the study area, which was used to calculate part of the study sample size to facilitate the identification of one respondent per existing building.

Random or probability sampling, specifically stratified random sampling, was used to select a total of twenty-seven (27) targeted key informants. Basically, randomly selected respondents had an equal chance of being selected, and four criteria were also used to determine the appropriate sample size. These included the level of precision, the level of confidence or risk, the margin/sampling error, and the degree of variability in the attributes being measured. Furthermore, the sample size is proposed to determine the precision rate and confidence rate, as per Kothari & Garg (2019). The sample size should be optimal, neither large nor small. Strata sample size was determined using writings by Kothari & Garg (2019), which states that;

$$n = \left[ \frac{Z^2 pqN}{e^2(N-1) + Z^2 pq} \right]$$

**Where:**

- n** = the Sample Size
- N** = the Total Population Size, i.e., = 1879
- Z** = the Confidence Interval Level, i.e., = 95% (1.96)
- e** = the Level of Precision or Margin of Sampling Error, i.e., = 5%
- p** = the Degree Variability, i.e., = 50%
- q** = 1 – p.

As indicated above, the data used in sampling are confidence level (Z) – of 95% (1.96) and a level of precision or margin of sampling error (e) – of 5%. A study by Kihale (2011) shows that; these values are economical to use, and have been used in various studies, including theirs. Essentially, a decrease in confidence interval level is equal to an increase in the chance of error. For example, if the confidence interval level is 90%, it means the change of making errors is great, i.e., 10%, than when the confidence interval level is 95%, due to the chance of making errors being less, i.e., 5%. From the formula above, the calculated sample size (n) for the residents = 82.887, i.e., 83. The obtained residents' sample size was combined with the key respondents' sample size to yield the study's total sample size (n) of 110 (as shown in Table 3.01).

**Table 3.01: the study population (building owners, tenants, officials from LGAs and CGAs, as well as officials from Ministerial Departmental Agencies (MDAs)).**

Population Type		Population Size(N)
Building Owners, Tenants & Residents	Building Owners	43
	Real Estate Developers	11
	Tenants	29
Local Government Authority (LGAs)	Ward Executive Office (WEO)	01
	Mtaa Executive Officer (MEO)	01
	Mtaa Chairman	01
	Ward Councilor	01
	Ward Chairman	01
	Municipal Urban Planning Officer	01
	Ten Cell Leaders	09
	Central Government Authority (CGAs)	MLHSSD
MoW		01
PO-MRALG		01
VPO-UE		01
MoE		01
Ministerial Department Agency (MDAs)	TANROADS	01
	TARURA	02
	NEMC	02
	TANESCO	01
<b>Total Number of Respondents/Sample Size (n)</b>		<b>110</b>

Source: Author's own constructs (2023).

**3.1. Survey Administration**

To improve the quality of the obtained answers and the response rate while reducing respondents' annoyance, a structured questionnaire with five (05) Likert scales was used in this study (Babakus & Mangold, 1992). As seen in Table 3.02, a total of 110 questionnaires were distributed to the targeted respondents. In essence, only 106, i.e., 96.4%, of the questionnaires were returned; of these, 102 were used for analysis, with four (04) questionnaires being excluded as they were incomplete. Basically, the acceptable response rate of 96.4% on the returned questionnaire supports the findings of Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), who state that; a response rate of at least 50% is statistically significant for analysis and publicity, with a response rate of 60% being good, and a response rate of 70% or more is considered exceptional. In a similar vein, Sekaran & Bougie (2010) both state that surveys should aim for a response rate of at least 30%. Furthermore, as noted by Maro (2019), a higher response rate indicates greater representativeness of the target population; yet, a low response rate, i.e., less than 50%, may render the study unsatisfactory,

unacceptable, and raise validity concerns.

**Table 3.02: the response for the questionnaires distributed to the respondents (building owners, tenants, officials from LGAs, CGAs, and officials from Ministerial Departmental Agencies (MDAs)).**

Population Category or Type		Population Size (N)	Distributed	Returned	Response Rate
Building Owners, Tenants & Residents	Building Owners	43	43	41	95.3%
	Real Estate Developers	15	15	14	93.3%
	Tenants	33	33	32	96.9%
Local Government Authority (LGAs)	Ward Executive Office (WEO)	01	01	01	100.0%
	Mtaa Executive Officer (MEO)	01	01	01	100.0%
	Mtaa Chairman	01	01	01	100.0%
	Ward Councilor	01	01	01	100.0%
	Ward Chairman	01	01	01	100.0%
	Municipal's Urban Planner	01	01	01	100.0%
	Ten Cell Leaders	04	04	04	100.0%
Central Government Authority (CGAs)	MLHSSD	01	01	01	100.0%
	MoW	01	01	01	100.0%
	PO-MRALG	01	01	01	100.0%
	VPO-UE	01	01	01	100.0%
	MoE	01	01	01	100.0%
Ministerial Department Agency (MDAs)	TANROADS	01	01	01	100.0%
	TARURA	01	01	01	100.0%
	NEMC	01	01	01	100.0%
	TANESCO	01	01	01	100.0%
<b>Total Number of Respondents (TNR) / Sample Size (N)</b>		<b>110</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>Average = 96.4%</b>




### 3.2. Data Analysis

For the quantitative analysis (i.e., questionnaire survey), the IBM *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 25 was used to clean, code, process, and descriptively analyze the collected data. Mean score analysis and standard deviation were computed, resulting in a ranking of the effects in descending order following comparison, as seen in Table 3.03. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was used to test and verify the quantitative data's reliability, with its result being above the value of 0.70. The reasons, adherence and non-adherence were statistically significant at a  $p < 0.05$  for those with a Likert Scale of 5 at a 95% confidence level, and were measured using a parametric test, such as the one-sample t-test ( $\mu = 3.5$ ), with  $\mu$  serving as the test value. Also, in order to obtain more precise calculations that mapped out a pattern or link between measured or comparable variables, the results were also presented using Microsoft Word and Excel (Tables).

$$\text{Mean Score Value (M.S.)} = \frac{\sum FXS}{N}$$

**Where:**  $F$  = Frequency of response for each score  
 $S$  = Score given to each cause  
 $N$  = The total number of respondents for each factor

**Table 3.03: Mean score values (M) comparison table**

SN.	Mean Score (M.S.)	Ranking	Colour
01.	$4.0 \leq M.S. \leq 5.0$	High Mean Score	
02.	$3.0 \leq M.S. \leq 3.9$	Medium Mean Score	
03.	$1.0 \leq M.S. \leq 2.9$	Low Mean Score	

For qualitative analysis (i.e., interview & FGD), the researcher and assistants managed the data collected in the field by taking notes and audio recording all unstructured interviews and FGD. The thematic approach was used to analyze qualitative data, in line with texts by Clarke & Braun (2013), whereby the collected data were reported in terms of themes. Collected data were transcribed, organised and coded, before being analyzed, in accordance with the writings by Yin (2011), Creswell (2013) and Evarist *et. al.* (2022). In the transcription and translation process, the data obtained in Kiswahili were translated into English by the researcher and cross-checked by an expert. Reading, re-reading the content, verifying and

tallying the frequency of codes, noting unique ideas that emerged from the data, and noting relationships between variables and themes were all part of the coding process. Similar to a study by Evarist *et. al.* (2022), the themes were centered on encapsulating the content's underlying meaning rather than being restricted to the precise words. Additionally, open-ended questions yielded data that were incorporated in the qualitative data analysis. Excerpts from the FGD and interview were extracted and included to illustrate key findings.

## 4.0. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.01: the respondent’s demographic characteristics

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
<b>Gender Distribution</b>				
Female	42	40.8	40.8	40.8
Male	61	59.2	59.2	100.0
<b>Marital Status Distribution</b>				
Single	22	21.4	21.4	21.4
Married	59	57.3	57.3	78.6
Widowed	4	3.9	3.9	82.5
Co–habiting	13	12.6	12.6	95.1
Divorced or Separated	5	4.9	4.9	100.0
<b>Age Distribution</b>				
Below 30 years	26	25.2	25.2	25.2
30 – 39 years	44	42.7	42.7	68.0
40 – 49 years	21	20.4	20.4	88.3
50 – 59 years	7	6.8	6.8	95.1
Above 60 years	5	4.9	4.9	100.0
<b>Highest Level of Academic Qualification</b>				
None	9	8.7	8.7	8.7
Certificate or Diploma	21	20.4	20.4	29.1
Bachelor Degree	56	54.4	54.4	83.5
Master’s Degree	16	15.5	15.5	99.0
Ph.D.	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
<b>Employment Status Distribution</b>				
Full Time Employee	34	33.0	33.0	33.0
Part Time Employee	7	6.8	6.8	39.8
Self Employed	46	44.7	44.7	84.5
Unemployed	13	12.6	12.6	97.1
Retired	3	2.9	2.9	100.0
<b>Duration of Living, Working or Doing Business</b>				
Below 05 years	18	17.5	17.5	17.5
06 – 10 years	32	31.1	31.1	48.5
11 – 20 years	25	24.3	24.3	72.8
21 – 30 years	21	20.4	20.4	93.2
Above 31 years	7	6.8	6.8	100.0
<b>Professional Qualification</b>				
Architects, Urban Planners & Quantity Surveyors	17	16.5	16.5	16.5
Economist & Sociologist	9	8.7	8.7	25.1
Entrepreneurs	25	24.3	24.3	49.4
Accountants & Finance	16	15.5	15.5	64.9
Engineers (Civil, Electrical & Mechanical)	5	4.9	4.9	69.8
Teachers (Primary & Secondary School)	7	6.8	6.8	76.6
Lawyers	4	3.9	3.9	80.5
Medical Officers (Medical Doctors & Nurses)	5	4.9	4.9	85.4
Valuers & Real Estate Managers	4	3.9	3.9	89.3
ICT Specialist	3	2.9	2.9	92.2
Sales & Marketing	4	3.9	3.9	96.1
Land Surveyors & Cartographers	4	3.9	3.9	100.0

Source: Author (2024). Total Number of Respondents (TNR) or Total Sample Size (N) = 103.

Table 4.01 summarize and provides the respondents’ demographic characteristics, which details essential insights into the study's issue. The majority of the respondents were male (n = 61; 59.2%). While the remaining (i.e., n = 42; 40.8%) were females. This reflects that men are more actively engaged in informal socio–economic activities, and space improvisation, i.e., physical alteration of planned spaces outside the formal planned development controls. Besides, a good number of respondents were married (i.e., n = 59; 57.3%), followed by single respondents (i.e., n = 22; 21.4%) and cohabiting respondents (i.e., n = 13; 12.6%). Likewise, a substantial proportion actively engaged in informal socio–economic activities, and space improvisation, were between the ages of 30 to 39 years (n = 44; 42.7%), necessitated by household responsibilities, unemployment, and income generation, which, for economic survival, encouraged them to improvise spaces, hence non–adherence to restrictive planning regulations. The educational attainment among respondents was relatively high, with over 91% (i.e., n = 94) having attained a formal academic qualification, and more than half having a Bachelor degree (i.e., n = 56; 54.4%). This level of education implies a high degree of awareness of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations. However, the persistence of improvised spaces within planned settlements indicates that non–adherence is not necessarily due to ignorance, but rather to practical constraints, weak enforcement, or deliberate negotiation of formal rules to meet immediate socio–economic needs. Again, regarding employment patterns, nearly half of the respondents were self–employed (i.e., n = 46; 44.7%), operating socio–economic activities within improvised spaces, as documented in a study by Tesha *et al.* (2025a; 2025b). Likely, this group informally occupied and improvised planned spaces due to their maximum accessibility, pedestrian flow, customer proximity, etc., thereby conflicting with formal planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations, highlighting a conscious trade–off between regulatory adherence and socio–economic opportunities. Additionally, the duration of living, working, or doing business plays a key role, with over half of the respondents (i.e., n = 75; 72.9%) having lived or worked in the settlement for more than 11 years, fostering strong place attachment and social networks. Basically, long–term residents develop localized knowledge of regulatory and enforcement gaps, as well as informal norms, which can normalize non–adherence to planning regulations despite high awareness. Finally, all respondents had professional qualifications as seen in Table 4.01, with more than a quarter of them (i.e., n = 30; 29.2%) being professionals in the built environment (architects, urban planners, quantity surveyors, civil engineers, electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, valuers, real estate managers, as well as land surveyors and cartographers). The presence of professionals in the built environment among respondents demonstrates that even those with technical knowledge of planning systems participate in or tolerate spatial improvisation. This underscores that non–adherence in planned settlements is less about lack of awareness and more about structural, economic, and institutional realities shaping everyday urban life.

**4.2. Awareness of Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations.**

Scripts by Madanipour (2010) highlight that; the process of constructing any building in a city involves complex regulatory frameworks. Hence, before embarking on the construction of any structure, i.e., shade, building, etc., she or he must be aware of all allied existing planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations governing the area. In this study, the awareness on any existing planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations in the study areas was checked, in which 83.5% out of 103 respondents, said “No”, they were not aware; 16.5% said “Yes”, they were aware, while none of the respondents, said they were “Not Sure”, as indicate in Table 4.02 below,

**Table 4.02: an awareness of any existing planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations.**

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
No	86	83.5	83.5	83.5
Yes	17	16.5	16.5	100.0
Not Sure	0	0.0	0.0	100.0

**Source:** Author (2024). Total Number of Respondents (TNR) or Total Sample Size (N) = 103.

These results also coincide with studies by URT (2007); Moshi *et al.* (2018); Magigi & Drescher (2010), and Mbee & Tonte (2022), which revealed limited or inadequate public awareness and relevant knowledge on existing approved planning scheme, as well as policy and legal frameworks guiding urban planning, as an observed issue in managing urban developments. The lack of awareness can be dangerous, as detailed by Msangi (2011) & Nuhu (2019): in situations where citizens lack awareness of their land rights, the state may exploit its people. The same result was also shared by (Egbu *et al.* 2007 & Arigbigbola 2007) in Lamond

*et al.* (2015) in a study conducted in Nigeria, whereby the majority of the urban population were not aware of urban planning processes and regulations, a situation which was exacerbated by unrealistic and restrictive planning and land development requirements. This indicates that, in addition to communities being aware of urban planning policies, legislation (acts), standards, and regulations, these policies and legal frameworks must be specific and realistic. Godfrey & Mrema (2018) concretize the argument, reporting on how the lack of policy and urban development guidelines specifically addressing the economic aspect of public urban spaces is a primary contributor to making public spaces unsustainable. Furthermore, Msangi (2011) and Lamond *et al.* (2015) both emphasize the creation of local community awareness during and after the implementation of any planning project. This goes hand in hand with the Medellin Declaration during the Seventh World Urban Forum, which laid down a new urban agenda that promotes a people–centered urbanization model, based on “cities for life”; to overcome the challenge of the lack of an adequate legal framework and planning system (UN–Habitat, 2014). The awareness creation was also evident during the FGD, as reported

by one respondent, who said:

[.....] “in this settlement, the awareness is created through MEO’s organized local community meeting with citizens. Normally the meeting is attended by all committees in the MEO’s office, informing them all matters regarding community development as well as issues related to planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations, specifically on where and how to get different permits or licenses; effects of developing without permit or conducting anything without permit or license; the importance of following building procedures and how, the importance of adhering environmental standards to avoid any issues; how to conduct any property transaction in the areas; how to report any planning violation in the areas; etc.” – a resident and a MEO within the settlement.

Meanwhile, none of the participants said that they were “Not Sure”, those who responded “No” (i.e., 83.5%) on the fact that they lacked or were not aware of the existing planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations governing their planned settlement, were asked to rank using a Likert scale. The scale was employed on a list of five (5) reasons extracted from the literature to find out why they lack awareness. Below are the results after the analysis.

**Table 4.03: presents the reasons for the lack of awareness on the planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations that residents may employ within the planned settlements.**

Reasons for the Lack of Awareness on the Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations	T N R	Mean Score (M.S.)	Std. Dev. (SD)	R A N K
<b>Reliability Test: Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.704</b>				
Lack of enough urban planning and housing professionals.	86	4.17	0.960	1
Lack of enough financial resources in creating awareness.	86	3.80	1.166	2
Absence of information.	86	3.79	1.179	3
Inaccessibility of information.	86	3.66	1.174	4
Other	86	3.08	1.661	5

**NOTES:** M.S. = mean score of the reasons for the lack of awareness on the planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations that residents may employ within the planned settlements, and they are aware of, where 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 = Disagree (D), 1 = Strongly Disagree (D). The higher the mean score, the more reasons there are for the lack of awareness of planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations that residents may employ within the planned settlements, and they are aware of; TNR = Total Number of Respondents; and Std. Dev. = Standard Deviation.

**Table 4.04: presents the results of one-sample t-test on the reasons for the lack of awareness of the planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations that residents may employ within the planned settlements.**

Factors	Test value ( $\mu = 3.5$ ) <i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2 – tailed)	Mean Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference		Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )
					Lowest	Upper	
R 1	6.513	85	0.000	0.674	0.47	0.88	Yes
R 2	2.404	85	0.018	0.302	0.05	0.55	Yes
R 3	2.286	85	0.025	0.291	0.04	0.54	Yes
R 4	1.286	85	0.202	0.163	-0.09	0.41	No
R 5	-2.338	85	0.022	-0.419	-0.77	-0.06	No

**NOTES:** Results significant at 95% when  $p < 0.05$ ; *df* = Degree of Freedom, i.e., 85; STD. = Standard Deviation; TNR = Total Number of Respondent Tables

Table 4.03 and 4.04 present the mean scores analysis and one–sample t–test of the reasons for the lack of awareness of the planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations that residents may employ within the planned settlements. The results were reliable, with a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.704, and the top three (03) reasons were statistically significant (i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ). Besides, when mean scores are equal, the criterion with the lower standard deviation was ranked higher, as a smaller standard deviation indicates that the values are closer to the calculated arithmetic mean. From these tables, the disclosed findings were:

**Lack of Enough Urban Planning and Housing Professionals;** – was ranked first with a mean score of 4.17, as well as a standard deviation of 0.960, and it was statistically significant ( $t(85) = 6.513, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). For the awareness creation, to be done regularly and timely, it needs all LGA departments to be capacitated with an adequate number of well–equipped and skilled technical personnel in every aspect, up to Mtaa level. Any lack of the above, seriously hurts the purpose, in–terms of overseeing the effective and efficient adherence and compliance of planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations, against urban space improvisation in the area. The same was also highlighted in the findings by Lupala (2002); UN–Habitat (2011a); Bahendwa (2013); Lamond *et al.* (2015); Locke & Henley (2016); Mandeli (2019); and Nuhu (2019). This result was also confirmed during FGD, when one of the participants said:

[.....] “eeeh, currently, no!, we do not have urban planning or housing professionals up to Mtaa level. We only have public health, social welfare, and community development professionals, as well as veterinary specialists and the ward police..... Also, at the Mtaa government level, it is a rule that; there must be committees, e.g., health, social welfare, security, etc., that daily assist the MEO on several duties within an area,” – a resident, and a Mtaa Executive Officer (MEO) in Sinza “A”.

**Lack of Enough Financial Resources in Creating Awareness;** – was ranked second with a mean score of 3.80, as well as a standard deviation of 1.166, and it was statistically significant ( $t(85) = 2.404, p = 0.018 < 0.05$ ). Awareness creation needs adequate funding, depending on the number of strategies, ways, or sources by which the particular message is or will be conveyed to the community, to get them on board. Any limitation in terms of financial capacity can only mean that issues regarding equipment and tools to be used, any printing involved, as well as human resources, transportation, production, public announcements, and other costs to be paid for, may not be possible, hence complicating the entire awareness aim. The lack of awareness on the issue and impacts regarding urban space improvisation may lead to unnecessary and unorthodox conversion of urban spaces into other unintended uses. The same finding was also shared by Chen (2016) and Godfrey & Mrema (2018). Other reasons for non-awareness detailed in open-ended questions included: poor community engagement in the planning and execution of the awareness campaign; and a lack of interest or prioritization by both residents, LGAs, and CGAs. Besides, during FGD and interviews, the key respondents were asked to identify the sources of information, that can effectively create awareness on the use and importance of adhering to planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations, against the on-going urban space improvisation. The listed sources included:

- 1.) Awareness by the CGA, LGA, i.e., ministerial official, and WEO.
- 2.) Awareness by family or friends.
- 3.) Awareness by the community-based organization, partnering with private companies and influencers in branding and creating content, on planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations.
- 4.) Awareness using shareable infographics, brochures, posters and other printed materials, by CGA, LGAs, WEO, CBO, private companies, etc.
- 5.) Awareness using newspapers, magazines, radio, television, electronic mobile SMS, etc.
- 6.) Awareness by using a production of shareable video contents and automatic on-line social media ads with magnetic stories.
- 7.) Awareness through street mobile public announcements and podcasts.
- 8.) Awareness using the police.
- 9.) Awareness using a developed brand voice that can stick in urbanites’ minds, and
- 10.) Awareness by creating a controversy.

The listed sources were found to be realistic and appropriate, given the audience. For example, even UN–Habitat (2011a) advocated for raising public awareness of the participatory budgeting process (using radio, brochures, manuals, etc.). The lack of awareness has driven residents and non-residents to invade and improvise public and private spaces by erecting temporary and permanent structures. This may lead the government to use its power to forcibly evacuate whenever it wants to develop the area, e.g., for road construction. An action that most often leads to loss of property, life, and compensation, as well as personal injuries. This is also evidenced in a study by Limbumba (2010), which argues that when land is reserved for a public purpose other than residential, the government usually evicts and/or demolishes settlements to pave the way for its development.

#### 4.2. Compliance with Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations in the Planned Settlement

This was analysed in two (02) aspects, i.e., adherence and non-adherence, of planning legislations (acts) and standards within a planned settlement against the on-going on improvisation of urban spaces, when moving into, changing or extending the spaces.

**Table 4.05: On whether the residents have ever complied and applied any of the existing urban planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement with improvised urban space, when moving into, changing or extending the spaces.**

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
No	21	20.4	20.4	20.4
Yes	81	78.6	78.6	99.0
Not Sure	1	1.0	1.0	100.0

**Source:** Author (2024). Total Number of Respondents (TNR) or Total Sample Size (N) = 103.

On investigating out the application and adherence of any planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement against urban space improvisation, to determine whether the residents have ever applied them, when moving into, changing or extending the spaces; 78.6% of the respondents said “no”, 20.4% said “yes”, while 1.0% said they were “not sure”, as indicate in Table 4.05. In an interview, it was revealed that; the application was not as it is required to be, because of enormous and abrupt changes going on in the settlement, with some participants citing the construction of single storey servant quarters, which have been done even without a building permit. This tallies with findings by Segelela (2015) and Kombe (2017), citing reasons being due to lack of

daily or weekly spatial or land–use plan monitoring, caused by perhaps lack of enough LGA resources (i.e., enough planning officers

in the LGA or up to Mtaa level, finances, equipment, transportation, etc.). Others cited the lack of building signboards in some of the multistorey buildings as an example. It was also noted that it has been challenging to implement the planning and standards because the surveyed plots are too small in size, contrary to the family spatial-use requirements. The size is evidenced by URT (2016a), which indicated that; the originality of Sinza “A” being from the site and service project, the minimum plot size is 288 square meters. Furthermore, for those who responded “yes” (i.e., 20.4%), and using the eight (08) identified areas, ranked using 5–Likert scale, it was revealed after the analysis that; adherence and application of any planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement is done during:

**Table 4.06: presents the areas in which the adherence and application of planning legislations (acts) and standards are done within a planned settlement.**

Adherence and Application of Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations within a Planned Settlement	T N R	Mean Score (M.S.)	Std. Dev. (SD)	R A N K
<b>Reliability Test: Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.716</b>				
Land acquisition.	21	4.57	0.676	1
Adherence to development controls when applying for a building permit.	21	4.24	1.179	2
Change of use.	21	4.14	0.910	3
Land transfer.	21	4.10	0.944	4
Environmental impact assessment certification from NEMC.	21	4.00	1.140	5
Application for a building occupancy certificate.	21	3.62	1.465	6
Project registration to professional registration bodies, e.g., AQRB, CRB, ERB,	21	3.52	1.327	7
Payment of property tax to the CGAs, i.e., MLHSD.	21	3.48	1.167	8

**NOTES:** M.S. = mean score of the area in which the adherence and application of planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations is done within a planned settlement, and they are aware of, where 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 = Disagree (D), 1 = Strongly Disagree (D). The higher the mean score, the more the area in which the adherence and application of planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations is done within a planned settlement; TNR = Total Number of Respondents; and Std. Dev. = Standard Deviation.

**Table 4.07: presents the results of one-sample t-test on the reasons for the areas in which the adherence and application of any planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations are done within a planned settlement.**

AA	Test value ( $\mu = 3.5$ ) <i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2 – tailed)	Mean Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference		Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )
					Lowest	Upper	
AA 1	7.262	20	0.000	1.071	0.76	1.38	Yes
AA 2	2.868	20	0.010	0.738	0.20	1.27	Yes
AA 3	3.236	20	0.004	0.643	0.23	1.06	Yes
AA 4	2.891	20	0.009	0.595	0.17	1.02	Yes
AA 5	2.010	20	0.050	0.500	-0.02	1.02	Yes
AA 6	0.372	20	0.714	0.119	-0.55	0.79	No
AA 7	0.082	20	0.935	0.024	-0.58	0.63	No
AA 8	-0.093	20	0.926	-0.024	-0.56	0.51	No

**NOTES:** Results significant at 95% when  $p < 0.05$ ; *df* = Degree of Freedom, i.e., 20; STD. = Standard Deviation; TNR = Total Number of Respondents; AA = Application and Adherence.

Tables 4.06 and 4.07 present the mean scores analysis and one-sample *t*-test of adherence and application of planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement. The results were reliable with a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.716, and the top ranked five (05) areas were statistically significant (i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ). Besides, when mean scores are equal, the criterion with the lower standard deviation was ranked higher, as a smaller standard deviation indicates that the values are closer to the calculated arithmetic mean. From these tables, the disclosed findings were:

**Land Acquisition;** – was ranked first with a mean score of 4.57, as well as a standard deviation of 0.676, and it was statistically significant ( $t(20) = 7.262, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Its application and adherence are done in order for residents to acquire land and its legal ownership, as per Kironde (2005) and Shubira (2014); hence, gaining property rights. The gained rights include, the right to; own or occupy and use; dispose or sell or inherit or transfer or bequeath; sublet, realize benefits (financial gains), generate income from land or mortgage; develop or improve or maintain; restrict others from entry i.e., exclude others by controlling; access services; and surrender the property through lawful action (bundle of rights). During the FGD, one participant detailed that:

[.....] “I know using the Land Act No.04 of 1999 amended in 2004, I have been involved as a witness for some residents who were involved in land transaction (i.e., selling or buying) and transferring ... I remember recently as

*the MEO office, we were notified on an auction that took place last week, where one of the residents had defaulted on the bank loan acquired, I think using the Mortgage Finance (Special Provision) Act No. 17 of 2008.... My mother also used part of her retirement house to buy an NHC apartment, which we are currently renting..... I think it was acquired under the Unit Title Act of 2008. So, I think the residents are aware, and have been applying the existing laws,” – a resident & member of the Mtaa Executive Office (MEO) in the settlement.*

**Adherence of Development Controls when Applying for Building Permit;** – was ranked second with a mean score of 4.24, as well as a standard deviation of 1.179, and it was statistically significant ( $t(20) = 2.868, p = 0.010 < 0.05$ ). In reality, via physical observation, to a large part, the settlement is a high-density (i.e., 789 plots), with a small part containing low-density plots (i.e., 46 plots), accommodating mixed-use buildings from residential, commercial, office, to commercial-residential or office, etc. The low and high-density plot hosts quite a number of mixed-uses and socio-economic activities, operated by residents and non-residents, making the settlement self-sustaining. It generates sufficient diversity and vitality, which stimulate public contact, high pedestrian footfall, and transactions, according to Montgomery (1998). Unlike the current on-going urban space improvisation, the plots in-terms of main buildings occupied on, have been and continue to be developed with adherence to planning consent and building permit as insisted by the LGA and evidenced in plates 4.01 to 4.08. However, some of them were observed to execute building projects in violation of urban planning regulations, as evidenced in plates 4.09 to 4.11.



**Plate 4.01:** an extension of a multistorey hospital, nursery school and sister's house, Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.02:** a construction of a multistorey residential apartment in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.03:** construction of a commercial building in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.05:** a construction of a multistorey residential apartment in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.06:** a construction of a multistorey hostel building in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.08:** a construction of a Masjid Rahman in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.07:** a construction of a multistorey commercial cum residential building in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.09:** (above) an LGA's advert stopping any kind of development in the respective urban public open space in Sinza "A"; (below) a newly constructed retail kiosk erected despite the LGA estoppel advert, **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.10:** an on-going building project without LGA's building permit, unregistered by respective regulatory bodies (i.e., AQRB, ERB, CRB, OSHA and NEMC) and a signboard and stickers, leading to an estoppel for an extension of a multistorey commercial building in Sinza "A", **Source:** Author (2024).



**Plate 4.11:** an on-going extension of multistorey Masjid Islamiya, without a signboard and stickers adherence to urban planning regulation, and without being registered by respective regulatory bodies, i.e., AQRB, ERB, CRB, OSHA and NEMC, **Source:** Author (2024).

Findings also indicated that adherence covered development controls, i.e., building density, plot coverage, plot ratio, and setbacks, rather than plot density or plot size. But unfortunately, it does not cover the skyline with regard to limitations on the number of stories to be developed; roofing and building textures, colour codes, etc. Also, findings showed that adherence is attained during the application for building permits for building construction, demolition permits, change of roofing structure, boundary (fencing) walls,

and building shopping frames as the main structure, but not for improvised rental rooms added as retail shops. Again, building heights mostly range from two to three storeys, with a few one-storey or four-storey buildings. The skyline is predominantly single-storey, with several double-storey buildings and high-rise buildings. Thus, controlling the neighbourhood's building height or skylines, against a number of upcoming high-rise buildings which totally takes away the privacy for those living on the low-rise building is almost impossible given the settlement's recently rapid changes caused by rapid urbanization and self-employment, as well as an increase on socio-economic activities, that are being shifted or branched from CBD, specifically Kariakoo. Additionally, in terms of improvisation and non-adherence to development control, the situation is even worse for backyard development, as it cannot be seen by the LGA official unless reported by a courageous and willing neighbour to a Ten Cell leader or MEO. Principally, the adherence has not been as high as expected. KI Dar es Salaam (2018), in Moshi *et al.* (2018), reports that it had been difficult due to inadequate urban planning that was not enforced effectively, leaving the city to develop without a permit. The urban planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations prohibit the erection of any building without the LGA issuing a building permit. The prohibition includes the erection of a new building; re-erection of any building the walls of which had been wholly or partially pulled down; making additions to any building; making alterations in the structure of the building; converting the use of any building; and covering open spaces between walls or buildings. Good urban design in any city promotes development control, which, in return, supports spatial quality and can inform planning policy (Chen 2016).

Findings from the FGD also revealed non-adherence due to delays and lengthy bureaucratic procedures in the issuance of planning consent and building permits. Giving Nigeria as an example, Lamond *et al.* (2015) report that this expectation of delays often leads applicants to make extra out-of-pocket payments to LGA officials to facilitate the processing of planning permits. Shubira (2014), highlighting the experience in Tanzania on the same, adds that the permit application process can be long, time-consuming, cumbersome, discouraging, and bureaucratic, and sometimes surrounded by corruption, which slows down development and denies people their supposed right. To ensure that the settlement experiences effective and consistent adherence to development control, FGD participants suggested the full involvement of local community members working with Ten Cell leaders, the MEO, and LGA officials. This finding aligns with Mushumbusi's (2011) suggestions for self-regulation in planning and construction, through development committees and local leaders, as an effective building control system in settlements to enforce development guidelines. He concretizes this: the practice of self-regulation combines the rich informal networks and norms observed in the settlements with the developed formal guidelines, ensuring that people conduct their housing activities in a well-regulated environment.

**Change of Use** – was ranked third with a mean score of 4.14, as well as a standard deviation of 0.910, and it was statistically significant ( $t(20) = 3.236, p = 0.004 < 0.05$ ). Finding from FGD revealed that; the legislations (acts), standards and regulations were adhered when changing the use mostly from residential to residential cum commercial for apartments, hotels and other retail businesses; residential to office cum commercial; residential to guest houses, adding more rental room or apartments, shops and liquor store, etc., as evidence in a study by Tesha *at el.* (2025b). The entire process is participatory among the LGA, the professionals involved, local community members, and the developer. This was evidenced in an interview with the MLHSD official, who described the process that was involved in one of the recent projects, as he said:

[.....] *“the municipality, under the Urban Planning Section, is involved in the change of use by presenting the intention for changing the use of a certain area, to the full council. At this meeting, they have to agree to the change, and as a result, a municipal urban planner prepares a public notice that describes the intention and clearly specifies the change in terms of use classes, i.e., whether it is from residential to residential cum commercial or otherwise. The notice remains open to the public for 30 days, providing an opportunity for people to become aware of the changes and present their observations or queries, if any, to the municipal director. After 30 days, the comments are collected, analysed, and then presented to the Urban Planning Committee (UPC) for discussion. If the application is successful, the planner will present it to the Minister responsible for Lands, Housing, and Human Settlement Development (MLHSD) via the regional urban planner, who will then need to authorize it and forward it to the Minister who has the legal mandate to authorize the changes. Throughout this process, the regional urban planner has to make sure that all the minutes and the analysis for each meeting are attached to the application”*, – an urban planner in the MLHSD.

This inclusive process coincides with findings by Babere (2013), on changing the use of a specific space for public use, i.e., accommodating informal livelihood activities in a space which is identified as participatory, as stipulated in the Urban Planning Act (2007) section (19), before going through the LGA's change of use process.

**Land Transfer;** – was ranked fourth with a mean score of 4.10, as well as a standard deviation of 0.944, and it was statistically significant ( $t(20) = 2.891, p = 0.009 < 0.05$ ). Basically, the transfer of land is done under the National Land Act No. 04 of 1999, as amended in 2004, whereby, under section 02, the original owner may pass all rights of occupancy, a lease, or a mortgage to another person. This application and adherence were also revealed during the FGD, in which respondents said:

[.....] *“when my husband passed away, he left me with several pieces of land and properties in different locations. I cannot disclose how many, but the largest plot, located in prime areas, has around 1800 sqm, and the smallest has 525 sqm. So, under the stipulated law section on land transfer, I had to process the transfer by registering ownership in my name and in the names of our four (04) children, as indicated in the will. Of course, with the process, I also*

*encountered payment of capital gain tax, in one of the plots which was located near Mlimani Tower, in this neighbourhood, whereby the will had instructed for it to be sold to maintain the beginning of the new life, without the deceased. As required by the land law (i.e., the Land Act No.04 of 1999, amended in 2004), we have also been and continue to pay property tax for all the plots we have, and the amount paid on each plot varies depending on the value and location of the property. It was then that I noticed the existence of the Unit Title Act of 2008, which was employed when he bought a single unit apartment,” – a resident & widow living in the settlement.*

The practice in land transfers requires the buyer or seller, depending on the agreement, to pay duties, taxes, or dues in any transaction involving the sale of land. These duty fees, as well as taxes or dues involved, include: “the stamp duty fees”, levied at 1% of the gross selling price, determined from the purchase price or the plot value as per the valuation report. For the taxes, one must pay “the capital gains tax”, which is currently at 10% of the value of the transferred property, and a capital gains tax certificate is issued after payment.

**Environmental Impact Assessment Certification from NEMC;** – was ranked fifth with a mean score of 4.00, as well as a standard deviation of 1.140, and it was statistically significant ( $t(20) = 2.010, p = 0.050 < 0.05$ ). Introduced in Tanzania in 1992, EIA is a compulsory procedure before undertaking construction of any civil or structural works, including new works and major extensions of existing civil structures or facilities. Basically, EIA assesses the potential negative impacts of civil or structural works on the environment to inform decision-making about the environmental consequences of proposed actions. Its operation legal framework under NEMC includes: National Environmental Policy (NEP) of 1997, revised in 2021; the Environmental Management Act of 2004; the Environmental Impact Assessment and Audit Regulations of 2005; Environmental Management (Water Quality Standards) Regulations of 2007; and the Environmental Management (Soil Quality Standards) Regulations of 2007. Participants in the interviews and FGD confirmed having used or participated in the EIA process to obtain a NEMC certificate for petrol stations, hotels, apartments, commercial buildings, carwash businesses, etc. Besides, an EIA expert itemized areas in which adherence is obtained in NEMC, in which he said, –

[.....] “*eeeh, well; it is a main requirement to have joint consultative meetings with local community members, in a geographical area where the project is going to be implemented, for example, in buildings, or where the project is going to go through, in-terms of villages/districts centers, take example of the roads or crude oil piping infrastructure. Normally, other than introducing exactly what the project is all about, using architectural scheme drawings, our discussion in most cases depends or looks into issues related to; project waste generation; population influx in-terms of availability of construction labours and movement of people in and out of the construction site; vegetation and soil erosion issues; health and safety issues in-terms of communicable disease in which we recommend on using locally available labours, to combat issues related to cholera, HIV/AIDS, viruses as it was with COVID, provision of health and safety education. We also look into noise, air, soil and water pollution; vibration from heavy equipment, etc.*” – an EIA expert.

Other reasons for the residents to apply any planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations, as revealed by the respondents via an open-ended question, included: during application for a certificate of occupancy from the LGA for all newly constructed buildings, and OSHA for industries and their allied facilities. The certificate endorses that the newly constructed building is fit for human occupation and habitation. Another area mentioned was during the removal of pedestrian walkway’s Kerb stones, to extend the parking space (*as seen in plate 4.13, 01–05*) and hard landscape via pavement, external floor tiles, reinforced concrete slab, for a car parking space.



**Plate 4.13:** the Kerb stones removed via LGA, TARURA and TANROADS permit, to connect the semi-public spaces, pedestrian walkways and access roads, as an improvisation to accommodate car parking and a space used by imported used car vendors on Sam Nujoma service road in Sinza “A”. A far on (02) is a pedestrian walkway blocked by a retail shop. **Source:** Author (2024).

The entire process was carried out after obtaining approval or a permit from LGA, TARURA, and TANROADS. Nevertheless, for those who responded “no” (i.e., 78.6%), their reasons for not applying any planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement were revealed to be,

**Table 6.15: presents the reasons for the residents not to adhere to and apply planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement.**

<b>Non-adherence and Non-application of Planning Legislation (Acts), Standards and Regulations within a Planned Settlement.</b>	<b>T N R</b>	<b>Mean Score (M.S.)</b>	<b>Std. Dev. (SD)</b>	<b>R A N K</b>
<b>Reliability Test: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.701</b>				
Bureaucracy, complex and long process in obtaining permits.	81	4.32	0.873	1
Lack of public awareness on urban planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations.	81	4.29	0.809	2
Lack of an integrated central database management system in issuing permits.	81	4.11	1.042	3
Insufficient resources in the LGA's planning department.	81	4.00	1.006	4
Lack of coordination between land agencies and LGAs, as well as CGAs	81	3.62	0.964	5
Bribery or corruption.	81	3.62	1.339	6
An increase in the cost of construction.	81	3.41	.888	7
Lack of willingness	81	3.32	1.017	8

**NOTES:** M.S. = mean score of the reasons for the residents not to adhere and apply planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement, where 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 = Disagree (D), 1 = Strongly Disagree (D). The higher the mean score, the more reasons there are for residents not to adhere to or apply any planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations within a planned settlement; TNR = Total Number of Respondents; and Std. Dev. = Standard Deviation.

**Table 6.16: presents the results of one-sample t-test on the reasons for the residents not to adhere to or apply planning legislations (acts), standards and regulations within a planned settlement.**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Test value (<math>\mu = 3.5</math>) <i>t</i></b>	<b><i>df</i></b>	<b>Sig. (2 – tailed)</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>95% confidence interval of the difference</b>		<b>Significant (<math>p &lt; 0.05</math>)</b>
					<b>Lowest</b>	<b>Upper</b>	
R 1	8.474	81	0.000	0.817	0.63	1.01	Yes
R 2	8.876	81	0.000	0.793	0.61	0.97	Yes
R 3	5.297	81	0.000	0.610	0.38	0.84	Yes
R 4	4.500	81	0.000	0.500	0.28	0.72	Yes
R 5	1.145	81	0.255	0.122	-0.09	0.33	No
R 6	0.825	81	0.412	0.122	-0.17	0.42	No
R 7	-0.870	81	0.387	-0.085	-0.28	0.11	No
R 8	-1.629	81	0.107	-0.183	-0.41	0.04	No

**NOTES:** Results significant at 95% when  $p < 0.05$ ;  $df$  = Degree of Freedom, i.e., 81; STD. = Standard Deviation; TNR = Total Number of Respondents.

Table 6.15 and 6.16 present the mean scores analysis and one-sample  $t$ -test on the reasons residents do not adhere to and apply planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations within a planned settlement. The results were reliable with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.701, and the top ranked four (04) reasons were statistically significant (i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ). Besides, when mean scores are equal, the criterion with the lower standard deviation was ranked higher, as a smaller standard deviation indicates that the values are closer to the calculated arithmetic mean. From these tables, the unveiled findings were:

**Bureaucracy, Complex and Long Process in Obtaining Permits**, ranked first with a mean score of 4.32, a standard deviation of 0.873, and was statistically significant ( $t(81) = 8.474, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Despite all developments in any declared planned settlement being specified not to be executed without a building permit from LGA, as reported by Kironde (2005); still, findings revealed some of developers to have skipped the process in-terms of applying planning consent, building permit, EIA certificates, building occupancy certificate etc., by most buildings being erected and occupied without them, coinciding with Kironde (1994). The reasons highlighted by participants included difficulty in securing them due to lengthy procedures and time-wasting bureaucracy, which hinder the implementation of regulatory frameworks and impose high additional costs. The same finding was also shared by Kironde (1994), Kironde (2005), Mwigira (2011), and Kamomonga (2013). Comparatively, the situation is even worse when you compare it to Malaysia, as exemplified by World Bank (1991) in Mwigira (2011), who stated that; it takes four (04) to seven (07) years to obtain a building permit, which increases the cost by 50%.

**Lack of Public Awareness on Urban Planning Legislations (Acts), Standards and Regulations;** – was ranked second with a mean score of 4.29, as well as a standard deviation of 0.809, and it was statistically significant ( $t(81) = 8.876, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Awareness creation among local community members regarding the importance of applying planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations when developing any construction project in a planned settlement, against the improvisation of urban spaces, is of paramount significance. There are so many issues that have been discussed, as seen in the settlement, due to the general public not being aware, or less aware, and not applying urban planning legislation (act), standards, and regulations in project development.

The issues may include; construction project stoppage, and unnecessary increase in project cost which may both leads into time and cost overrun to the owner; registration fines from LGA and construction regulatory authorities like AQRB, ERB, NEMC, and CRB; an arise of conflicts with neighbours and the community at large for the matter relating to boundaries, setback violation, spillage of untreated construction waste water on the street and neighbouring buildings, as well as non–usage of safety net vs. flying objects; blockage of access roads and pedestrian walkways; etc. This finding also aligns with that of Moshi *et al.* (2018).

**Lack of Integrated Central Database Management System in Issuing Permits;** – was ranked third with a mean score of 4.11, as well as a standard deviation of 1.042, and it was statistically significant ( $t(81) = 5.297, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Other than NEMC, which is under the VPO dealing with environmental issues in any construction development, according to Kamomonga (2013), land administration in Tanzania operates under a duality system, centralized at the MLHSD, and in LGA’s land offices, which are under the PO–RALG. The MLHSD provides technical leadership and national implementation, while the LGA provides district level operational implementation. If we are to deal appropriately with urban space improvisation, then; the two institutions must be linked with others, to avoid all unsynchronized and uncoordinated processes related to construction development permits. Even findings from FGD revealed that; to curb all the issues regarding construction permits as well as urban space improvisation, a multi–sectoral approach must be opted by making strong consideration and heavy investment on an integrated electronic central database management system dealing with issuance of all the permits, from planning consent, building permit, EIA certificates, to building occupancy certificate, utilities, and the other allied permits like solid and liquid waste management etc. This finding on institutional linkage coincides with Arimah & Adeagbo (2000), Kamomonga (2013), and Moshi *et al.* (2018). The integration should be done simultaneously with participatory and inclusive local governance that empowers all inhabitants; recognize the key contributions of various levels of government, including at the regional, subregional and municipal levels; strengthen formal coordination mechanisms; define joint responsibilities; and provide each level of government with the necessary resources and incentives to carry out their respective roles effectively; which is the requirement form the Medellin Declaration, as per UN–Habitat (2014). This approach shall ensure that all construction developments are properly and openly coordinated daily, alongside positive collaboration among urban planning departments and institutions; hence avoiding what was identified by Babere (2013) and Ogu (1999) in Lamond *et al.* (2015). It shall also deflect what was conveyed by Mgweno (2000) in Mushumbusi (2011), namely that when the regulatory role for land development is placed in different institutions, these enact uncoordinated laws that sometimes cause conflict when fulfilling the same land development role.

**Insufficient Resources in the LGA’s Planning Department;** – was ranked fourth with a mean score of 4.00, as well as a standard deviation of 1.006, and it was statistically significant ( $t(81) = 4.500, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). The financial, equipment, and human or technically equipped professional resources, together with the political will to allocate funds for urban development as a priority, are very important for the ease of application of planning legislation (acts), standards, and regulations within a planned settlement. Otherwise, their insufficiency cripples the LGA's and even the CGA's ability to manage land and urban growth in accordance with the original intended concepts, legislation (acts), standards, and regulations. This finding also relates to a study by Kironde (2005); Mushumbusi (2011); Shubira (2014); Gallico (2016); Kombe (2017); Godfrey & Mrema (2018); Durand–Lasserve (2005) in Nuhu (2019); and Mbee & Tonte (2022), who also revealed how limited resources and lack of will, hurt the effective, efficient, timely, and successful operation of planning legislation (acts), standards and regulations by the LGA’s urban development sections. One respondent concretized this during interviews, saying:

[.....] “*the lack of specific allocated budget for the urban planning department planners, has been and continues to make it difficult in realization of most masterplans with all its infrastructures..... in real sense, the responsibility of any urban planner involves planning and implementation of any entire urban planned masterplan drawing... but due to misconception, the situation on the ground, is quite different, as after planning and preparing the drawings with all its infrastructures and measurements; planners tend to shy away, due to lack of specific implementation budgeted, leaving that part to the architects in developing a specific allocated plot only, leaving out other infrastructures. That is why we end up with an untarmacked road network lacking stormwater drainage systems, pedestrian walkways, street traffic lights, road signs, etc. I think an initiative in–terms of budgeting, must be done, so that planning departments are able handle an urban planning project as a single package from planning, surveying, to implementation of all important human supportive infrastructures, i.e., recreational spaces; passive and active open spaces; tarmacked road network with storm water drainage systems; pedestrian walkways; street traffic lights; road signs; street furniture; solid and liquid waste management systems; electric, ICT, telecommunication; etc.*”, – a urban planner at the MLHSD.

Moreover, UN–Habitat (2011a) identifies diverse primary sources of LGA revenue, including transfers from CGA; property tax and other allied taxes; permit fees, fines, and change–of–use payments; loans and other forms of revenue (e.g., user charges). UN–Habitat (2014) advocated for the full exploitation of the available potential LGA sources, by even implementing necessary institutional and legal reforms to make use of innovative land–based financing tools. It also promotes the LGA's borrowing from the capital market by issuing LGA bonds, as another way urban authorities can mobilize additional financial resources. Further, both UN–Habitat (2011a); UN–Habitat (2014); Lamond *et al.* (2015); and Po (2001) in Chen (2016), advocates for building public–private partnerships as another sustainable way LGAs can exploit against limited financial capacity, in providing services e.g. delivery of

healthcare; primary and secondary school education; public transport; water supply; sanitation such as solid waste management system, drainage systems, waste water management system; road repairs, pavements, street lightings and parking systems; the management of public facilities and parks; etc. Additionally, another reason residents did not apply any urban planning regulatory framework, as tabled in an open–ended question, was the lack of flexibility in the existing urban planning standards and regulations in planned settlements. The participant insisted on the need for flexibility, a point also supported by Kironde's (1992) study. Weak enforcement, which affects their adherence and application, was also highlighted, tallying with writing by Mbee & Tonte (2022). Unfortunately, this is true, as Omollo (2020) and Konadu *et al.* (2025) insist, because their adequate adherence and application depend on enforcement and a proper monitoring system to achieve SDG Goal 11, which seeks to ensure sustainable cities and communities. Housing deficit was also cited as one of the reasons that leads to non–adherence, tallying with Arimah & Adeagbo (2000); and Omollo (2020), due to high housing demand, struggles for multiple income, and an increase in the demand for rental spaces that can host miscellaneous socio–economic activities in the settlement.

## 5.0. CONCLUSION

Improvisation of urban spaces mutates and evolves both gradually and radically, altering urban form and the entire urban fabric and tissue. It emerges due to a number of socio–economic activities conducted in planned spaces by urbanites. Basically, its emergency is accompanied by a number of issues related to awareness, compliance, and, at times, the violation of the urban planning regulatory framework, thereby justifying and necessitating this paper, which concludes and recommends the following. Rather than pursuing aggressive enforcement or eradication, planners and policymakers must consider how to integrate informality into broader urban development strategies. A move to accommodate informal socio–economic activities in the newly prepared– or revised existing–policies, legislations (acts), standards and regulations, as well as plans. This includes allowing more flexible zoning and land use policies in planned areas. Such reforms will advance a shift from Eurocentric to Afrocentric urban design concepts, allowing cities to distance themselves from Western (i.e., Europe and America) tailored spatial planning concepts, standards, and practices. It will also ensure that a move is made away from disapproved and frustrating inherited or imported bureaucratic constraints, as well as high planning standards and concepts; hence, making a way for those that capture local needs and realities. It also recommends strengthening institutional frameworks by reviewing and enacting existing and draft regulatory instruments. Among the policies, legislation (acts), standards, and regulations recommended for review are the National Human Settlements Development Policy of 2000 and the National Housing Policy Draft 04 of 2010, which should be reviewed and enacted. This should also go along with the thorough review of the already prepared and enactment of specific building codes. Other, include reviewing the existing National Land Policy of 1995 and its land statutes (i.e., Land Act No. 04 and No. 05 of 1999). This shall speed up the MLHSD under preparation, the National Estate Agency Bill of 2015. Other includes, Water Supply and Sanitation Act No. 05 of 2019, Urban Planning Act No. 08 of 2007, and its associated standards i.e., the Urban Planning (Planning Space Standards) Regulations of 2018, Urban Planning (Zoning of Land Use) Regulations of 2018, Local Government (Urban Authorities) Development Control Regulations of 2008, Urban Planning (Control and Management of Public Open Spaces) Regulations of 2018, Water Supply and Sanitation Regulation of 2019, etc. This approach aims to create a fluidity loophole that can better accommodate the emerging, community–driven transformations, involving informal accommodation of socio–economic activities, reflect the evolving urban landscape, and eliminate overlapping powers. The paper also calls for redevelopment plans within the revised and reviewed planning regulatory framework for all planned settlements experiencing spatial improvisation. It further calls for training and deploying adequate human resources down to the “Mtaa” level, as well as providing sufficient financial resources, equipment, and ICT tools to both the CGA and the LGA to eliminate bureaucratic barriers and enhance public awareness. The paper also emphasizes early participation of urban residents in planning and redevelopment processes through a bottom–up approach, and advocates for long–term monitoring of informality dynamics by integrating GIS and remote sensing with field surveys to track and monitor informal growth in planned settlements. This will create bottom–up oriented regulatory frameworks for urban planning. Finally, regularly and fully resourced (i.e., human, financial, technical equipment, etc.) inspections are insisted on.

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