


ORIGINAL PAPER

# Is it a local community-centered plan? Community participation in the Dodoma master planning and implementation processes

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## Abstract

The participatory planning approach is centered on inclusive idea generation, consensus building, and consideration of socioeconomic and cultural aspects. Currently, there is limited knowledge regarding whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan reflects the needs and interests of the local communities. A mixed research approach and case study strategy were deployed. Interviews, documents reviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were the main data collection methods. Content analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyse qualitative and quantitative data respectively. The findings indicate that the 2019 Dodoma master plan marginally reflects the needs and interests of the Madukani and Msalato wards communities. This was evidenced by a lack of harmonisation of needs and interests between the City Council of Dodoma (CCD) and the local communities. The local communities prioritised individual interests (tenure security) while CCD focused on the complex public interests (sustainable city). Regardless of the importance of safeguarding public interests, the process was subjected to ineffective communication, negotiation, orientation of earmarked land uses, commitment, and inclusive decision-making. The participation practice signifies either non-participation (manipulation/therapy) or tokenism (informing/consultation) of Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation. This was proved by the power imbalance of the technocrats in accommodating the suggestions of the local communities. Again, denial of the local communities' suggestions and ineffective information dissemination counter with the Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory. The findings, therefore, call for inclusive decision-making to ensure the 2019 Dodoma master plan is effectively understood, owned, and observed by the local communities.

## Keywords

Community participation, Community needs and interest, Consensus building, Master planning

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## Highlights for public administration, management and planning:

- Community needs and interests were ineffectively valued in the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan
- Results reflect that resolutions in the master planning process were largely derived from professional convictions.
- Stakeholders' participation should be embedded at the grassroots level to increase awareness and publicity of the master plan to the local community.
- These findings should be used as a wake-up call to the decision-makers, practitioners, and the local community in Sub-Saharan Africa to move from the imposed top-down planning tradition in planning systems.

## 1 Introduction

Originally, the master planning approach was deployed in Europe and the United States as the only planning tool to guide urban growth and development (Fainstein 2010). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the approach was deployed to revitalise the adverse effects of the industrial revolution that happened in the 19th century in Europe and America (Mabaso et al. 2015). The underlying assumption of master planning was centered on the top-down planning approach paired with rigid land use zoning (Fainstein 2010). Due to the rigidity of the approach, inconsistencies in the master plans have been reported all over the world including unrealistic land use zoning regulations and ineffective understanding of community problems (e.g. Berke et al. 2006; Wapwera 2018).

As mentioned by Gumel et al. (2020), from the 1960s to 1970s the Global North experienced a paradigm shift from master planning (autocratic) to a strategic planning approach. The paradigm shift was contributed by the evolution of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The CSO movements were centred on fighting for the compromised rights such as social, economic, and cultural aspects (Fainstein 2010; Harvey 2012). Likewise, international organisations have been on the front line to ensure the world achieves sustainable cities that are inclusive, safe, and resilient. There are various agendas launched to ensure sustainable and inclusive cities such as Agenda 21, Agenda 2030, and New Urban Agenda (NUA). The International Organisations advocate for the citizens and CSOs' inclusion in the planning and implementation processes of the land use plans (Harrison & Croese 2022; U.N. Habitat 2018, 2024).

Closely related to global experiences, master planning in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) was introduced during the colonial period (Harrison & Croese 2022). The majority of the post-independence governments in SSA have continued to use master plans as a main planning tool. However, many cities prepare master plans without effective community participation, disregarding community needs and priorities, and little reflection of the actual situation on the ground (Loh 2011; Nunbogu et al. 2018; Pambila et al. 2023). The lack of community interests and needs inclusion have led to poor implementation of land use plans in the SSA countries (Abubakar & Doan 2017; Cobbinah & Darkwah 2016).

Similarly, the deployment of the master planning approach in Tanzania started during the colonial regime in the 1840s–1960s (Kasala 2015). How-

ever, the growth of cities, municipalities, and towns in Tanzania is inconsistent with master plans coupled with 75 % of the development of informal settlement (Namangaya & Mushi 2019; Peter & Yang 2019; Magina et al. 2020).

On the other hand, the participatory planning approach started in the 1960s and 1970s in the US and Western Europe as a result of social movements questing for democracy in the decision-making process over technocratic decisions (Fainstein 2010; Tsoriyo 2024). Global experiences show that there was lack of collective resolutions between the local community and technocrats, unfulfilled promises, planning systems favoring top-down planning approach, divide and conquer approach, and spatial planners deciding on land use and zoning regulations in advance (Follador et al. 2018; Križnik et al. 2019; Lederman 2017; Mashhadi Moghaddam & Rafeian 2020; Pimentel Walker & Friendly 2021; Rabe et al. 2016; Silverman et al. 2019).

Equally, the participation of stakeholders in SSA was adopted in the early 1990s. Stakeholders' inclusion in the planning process in SSA was a result of the political and economic paradigm shift advocating for active participation to attain sustainable development. Despite the policies and laws in SSA advocating for community participation in the planning and implementation processes, there are various challenges affecting stakeholders' participation such as failures in reaching consensus, power imbalance, and lack of integration of informal livelihoods (Abubakar & Doan 2017; Nyiransabimana et al. 2019; Watson 2009a).

Closely related to the global and SSA's urban planning, the need for stakeholders' participation in planning and implementation processes in Tanzania started in the 1990s. The Strategic Urban Development Programme (SUDP) was adopted to replace top-down, centralised and technocratic planning applied during the colonial and post-colonial eras (Halla 2002; Kasala 2015). Adaptation of stakeholder participation was influenced by global political democratization from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s. The paradigm shift required stakeholders' participation and partnerships in the planning and implementation of urban development (Halla 2007).

However, in 2007 the government returned to master planning. Among the reasons for abandoning SUDP were the lack of sustainable financing, the absence of regulations, and the lack of spatial guidance (Kasala 2015). The enactment of the Urban Planning Act (UPA) No. 8 of 2007 was purposely to improve citizen participation in planning and implementation processes. The colonial law—Town

and Country Planning Ordinance of 1956 revised in 1961 did not value the importance of community participation. The local community engaged only in the final stage after the plan was prepared by the technocrats.

The UPA No. 8 of 2007 advocates for the local community to participate from the early stage of the planning process. Yet, it is not well-researched whether the new law has pragmatically improved stakeholder participation particularly harmonisation of the conflicting interests and needs between the government and the local community.

This paper contributes to the body of knowledge by shedding light on the critical challenge of master plan implementation in the SSA countries. The planning systems in the SSA countries are constrained by the colonial-embedded top-down planning systems. The autocratic systems have led to ineffective consideration of the local communities' inputs in the planning process. The planning systems in SSA prepare plans without extensive negotiation, orientation, consensus building, lack of inclusive planning, and less consideration of livelihood aspects such as the informal sector. The lack of consensus building between the planning systems and the local communities has contributed to the domination of informal settlements development in SSA (U.N. Habitat 2022).

Therefore, this study fills the gap in whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan is a product of the needs and interests of the local community. Accordingly, this research paper analyses the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, maps the land uses proposed at the Madukani and Msalato wards, identifies the needs and interests of the local community in two subcases, evaluates harmonisation process of needs and interests between the local communities and the City Council of Dodoma (CCD), and analyses how final decisions were reached. This study is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No.11 which emphasises sustainable cities and communities that are inclusive, safe, and resilient.

## 2 Conceptual and theoretical frameworks underpinning the study

### 2.1 Master planning

As noted by Todes et al. (2010) the main challenge of master planning is centered on being static and rigid in managing rapid urbanising cities.

The genesis of master plan was to manage slow-developing cities of the Global North. For decades, master planning has been practiced in an autocratic manner. The master planning gave little attention to public participation, with a belief that there was common public interest and a neglect of social, political, and economic dynamics shaping the city (Todes et al. 2010). It is worth noting that, the master planning concept should not be blamed for being static and rigid rather than the technocrats are the ones who deserve blame as they often ignore the dynamic nature of the society.

In sub-Saharan Africa, master planning has failed to accommodate the basic requirements of the local community including social, economic, and cultural aspects and reality on the ground (Wapwera 2018). For instance, master planning has paid less attention to integrating the livelihood sources of urban poor (Gumel et al. 2020). This situation has led to informal settlement development, traffic congestion, encroachment of ecological areas, cities developed in the form of haves and have-nots, and slums development. Technocrats marginally value the needs of the community coupled with rigid land use zoning regulations, valuing orderly, aesthetic, and beautiful cities (Watson 2013). Ineffective consideration of the needs of Africans has resulted in demolitions and evictions as major means of attaining the fantasy cities at the expense of the urban poor (Watson 2009a).

The master planning approach in SSA lacks viable financing, political support, weak institutional framework, exclusion of stakeholders in decision-making, and lack of coordination, monitoring, and evaluation (Nyiransabimana et al. 2019). The master planning approach has been criticized for manifesting inefficiencies, rigidity, dictatorship, robotism, and developer unfriendliness (Halla 2007). Despite the master planning approach being adopted as a tool to manage cities in Tanzania, there is little knowledge of whether it has helped to guide and make the cities sustainable and inclusive.

### 2.2 Community participation

The term community participation has been widely expressed by many scholars. For instance, according to Ostad-Ali-Askari et al. (2021), it is a process of collecting ideas, opinions, and concerns from certain groups of individuals regarding the proposed plan/project/program that is likely to affect or benefit their way of living. Collective idea generation, planning, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation are important elements for effective community participation (Silverman et al. 2019).

Community participation is measured by consideration of citizens' interests and needs in planning and decision-making processes by the power holders (Tsoriyo 2024).

However, some spatial planners do not strive for mutual agreement before making resolutions of the government-led projects as they perceive that they know the needs of the local communities (Lilja 2017). Many planning systems in the world have adopted participation in planning and implementation processes. Yet, there is unequal access to decision-making, a lack of knowledge, poor representation of the local community, a limited number of workshops, and a lack of feedback to the local community (Larson et al. 2022; Yang & Nam 2015). Other challenges include the absence of a guarantee for community views to be incorporated into the master plan and technocrats' attitude of favoring individuals with economic muscles at the expense of the local community needs (Costa & Lee 2019; Castelo et al. 2016). Generally, citizen participation is significantly confronted by a power imbalance, different interests among stakeholders, lack of awareness, poor communication, lack of trust, and resource constraints (Mahjabeen et al. 2009; Willems et al. 2016).

However, experience from Brazil, the United States, the UK (London), Amsterdam, and Korea reveals that inclusion of the citizen's stakes in development plans is guaranteed by engaging Civil Society Organisations (CSO) elected among the citizens (Fainstein 2010; Harvey 2012; Rocco et al. 2019). Equally, stakeholder participation has been proven to be effective in Amsterdam city, whereby solutions to city challenges and quality of life have been enhanced (Fainstein 2010; Liu et al. 2023).

### 2.3 Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation Model

The Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation Model was developed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969 in the United States of America. The model was developed as a measure of the level of participation in the 1960s to 1970s. By then the city and municipal governments in the USA gave little chance for the citizens to participate in the decision-making process. The model is divided into three levels/ categories with eight rungs. The levels and rungs are such as Non-participation (Manipulation and Therapy), Tokenism (Informing, Consultation, and Placation), and Citizen Control (Partnership, Delegation and Citizen power) (Arnstein 1969; Ostad-Ali-Askari et al. 2021).

The model advocates for full community participation that allows for citizen control; however, the participation process as intention and success depends on the eye of the beholder—bureaucrats from planning authorities (Willems et al. 2016). Experiences have shown that when power holders restrict the views of the local community, participation just remains as window dressing rituals and rubber stamps (Arnstein 1969). Inclusion in a participatory process may not be enough to guarantee voice (Arnstein 1969), and even if it does, that voice is not enough (Larson et al. 2022).

Therefore, based on the aims of the study Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation Model fits this study in two aspects. First, the model gauges the level and rungs of citizen participation in the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. Second, the model was useful in assessing whether the critical challenge of power imbalance in the planning and decision-making processes was mitigated by the technocrats in the preparation and implementation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan.

### 2.4 The Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory

Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory underpins open communication and discussion that focuses on attaining common understanding and agreement (Lin 2022; Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger 1998). The theory underscores that communication should not be affected by power, self-interest, or ignorance (Lin 2022). The planners are argued to act as knowledge mediators, brokers, or critical friends but not influencers in the planning processes (Lin 2022; Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger 1998). The Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory advocates negotiations and collaboration of diverse stakeholders in the planning and decision-making process (Lin 2022).

Moreover, the Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory advocates for collective decision-making coupled with undistorted communication, transparency, power balance, no oppression, and respect for all ideas from stakeholders (Adjei Mensah et al. 2016; Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger 1998). The theory cautions that participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless (Arnstein 1969; Bolt & Jong 2021; Silverman et al. 2019).

Therefore, Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory fits this study. First, the theory measured whether the important prepositions such

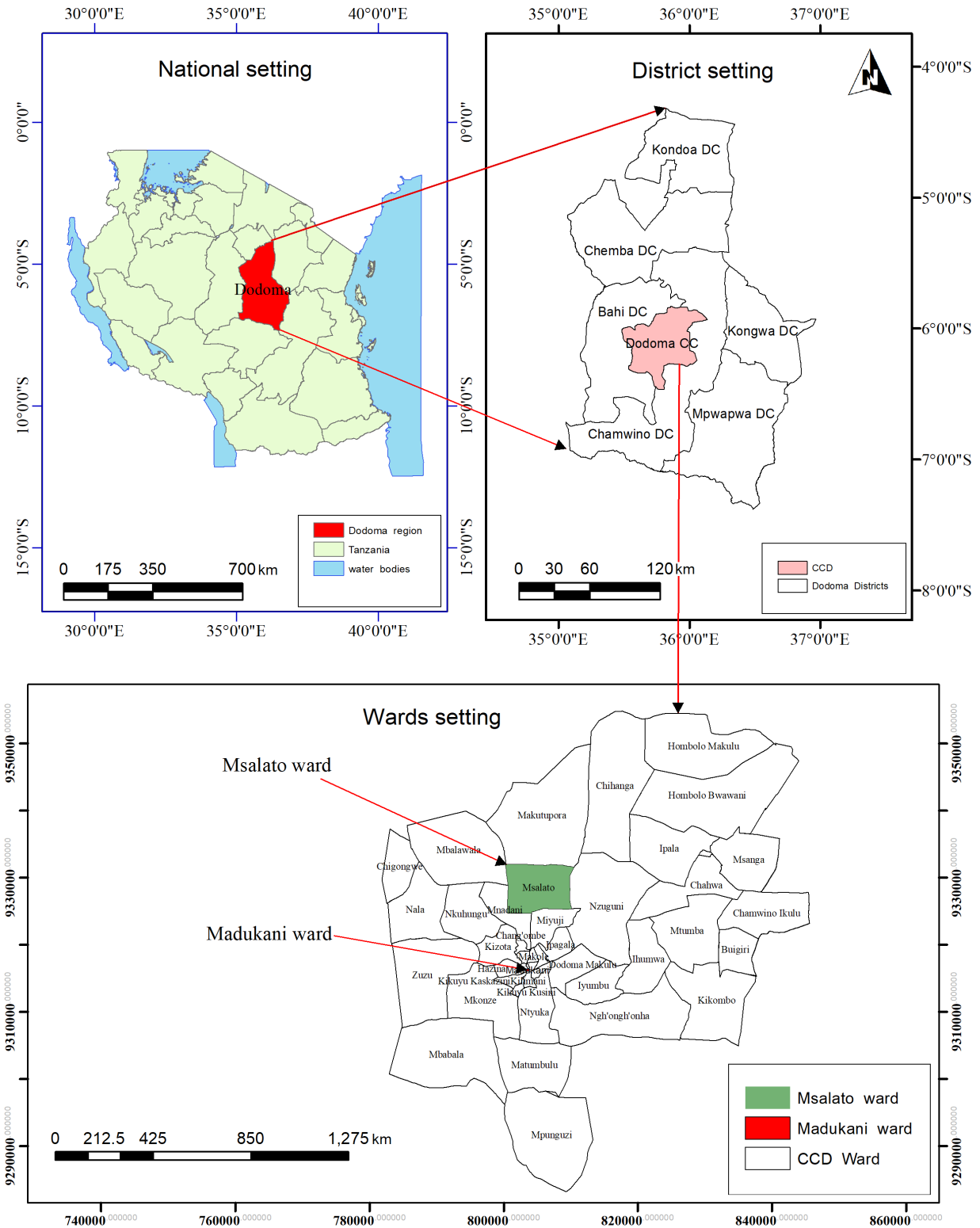


Fig. 1 Location map of the study are

as collaborative planning, education of the local community, and the respect of ideas were taken into account by the CCD and task force officials. Second, this study assessed how a power balance was ensured in the planning and final decision-making processes. Therefore, this study is significant because the assessment of the gap between desired participation and actual practices remains a critical and alarming challenge worldwide (Bolt & Jong 2021).

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Study area selection and justification

The City Council of Dodoma (CCD) is located in the Dodoma region, the National Capital City of Tanzania. The city is located in the central part of the United Republic of Tanzania with a Latitude of 5°48' to 6°28' and a Longitude of 35°32' to 36°8'. The city has an area of 2615 square Kilometres with a population of 765179 as per the national census of 2022. Madukani and Msalato wards are located in the Central Business District (CBD) and the peri-urban areas along the Dodoma to Arusha Road respectively (Fig. 1).

The City Council of Dodoma (CCD) was selected among other cities because of a pair of reasons such as a recently prepared master plan (five years ago), the presence of 25 % of informal land developments (Huang et al. 2018), and the CCD being among the few cities with early 1976 master plans. Others include the presence of a special organ (CDA<sup>1</sup>), and the rapid population increase from 2017 when the government shifted capital activities from Dar es Salaam (Business City) to Dodoma (Government City).

On the one hand, Madukani ward was selected because it is located in the Central Business District (CBD) with high population density (20175 persons per square kilometres), the presence of horizontal developments in contrast to the 2019 Redevelopment Plan, and high land value. The 2019 redevelopment plan was prepared as part of the 2019 Dodoma master plan to optimize land value and revitalise the CBD. The construction of commercial spine (high-rise buildings) requires extensive stakeholder participation.

Besides, the households at Madukani ward were regarded as an information-rich case because the ward is among the old wards developed since the colonial period and some of the household members have been there for more than sixty (60) years before Tanganyika got her independence

in 1961. Therefore, the selection of the Madukani ward aimed to assess how the landholders, private and public sectors participated in the preparation of the redevelopment plan and how they were engaging to implement the 2019 master plan.

On the other hand, the selection of Msalato ward first, considered the presence of unresolved land use conflicts. Designation of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in the 2019 Dodoma master plan by the CCD and task force officials was done without extensive negotiation and mutual understanding with landholders. It was also noted that there was no compensation paid despite the Land Act No.4 of 1999 emphasising prompt compensation. The lack of collective planning and consensus building led to misunderstandings among the landholders. Second, the ward is found in a peri-urban area (12 kilometres from the CBD), informally developed, presence of Msalato International Airport (under construction) and its impacts on the social, economic, and livelihood of the residents. Third, the ward is located along the Great North Road with high land value (Nyakamwe 2021) to other road corridors in the city.

#### 3.2 Research approach and strategy

This research paper deployed a mixed methods approach. A concurrent mixed research approach was deployed among other mixed research methods. Qualitative and quantitative data were integrated to provide a comprehensive picture of the study. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from the key informants and the households at the Madukani and Msalato wards respectively. The key informants include the local leaders (at ward level), planning authority (CCD), public and private institutions, and ministries (MLHHSD and PO-RALG). With regards to this study, the analysis was dominated by qualitative data while quantitative data were embedded to deepen the qualitative data. The doings were in line with Yin (2011) that, concurrent (parallel) mixed methods involve integrating the qualitative and quantitative data at the same time to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

Qualitative data includes the needs and interests of the local community, the CCD, and central government; the needs and interests' harmonisation process; and the decision-making process. Quantitative data include age, sex, marital status, education level, employment status, land accessibility, and land tenure. Others were the needs and interests of the households (done by choosing the multiple response questions), whether households were

involved in proposing land uses and final decision making (asked by using Yes / No questions). The feedback from the households (numerical data) and Key informants (textual data) provided a holistic understanding of whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan is a product of harmonisation of the needs and interests of the local communities. Deploying a mixed-method approach provides a more complete understanding of research issues than using only one of them (Creswell & Creswell 2017).

This research paper deployed a case study strategy. The City Council of Dodoma (CCD) was selected as a case study to analyse whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan reflects the needs and interests of the local communities using Madukani and Msalato communities as subcases. An in-depth analysis was conducted on how the needs and interests of the stakeholders were identified; harmonised and final decisions were reached in the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. The case study involves an in-depth investigation of a specific case in its real-life experience (Quintao et al. 2020; Yin 2003).

### 3.3 Sampling

This study targeted all stakeholders of the master plan including landholders in the selected wards and key informants in public and private organisations. Both probability and non-probability sampling were deployed. Probability sampling involved random sampling, whereby every household had an equal chance of being selected during the households' interview to avoid bias. The estimation of the sample considered a number of households in the two wards as per the Tanzania National Census of 2012<sup>2</sup>. Statistical computation of the sample used Yamane (1967) formula;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} \quad (1)$$

The number of households was used to estimate sample size because the household heads were the ones expected to attend public hearings and be involved in the decision-making process. According to the Tanzania Census of 2012 Madukani and Msalato had a total of 563 and 1,493 households respectively which were used to compute the sample size. A total of 94 and 127 households were interviewed at the Madukani and Msalato wards respectively.

A random sampling was deployed whereby household heads were interviewed based on their availability and readiness to be interviewed. The exercise was conducted with the help of the Mtaa Chairpersons and Mtaa Council members. The use

of these local leaders fast-tracked the exercise because they were key players in introducing the principal and assistant researchers to the household heads. Also, their presence made the interviewees relax, feel secure, and cooperate.

Non-probability sampling involved only purposively selected officials based on established roles and expertise (Guetterman 2015; Patton 1990). Purposive sampling involved the selection of officials at the City Council of Dodoma (CCD), Task force team members, the private sector, the President Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements (MLHHS), the Regional Town Planning Office (RTPO), Wards Councillors, and Ward and Mtaa/street chairpersons.

The CCD officials were selected because they are custodians of all urban developments in the city (planning authority) while the task force members are the ones who prepared the 2019 Dodoma master plan. Officials from RTPO and MLHHS are responsible for approving the layout plans and the master plan respectively. The private sector is involved in the preparation of detailed layout plans in collaboration with the planning authority.

The Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) constitutes — Ward and Mtaa Executive Officers (WEO and MEO), Mtaa/street chairpersons, and Extension Officers. These respondents were selected because they are either elected representatives or government officials who know much about the local community's needs and priorities because they live with the local community. Therefore, a total of 262 respondents were interviewed in the following distribution: Madukani (94), Msalato (127), Officials (24), FGD participants at Madukani (8), FGD participants at Msalato (7), and Councillors (2).

Principally, the numbers of officials and FGD participants were determined by the practical experience and constraints. Obtainability and cooperation were among the important factors for successful households and key informants' interviews. Interestingly, the households, local leaders, officials at public and private institutions, and ministerial level were very cooperative. However, a few (4) officials from the CCD were reluctant to provide data. Nevertheless, the lack of cooperation of the few CCD officials did not have substantial effects because the majority cooperated.

### 3.4 Data collection

Both primary and secondary data were gathered. Secondary data were gathered via document review to enrich the topic information and discuss

sion of the findings. Likewise, primary data were collected through interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The structured questions were coded in the Kobo Toolbox to collect quantitative data from the households. The data from the households were such as age, sex, marital status, education level, employment status, land accessibility, land tenure, and needs and interests among others. Kobo Toolbox fast-tracked and simplified the data collection exercise as there was no paperwork involved. The principal researcher was even able to remotely track the ongoing data collection exercise done by the research assistant.

Besides, semi-structured questions were deployed to guide an in-depth interview with the key informants. The qualitative data gathered were such as the needs and interests of the landholders/households, the CCD, and central government; harmonisation process of needs and interests; and the decision-making process. The researcher used a Tape recorder to record everything said by the respondents, which later was transcribed to get its meaning and implications for this study.

On the one hand, the validity was ensured by gathering both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data from key informants and quantitative data from the households were then compared based on the convergence and divergence. This is in line with Creswell's note (2017) that integrating qualitative and quantitative data is a way of checking the validity of the data collected. Likewise, the validity of the study was guaranteed by asking the same questions to the respondents of the same characteristics. For instance, the same questions were asked to the households in the two wards and officials from different institutions and then compared the responses. The high rate of similarities or discrepancies among the interviewees was used as a good test of data validity.

The reliability of data was ensured by independent collection of data from the two subcases of the Madukani and Msalato wards. The sample sizes (the number of households) from the two wards were estimated separately and data was collected and analysed individually and compared. Equally, the use of multiple data collection methods such as document review, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions were used to ensure the reliability of the data collected. Data from the households, local leaders, officials in public and private institutions, and ministries were triangulated to check the convergence and divergence of the information. Triangulation of information from diverse respondents guaranteed data validity and reliability.

### 3.5 Data analysis and presentation

Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis whereby different explanations, facts, and concepts were identified, extracted, and organised based on their meaning and relevance to the study. Data was coded and organised manually using a thematic approach. The themes (variables) such as needs and interests, harmonisation of needs and interests, and decision-making process were categorised separately in the matrix table after being transcribed from the recorded audio. The analysis focused on the convergence and divergence arguments of the diverse interviewees.

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages. The descriptive statistics were computed by using SPSS<sup>3</sup> software. The discussion was done by linking between findings and other scholars who wrote about similar studies in the world to send a message to the readers about stakeholder participation and harmonisation of needs and interests in master planning and implementation processes. Further, information was presented in the form of text, tables, figures, and plates. The next chapter reports the findings of the study.

## 4 Results

This section discusses the findings gathered from the diverse stakeholders in CCD, such as households, local leaders, key informants in public and private sectors, and ministries. The data was gathered through interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and document review. The major aim of the study was to assess whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan reflects the needs and interests of the local communities. Specifically, the study analyses the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, maps the land uses proposed at the Madukani and Msalato wards, identifies the needs and interests of the local communities in the two subcases, evaluates the harmonization process of conflicting needs and interests, and assesses decision-making in the planning process.

### 4.1 Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents

The structured questionnaire coded in the Kobo Toolbox was used to gather demographic and socioeconomic data at the Madukani and Msalato wards. The demographic and socioeconomic data

gathered were such as age, sex, marital status, education level, employment status, land accessibility and tenure. [Table 1](#) shows that 52 % of interviewed households at the Madukani and Msalato wards were male whereas about 74 % of households were married and living with their families. Males were the household heads and the family decision-makers. Again, 77.8 % were aged from 18-57 years. This population implies that most household heads were youth, adults, and fall under a working age. Moreover, 72.4 % of households fall under un-schooled and primary school level of education which signifies that the majority had a low level of education. The low level of education signifies the need for extensive awareness and education campaigns on master planning and implementation processes. Again, 78.7 % were self-employed in the informal sector. These findings imply that setting time for public hearings had to reflect the nature livelihood source. Furthermore, 49.8 % accessed land through inheritance from family members while 45.7 % accessed through buying from the landholders. This implies that more than 95.5 % of land belongs to individuals. The nature of land accessibility and ownership requires technocrats to make sure of consensus building with the landholders before the designation of zoning regulations.

#### 4.2 Land uses proposed by the master plan in the study areas

The land uses proposed by the master plan in study areas were gathered through document review. The 2019 Dodoma master plan report and the technical supplements were reviewed and land uses proposed at Madukani and Msalato wards were extracted. It was revealed that the land uses designated at Madukani ward were commercial, institutions, commercial/ residential, and park/nature reserve. The objectives of the master plan were to revitalise the deteriorating physical infrastructure at the Central Business District (CBD). To fulfill the target, the 2019 redevelopment plan was prepared alongside the master plan to guide the process. Among other targets, the redevelopment plan emphasizes increasing high density and optimizing land value and facilities. The plan proposed the development of a commercial spine (high-rise building development). Among the major development conditions are for developers to construct high-rise buildings up to twenty-five (25) floors ([Fig. 2](#)). On the other hand, the land uses proposed at Msalato ward include residential (existing unplanned settlements), a Special Economic Zone

(SEZ), institutions, a light railway, and Msalato International Airport. The largest part of Msalato is dominated by institutions such as the Prison, Tanzania Peoples Defense Force (TPDF), and Airport which are the results of the implementation of the current and previous master plans.

Based on the findings the land uses proposed by the CCD and Taskforce in the master plan targeted vertical development and mixed land uses at Madukani ward while industrial, institutions, and infrastructures including the International Airport (national strategic project) and light railway at Msalato ward. The land uses were designated to serve the national capital city functions.

#### 4.3 Needs and interests of the local community in the study areas

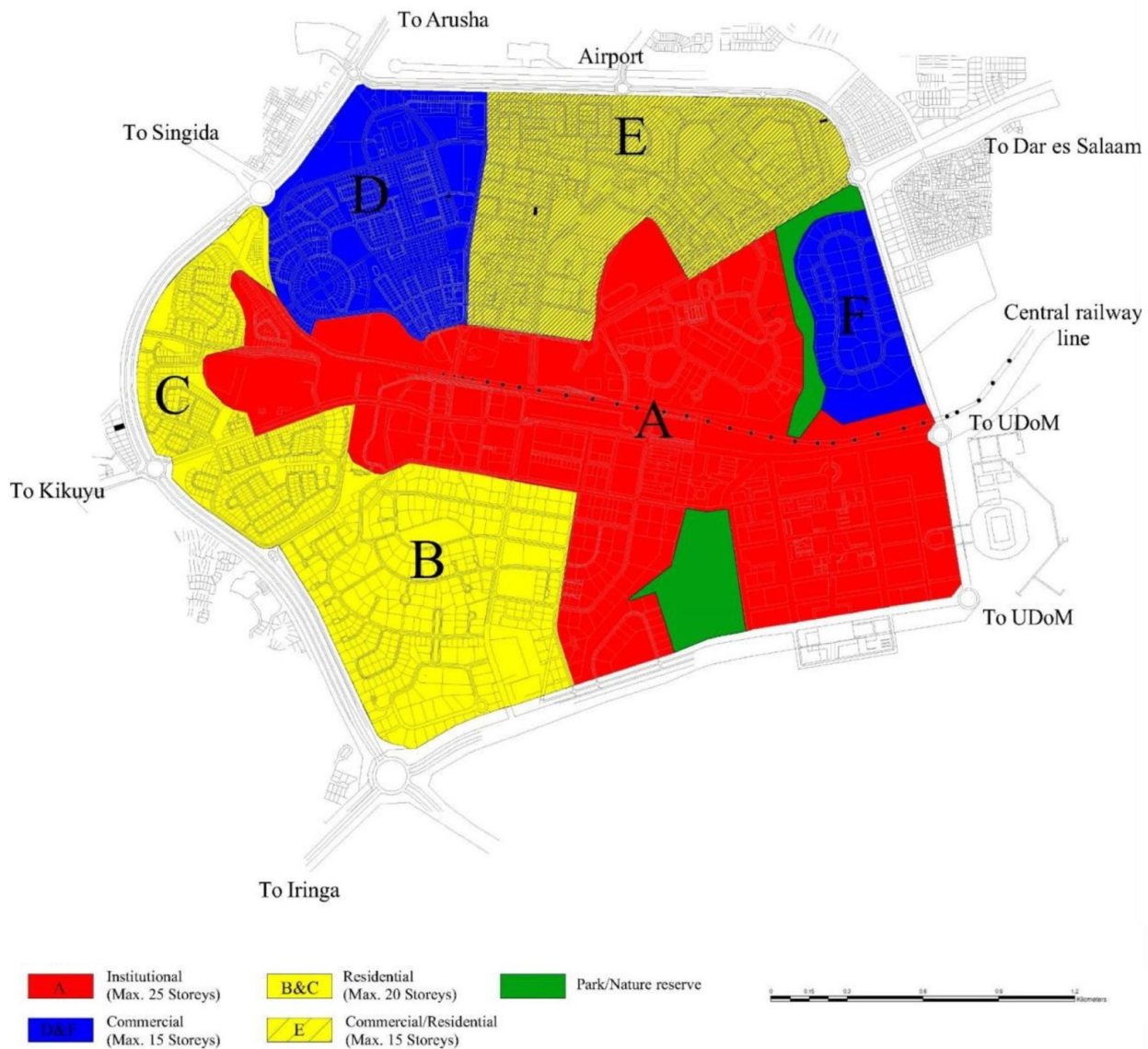
The households at Madukani and Msalato wards were asked about the requirements they proposed to be considered in the 2019 Dodoma master plan. Multiple responses structured questions coded in the Kobo Toolbox were used. The responses were then clustered by considering the variables with the highest score. The results showed that all households in Madukani and Msalato wards were interested in remaining with plots/land and securing land tenure ([Table 2](#)). The interests of tenure security posed by the households were supported by Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and councilors at Madukani and Msalato wards.

The landholders, FGD, and councilors were interested in being intact with their land because the land is a source of their livelihood and a place for their shelter. They were not interested in being displaced from their land unless there were public interests whereby legal procedures including paying compensation and an extensive education would be executed. The interests of households and the ward leaders were in line with [Table 1](#), whereby about 50 % of land accessibility was through inheritance from family, followed by 45 % bought customarily from the landholders. This incident made the landholders have a strong bond to their land. Generally, the primary interests of the local communities were planning for them to stay.

[Table 2](#) shows that the needs and interests raised by landholders at study areas differed from the land uses and zoning regulations proposed in the master plan ([Fig. 2](#) and [Fig. 3](#)). While the local community wanted to remain with their land and secure tenure, the CCD, task force, and central government interests were centered on proposing land for the construction of strategic projects, revitalising the CBD

**Table 1** The demographic and socioeconomic information of the households at the Madukani and Msalato wards (Field work survey 2023)

Respondent characteristics	Madukani Frequency=94	Percentage (%)	Msalato Frequency=127	Percentages (%)	Overall (%)
<b>Age</b>					
18-27	5	5.3	8	6.3	5.9
28-37	14	14.9	16	12.6	13.6
38-47	21	22.3	52	41	33
48-57	23	24.5	33	26	25.3
58-67	24	25.5	12	9.4	16.3
68 and above	7	7.5	6	4.7	5.9
Total	94	100	127	100	100
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	66	70.2	49	38.6	52
Female	28	29.8	78	61.4	48
Total	94	100	127	100	100
<b>Marital status</b>					
Divorced	4	4.3	3	2.4	3.2
Married	65	69.1	98	77.2	73.7
Single	14	14.9	9	7	10.4
Widows	11	11.7	17	13.4	12.7
Total	94	100	127	100	100
<b>Level of education</b>					
Unschooling	3	3.1	22	17.2	11.3
Primary school	53	56.4	82	64.6	61.1
Ordinary secondary	26	27.7	16	12.6	19
Advance secondary school	5	5.3	1	0.8	2.7
Certificate	1	1.1	1	0.8	0.9
Diploma	1	1.1	2	1.6	1.4
Degree	5	5.3	3	2.4	3.6
Total	94	100	127	100	100
<b>Employment status</b>					
Self-employment	70	74.4	104	81.9	78.7
Employed	4	4.3	6	4.7	4.5
Unemployed	20	21.3	14	11	15.4
Both self employed_employed	-	-	3	2.4	1.4
Total	94	100	127	100	100
<b>Land tenure</b>					
Title deeds	70	74.5	20	15.7	40.7
Letter of offer	24	25.5	0	0	10.9
Without documents	0	0	107	84.3	48.4
Total	94	100	127	100	100
<b>Land accessibility</b>					
Inheritance from family	67	71.3	43	33.9	49.8
Buying from landholders	18	19.1	83	65.4	45.7
Government allocation	9	9.6	1	0.7	4.5
Total	94	100	127	100	
<b>Land use</b>					
Commercial/Residential	55	58.5	3	2.3	26.2
Commercial	24	25.5	1	0.8	11.3
Residential	15	16	112	88.2	57.5
Others (religious, petrol station, education, industrial)	-	-	11	8.7	5
Total	94	100	127	100	100



**Fig. 2** The redevelopment plan at Madukani ward

area, effective utilisation of land, orderly, aesthetic, and beauty of the city.

The other pressing issues reported at Madukani ward; landholders and FGD members wanted to construct and rehabilitate their low-rise buildings which were contrary to the 2019 redevelopment plan. The 2019 redevelopment plan requires all developers to construct high-rise buildings. Unfortunately, most landholders were financially feeble to comply with the zoning regulations. Regardless of whether most of the landholders were economically poor; the CCD officials were reported to restrict the developers from constructing new

low-rise buildings. Nevertheless, it was argued by the FGD participants and key informants that restricting without critical consideration of the landholder’s economic status was wrong. The FGD participants emphasised that; they were not against the plan, but the critical question was how a financially poor landholder manages to construct a high-rise building.

On the other hand, land designated for SEZ was previously used for urban agriculture and partly for residential. Inappropriately, there was no compensation paid to the landholders as required by the Land Act No. 4 of 1999. This situation

**Table 2** The needs and interests of households at the Madukani and Msalato wards (Field work survey 2023)

Ward	Needs and interests	Frequency (N)	(%)
Madukani	Remaining with plots/land and securing land tenure	94	100
	Rehabilitating and constructing low rise houses	92	97.9
	Provision of education about master planning and implementation	90	95.7
	Enhanced information dissemination and transparency	93	98.9
	Proper timing schedule of public hearings	85	90.4
Msalato	Remaining with plots/land and securing land tenure	127	100
	Accommodation of urban agriculture in the master plan	119	93.7
	Access to commercial and social services	103	81.1
	Provision of education about master planning and implementation	126	99.2
	Enhanced information dissemination and transparency	124	97.6
	Budget allocation for land compensation	122	96.1



**Fig. 3** A collapsed house and a house constructed by traditional building materials at the Madukani ward

led to complaints from the landholders because the CCD stopped them from developing before compensation was paid. The actions were against the land law which requires compensation to be paid not more than six months from when the land was seized. The law further stipulates that compensation should be full, fair, and prompt; however, it was not abided by the CCD officials. The FGD participants and Msalato ward councilor added that there was no negotiation, orientation, or mutual understanding on the modality of developing land uses proposed which left landholders in dilemma. The findings suggest that there were dissimilarities in needs and interests between the local communities and the technocrats. The local community members paid much attention to individual interests (tenure security) while the CCD and central government were after public interests (attaining a sustainable city). Promoting sustainable develop-

ment was proved by the designation of land uses that support the National Capital City functions e.g. the redevelopment plan, Airport, light railway, ring roads, and institutions. The variations in interests certainly required more discourses and consensus building between two opposing parts which unfortunately was not effectively executed. The next section elaborates in detail on how the needs and interest’s harmonisation and decision-making processes were executed.

#### 4.4 Harmonization of the needs and interests between the CCD and the local community

As it was mentioned in the previous section, the 2019 Dodoma master plan proposed the implementation of vertical development at the Madukani ward. The review of the 2019 master plan report

showed that the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) was proposed as the chief means to implement the redevelopment plan. The PPP was proposed because the landholders alone would not manage to comply with zoning regulations due to financial incapability. Unfortunately, it was reported during FGD and household interviews that the CCD was not directly involved in the PPP process; rather the process was left to landholders, Solicitors, and developers/investors only. For instance, there was no education given to the landholders and guidelines put to foster the process. This situation led to the landholders being skeptical in engaging in the PPP process given that the majority (72.4 %) of the households in Madukani ward were either unschooled or had a primary school level of education as noted in Table 1. This education level implies that they needed more education about the PPP process which was unfortunately not done by the CCD.

Despite the difficulties of achieving the prior development condition, landholders and FGD members reported that the CCD officials were withholding them from getting building permits to construct new low-rise buildings after the old ones had collapsed. The CCD officials restricted all developers regardless of whether they had the financial capacity to comply with the regulations. The practice of the CCD officials could be regarded as unrealistic, practically not achievable, and against the SGD 11. Asserting the foregoing the Mtaa Chairperson at Madukani ward said:

*“Is it proper that only rich people should stay in the city and the poor should be expelled from the city? Construction of high-rise buildings should be demand-driven instead of forcing people to comply with it while they know that it could not work. The increasing land values and need to invest in real estate at a given time will determine when the high-rise buildings will be constructed”* (Mtaa Chairperson at Madukani Ward, April 2023).

The response from the FGD insisted the CCD to create a favorable environment between landholders, developers, and financial institutions to effectively participate in the redevelopment process rather than forcing landholders to achieve the unachievable. Restricting landholders without giving them a way forward would frustrate and dismiss the urban poor who do not have the financial capacity to comply with stipulated development conditions. The inability of landholders to comply with zoning regulations was evidenced by the presence (observed) of old, fallen and poorly constructed houses at Madukani— the downtown of the city. This scenario supports the fact that the majority of landhold-

ers were financially incapable of executing the zoning regulations (Fig. 3).

Despite the challenges posed by landholders, the CCD Town Planning Officer said that the practice was not primarily to infringe the rights of landholders and developers to live and work in the CBD but rather to have a city that is well-developed compactly and vertically. The response supports that the CCD’s ambition was to have vertical development at the CBD no matter how it would affect the landholders.

It was further supported by the FGD members at Msalato that normally the CCD officials rarely take trouble to make sure that the proposed land uses and zoning regulations are understood and consensus agreed by the landholders and public. Designation of land for SEZ was also not effectively communicated to the landholders, especially how the compensation would be done, how development would be executed, and their prospects. The practices of technocrats were proved by the City Mayor, Msalato ward councilor, and Mtaa Chairperson at Msalato:

*“Land use proposals were not mutually agreed between the CCD officials and the local community because their interests were different and there were limited means to harmonize them”* (The Mayor of City Council of Dodoma, July 2023).

*“Special Economic Zone (SEZ) was not a community idea, it was proposed by the CCD and task force officials without effective communication and negotiations to the landholders”* (Msalato ward councilor, April 2023).

*“We are not aware of land use and zoning regulations earmarked at Msalato ward; we normally hear that this area is proposed for a certain use while the land belongs to landholders”* (Mtaa Chairperson at Msalato Ward, April 2023)

The interview with Madukani ward councilor (Mayor) and Msalato ward councilor coincided with landholders and the FGDs participants that the CCD officials did not effectively negotiate and communicate to landholders about the 2019 Dodoma master plan. Unlike the response from the CCD Town Planning Officer, the senior Town Planning Officer from MLHSD admitted that the approval process gave little attention to the socio-economic aspects of the local communities and the available budget. The response was also supported by officials such as RTPD, the Director of Urban Development (DUD) at PO-RALG, the Registrar of Town Planning Registration Board (TPRB), and taskforce members.

It was further noted that during public hearings much focus was given on the technical aspects such as existing land use, population growth rate, traffic

counts, technical space and standards, land market, and compatibility of land uses. Aspects such as the source of budget to implement the designated land uses, consideration of the economic status of the local community, and consideration of how the plan will affect local people were rarely foreseen by CCD and task force officials. This situation led to land use conflicts and the inability of landholders to comply with zoning regulations as observed at the Madukani and Msalato wards. Asserting the foregoing the DUD said:

*“The needs assessment was done through community meetings and questionnaires with assumptions that technocrats understood the community needs while the reality was not the case”* (The Director of Urban Development at PO-RALG, July 2023).

Table 3 shows the lack of harmonisation of needs and interests between the CCD and the households. The proposals/suggestions of 2019 were extracted from the 2019 Dodoma master plan proceeding while the status in 2023 refers to the findings

as per the households’ interview. For instance, during the public hearing at Madukani ward in 2019 the households suggested landholders be allowed to construct new low-rise buildings after the old one had collapsed. Likewise, the households at Msalato ward proposed the designation of land for urban farming after a large piece of land was expropriated for the construction of the Msalato International Airport.

However, the households’ interviews in 2023 revealed that the suggestions by the households were ineffectively dealt with by the CCD and task force officials. This situation implies that there was a lack of harmonisation and consensus building between the local communities and the CCD and task force officials during the planning and implementation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. The lack of harmonisation of the needs and interests between the CCD and the households exacerbated the lack of plan ownership and commitment toward the master plan implementation.

**Table 3** The households’ suggestions during the public hearings in 2019 at Madukani and Msalato wards (The Master Plan Proceedings of 2019)

Ward	Community proposals in 2019	Status in 2023 (During household interviews)
Madukani	The households asked for education about redevelopment plan	The households lacked education about the 2019 Dodoma master plan
	Some households asked for surveying of their land and title deeds provision	26 percent of the interviewed households did not have title deeds
	The households asked to be allowed to construct new low-rise buildings after the old ones had collapsed	The CCD officials were reported to withhold construction of low-rise buildings
Msalato	The households asked for land for urban farming	There is no land proposed for urban farming at Msalato ward in the 2019 Dodoma master plan
	The households suggested prison be reallocated as it was infringing the ward development	Prison still exist
	The households asked for consideration of public services such as primary school, dispensary and burial ground in the master plan.	The market, bus stand, and burial yard were missing

**Table 4** Responses of the households on inclusion of their ideas in the 2019 Dodoma master planning process (Field work survey May 2023)

Response	Frequency (N)		Percentage (%)	
	Madukani	Msalato	Madukani	Msalato
I was not involved in proposing land uses	41	61	43.6	48
Planners prepared it on behalf	28	41	29.8	32.3
My ideas were not incorporated	24	25	25.5	19.7
I didn’t see what was proposed	1	-	1.1	-
Total	94	127	100	100

#### 4.5 Decision-making in the master planning and implementation processes

This section discusses how decision-making in master planning and implementation processes was executed. The households at Madukani and Msalato wards were asked multiple choice questions coded in the Kobo Toolbox whether they participated in the final decision-making of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. The major question asked was whether there was an inclusive idea generation, conceptualization, planning, orientation of land uses, and consensus building on the designated land uses, and implementation strategies. These questions were asked because they are fundamental principles of stakeholder participation.

The findings in the Table 4 depict that 44 % and 48 % of households at Madukani and Msalato wards respectively did not participate in proposing land uses of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. This implies that the households did not participate fully in the idea generation, planning, orientation of land uses, and setting strategies for implementation rather technocrats dominated the process. The technocrats' domination gave a marginal chance for the inclusion of the suggestions of the households as it was evidenced in Table 3 above.

Similarly, the key informants were asked about the whole process of decision-making during the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. The question focused on idea generation, planning, decision-making, and implementation strategies. All key informants supported the households' responses that the master plan was largely prepared by the task force and the CCD officials because the plan had to do with technicalities. The lack of inclusive decision-making was further attested by a couple of statements from key informants as follows:

*"On papers, the 2019 Dodoma master plan is regarded as a product of stakeholders' inputs, especially the local community; however, the planning process was largely dominated by technocrats"* (Technical staff member of the master plan Task force, June 2023)

*"Despite the households participated in public hearings; participation was just to inform them what the government had already planned to do regarding the 2019 Dodoma master plan"* (Director of Urban Development -PO-RALG and Deputy Chairperson of the Master plan Task force, July 2023)

*"The 2019 Dodoma master plan did not pay much attention to the local knowledge because it had nothing to do with the National Capital City which*

*presents the United Republic of Tanzania to the international world"* (The City Economist, April 2023)

*"In certain situations, planners make decisions which are divorced from the socio-economic expectations of the community"* (Managing Director of Urban Planning firm based in Dodoma, May 2023)

*"Household ideas were given less consideration because they could not improve or alter the content of the plan technically done by technocrats"* (Senior Town Planning Officers at MLHHS, April 2023).

*"The resolutions during the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master were from professional convictions"* (The Mayor of City Council of Dodoma, July 2023).

The quotes from the diverse key informants above prove that the planning and decision-making processes were dominated by the CCD and Task force officials. The responses are in line with feedback from the households who said that they did not participate in proposing land uses for the 2019 Dodoma master plan. The key informants noted that even though the households participated; the inclusion of their suggestions in the final master plan was determined by its adherence to planning principles and standards.

It was further noted by the senior Town Planning Officer at the MLHHS that the technocrats prioritised technicalities because the plan was to be submitted to the MLHHS whereby among the important requirements for approval was consideration of technical aspects not local knowledge from the households. The senior officer further noted that the ministry often considers proceedings just to check for compliance with the law but not assess the incorporation of the households' suggestions.

*"Usually planners at planning authorities do not have the final say in the master planning process. The plan has to be submitted to the MLHHS for scrutiny and approval. Among the requirements for the plan to be approved is to comply with planning principles and standards, not local knowledge. This situation leads to hard integration of local knowledge into the master plan"* (Senior Town Planning Officer MLHHS, April 2023)

Based on the responses above, there was more or less no consensus building between technocrats and the landholders during the designation of various land uses and zoning regulations. The novelty of this study was that even officials at CCD, task force, the private sector, and ministries admitted the weakness of the process. This situation perhaps indicates that the task force and the CCD officials were too optimistic that the local community would comply with the proposed land uses and zoning regulations which is impractical. It could, therefore,

be regarded that the CCD and task force officials did not honestly participate in the households rather they did it just to fulfil the law.

Therefore, the domination of technocrats could be linked to the Urban Planning Act No. 8 of 2007 Section 11 (1) (2) which states that; [...] “the planning authority shall within six months of such publication prepare a draft general scheme and submit it to a meeting of all stakeholders which shall include landholders, public and private institutions, Community Based Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations in the area”. The power of law perhaps gave much mandate to decide what the plan should look like and overlooked the integration of socioeconomic aspects such as land tenure, income, education, and livelihood sources of the local community. The practices of technocrats led to disownment, lack of commitment, and unawareness of the 2019 Dodoma master plan by the local communities at the Madukani and Msalato wards. The next section discusses the findings by linking with other published pieces of literature.

## 5 Discussion

This section discusses the major findings of the study in connection to a piece of published literature. As it was mentioned earlier, the curiosity of this research paper was to assess whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan reflects the needs and interests of the local communities. Therefore, discussion dwells on specific aims namely the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, land uses proposed at the Madukani and Msalato wards, the needs and interests of the local communities in the two subcases, harmonization process of conflicting needs and interests, and the decisions making process as follows:

### 5.1 Land uses proposed in the master plan

In proposing land uses the technocrats often consider technical aspects such as a good order, sustainable development, convenience, amenity, and compatibility among others (Echendu 2023; Kaamah et al. 2023). According to the Urban Planning Act No.8 of 2007 Section 9 (1); the purpose of a General Planning Scheme (GPS) / master plan is to coordinate the sustainable development of an area that promotes health, safety, good order, amenity, convenience, general welfare, efficiency, and economy (URT 2007). The law under Section 9 (2) further states the purpose of GPS (Master Plan)

to include improvement of the land and secure suitable provision of transportation, public purposes, utilities and services, commercial, industrial, residential, recreational areas, agriculture, and reserves (ibid, 2007).

Consideration of a sustainable city could be the case in the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan. The land uses proposed by the CCD at Madukani and Msalato wards focused to ensuring the capital city is developed sustainably. For instance, the redevelopment plan proposed at Madukani was purposely to rejuvenate the old and horizontally developed CBD into vertical development. The proposal at the CBD was in line with target 11.3 of SDG No. 11 which promotes vertical development. SDG No. 11 underpins vertical development to mitigate the city sprawl and minimise the cost of infrastructure installation to the city inhabitants (U.N. Habitat 2022).

Similarly, the land uses proposed at Msalato ward such as Msalato International Airport, Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and light railway were purposely proposed to ensure the capital city is economically vibrant. The presence of the International Airport is anticipated to open the capital city to the International World as the heavy jets will directly land and take off in Dodoma. Equally, SEZ is anticipated to create employment opportunities for the people as stipulated in the Urban Planning Act No. 8 of 2007 Section 3 (c).

Despite the goodness of attaining sustainable development to city dwellers, the challenge remains in how to balance the socioeconomics of most city dwellers. As was revealed in Table 1, about 95.5 % of land belongs to individuals’ landholders, accessed through inheritance from family members and bought from the landholders. The nature of land access and ownership suggests the need for mutual understanding between landholders and the technocrats in proposing land uses. Unfortunately, technocrats did not take much trouble to ensure landowners understand the land uses and their prospects. Often, technocrats in SSA strive to attain sustainable development with limited consideration of the local communities’ needs and interests (Echendu 2023; Watson 2009b, 2013).

### 5.2 Needs and interests of the landholders vis a vis the CCD and central government

The studies by Kaamah et al. (2023), Korah et al. (2016); Mahjabeen et al. (2009); and Silverman et al. (2019) noted that the prominent need of the local communities was the tenure security. The other needs and interests include a plan that reflects

day-to-day realities (livelihood sources), provision of planning education, consideration of customary land rights, access to information, and equal representation in the decision-making process (ibid). The studies concur with the findings in the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan as all households in Madukani and Msalato wards were interested in tenure security.

However, the CCD and the central government's aspirations were in public interest. The CCD and central government desire was to ensure the capital city of Tanzania is sustainably developed; however they marginally considered land tenure, income, and livelihood aspects in the planning process. This is parallel to the study by [Echendu \(2023\)](#) whereby the Rivers State government in Nigeria was after attaining sustainable development which led to marginal inclusion of the landholders' needs and interests in the master planning process. Ineffective consideration of the needs and interests of the local communities such as tenure security and livelihood contribute to the failure of master plans in the SSA countries ([Echendu 2023](#); [Kaamah et al. 2023](#); [Watson 2009a](#)).

### 5.3 Harmonization of conflicting interests between the landholders versus the CCD

Harmonisation of interests and needs in land use planning in the SSA cities remains to be a complex and alarming phenomenon. The SSA governments have given less attention to harmonising the conflicting interests and needs in the physical planning process as a result physical development is largely dominated by informal settlements ([U.N. Habitat 2022](#)). This could be said to be the case in Dodoma as there was marginal harmonisation of needs and interests between the landholders and the CCD officials.

Despite the landholders at Madukani and Msalato wards being interested in land tenure security, the CCD proposed stringent development conditions to comply with. The zoning regulations stipulated in the 2019 Dodoma master plan marked a point of disagreement between the landholders and technocrats. Essentially, the master plan proposals were indeed good ideas since they are important to revitalize the decaying CBD, to have industrial areas for the economic development of the city, and to improve transportation services in the city. However, restricting landholders not to construct low-rise houses after the old ones had collapsed at Madukani ward was against SDG No. 11. The goal emphasises on Sustainable Cities and Communities that are inclusive, safe, and resilient. The

households' members and FGDs insisted that they were not against the 2019 master plan. However, their critical question was how they would manage to construct the high-rise buildings on their own? This remains to be a complex question to the decision makers and practitioners in the planning systems in Tanzania and SSA countries as a whole. The technocrats have been proposing redevelopment plans in CBDs without critical analysis of how they would be implemented. For instance redevelopment plans remain a challenging phenomenon especially in areas where the developers are financially incapable and the demand for housing units is still low to attract potential developers to go into the venture with landholders.

Equally, withholding landholders at Msalato to develop their land without being compensated for five years was against the Land Act No. 4 of 1999 Section 3 which requires free, fair, and prompt compensation. The failure of the CCD to pay the prompt compensation required by law made landholders' lives uncertain. This finding is in line with a study by [Halloran & Magid \(2013\)](#) that the failure of the planning system in Tanzania lies in how to transform livelihood activities such as urban farming, petty trading, and informal sectoral activities into master plans.

It is worth noting that the lack of consideration of the local community needs and interests in master planning and implementation processes in Dodoma has a historical basis since the first master plan of 1976. The master plan of 1976 applied a Garden City Concept, a Western-embedded concept to guide the city development which could not reflect the socio-economic situation of the urban poor ([Abubakar & Doan 2017](#); [Huang et al. 2018](#)). Lack of consideration of the actual situation on the ground, especially citizen livelihood led to many land uses including green areas turned into farmlands, grazing sites, and informal settlements development ([Kiduanga 2014](#); [Lupala & Lupala 2003](#)).

Despite the challenges of the previous master plans; the current Dodoma master plan of 2019 is also subjected to the same challenges of the previous master plans as the interests and needs of the local community were ineffectively considered as pointed out previously. This is in line with studies by [Nanangaya & Mushi \(2019\)](#), [Nnkya \(2007\)](#), [Yang & Nam \(2015\)](#) that many master plans are ineffectively implemented in Tanzania due to resistance from the local communities.

Moreover, the practices in the 2019 Dodoma master plan were in line with the studies by [Poku-Boansi \(2021\)](#) in [Kaamah et al. \(2023\)](#) which revealed

that 78 out of 105 homeowners' inputs in Ejisu area were not taken into account by the technocrats during the land use process. The lack of incorporation of the homeowners' needs and interests led to failure of the plan adherence by the homeowners (Kaamah et al. 2023). Therefore, the lack of harmonisation of needs and interests during the 2019 Dodoma master planning process contrasts with the Collaborative Planning Theory which vows mutual understanding and respect of ideas of all participants during the discourse arenas (Lin 2022; Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger 1998). This incident of ineffectively valuing the concerns of the local community by the CCD and task force officials could be regarded as professional arrogance footed into imposed top-down planning mindsets.

#### 5.4 Decision-making in the master planning process

Despite the adaptation of the participatory planning approach in the SSA planning systems, the planning processes are meaningless, dishonest, and lack inclusive decision-making (Echendu 2023; Kaamah et al. 2023). The technocrats in the SSA countries often dominate the planning process (Ariti et al. 2018; Echendu 2023). The technocrats value the Western imposed planning principles and standards at the expense of the local community needs and interests e.g. land tenure and livelihoods (Ariti et al. 2018; Echendu 2023; Watson 2013).

Despite the legal frameworks supporting stakeholders' participation, the power is largely vested in technocrats to decide the land uses and zoning regulations (Kaamah et al. 2023). It is a matter of fact that town planners are elites of urban planning matters and able to decide technical issues especially how the city would look like. However, effective implementation of the land use plans depends on meaningful and honest negotiations, communication, orientation, mutual understanding, and inclusive decision-making (Echendu 2023; Lin 2022).

Basically, the land is a source of the local communities' livelihood and shelter. As noted in Table 1, 95.5 % of households in Madukani and Msalato wards accessed land through inheritance from family members and buying from the landholders. This incident shows that a large part of city land is individually owned and accessed through individual initiative which increases the households' attachment to their land. This also supports their need to remain with land and secure tenure as shown in Table 2. Therefore, proposing land/uses without consensus and mutual understanding between the two con-

flicting interest groups obviously would lead to conflicts and misunderstandings.

Surprisingly, regardless of the effects that would happen due to ineffective stakeholder participation, the CCD and task force officials marginally strived for inclusive decision-making in proposing land uses and zoning regulations. Shockingly, the majority of households and the local leaders in both wards were completely illiterate about the master plan which marked a serious concern of lack of inclusive planning and decision-making.

The practices in the 2019 Dodoma master planning were contrary to the Sherry Arnstein Model and Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory (CCPT) which underpins citizen control, power balance, and effective communication in the planning process. It is novel that the lack of consensus building in decision-making between technocrats and the local community was also supported by many officials in the CCD, public and private sectors, and ministries.

The domination of the technocrats in decision-making led to a lack of awareness, ownership, and commitment to implement the master plan. These practices were contrary to the study by U.N. Habitat (2018) that underpins the effective participation of different stakeholders. Effective participation of the local community increases the chance of master plan acceptability, feeling of ownership, and implementation (Echendu 2023). Marginalisation of socioeconomic aspects could be said to be the case in the 2019 Dodoma master.

Supremacy of the technocrats in the preparation of the 2019 Dodoma master plan was likely linked with technical know-how and power mandated in the Urban Planning Act No. 8 of 2007 Section 11(2) and 12 (2) which give mandate planning authority to prepare a draft master plan and then submit to the public hearing. Due to this power in law perhaps it was inappropriately used by the technocrats to deny suggestions proposed by the households during public hearings as shown in Table 3. Often, the technocrats neglect community interests because they think that the community's ideas are non-technical to influence the quality of decision-making which is a wrong conception (Echendu 2023; Ostad-Ali-Askari et al. 2021).

Generally, the way community members can be affected by land use proposals was ineffectively anticipated in both wards. This situation is in line with the studies by Echendu (2023) and Watson (2013) that planning systems in SSA are concerned with attaining fantasy cities. The technocrats bother on 'good city' without considering that the majority of Africans are poor and depend on the infor-

mal sector as a source of livelihoods (Watson 2009a, 2013). This is in line with the findings in Dodoma whereby the technocrats did not honestly bow down and accommodate the proposals of the households proposed in the public hearings. The lack of mutual decision-making is among the prominent factors that contribute to the failure of the master plans in SSA because the planning systems largely operate in contrast to the desires of the majority of local communities (Huang et al. 2018; U.N. Habitat 2022).

## 6 Conclusions

The inquisitiveness of this study was centered on analysing whether the 2019 Dodoma master plan reflects the needs and interests of the local community. Accordingly, this study first analysed the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents at the Madukani and Msalato wards. Second, mapped the land uses proposed in the 2019 Dodoma master plan. Third, the study identified the needs and interests of the local community at the Madukani and Msalato wards. Fourth, the study evaluated the harmonisation process of needs and interests. Last but not least, the study analysed how the final decision-making process was reached. The study deployed a mixed research approach and case study strategy. Interviews, FGDs, and Document reviews were the chief methods for data collection.

Generally, the findings indicate that the 2019 Dodoma master plan was hypothetically prepared in the participatory approach though in actual sense the plan was largely prepared by the technocrats. The master planning process was associated with the marginal harmonisation of conflicting needs and interests between the local community and the CCD and Taskforce officials. Legitimizations of resolutions were largely done from a professional conviction which led to the local community at Madukani and Msalato wards to disown and lack commitment towards the master plan implementation. This was evidenced by shelving the suggestions of the households given during the public hearings in 2019. The socio-economic, land tenure and livelihood aspects of the local communities were marginally considered despite the informal sector employing 79 % of the households interviewed at Madukani and Msalato wards.

Moreover, the participation practices in Dodoma fall under either No participation (Manipulation/Therapy) or Tokenism (Informing/Consultation) of the Sherry Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Participa-

tion given the fact that the majority did not participate, and views of the few local community participated were ineffectively accommodated in the final master plan. Again, the participation process ineffectively adhered to Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory as there was ineffective communication, the ideas of the local community were not respected, and lack of consensus building between the local community and the CCD officials.

This research paper is significant to policymakers and practitioners to prepare policies that will ensure effective inclusion and consensus decision-making in land use planning for all stakeholders, especially the local communities. Alike, this research paper is a wake-up call to the local community to decolonize the planning system which jeopardizes their needs and interests in land use planning and implementation processes.

Therefore, the study recommends effective harmonisation of conflicting interests and consensus buildings in decision-making between the local communities and the CCD officials in the master planning process. Technocrats should make sure the local communities understand how the plan will affect them whether positively or negatively rather than surprising them during the implementation stage. The planning systems in SSA are argued to change their mindsets from dictating to facilitative planning to ensure the master plans have an impact on society (Koyoo 2024; Korah et al. 2016).

In a similar view, since the majority of households and the local leaders disowned the master plan, the study suggests stakeholder participation to be a continuous process rather than being done as a one-time event. Given that the majority (72.4 %) of households at Madukani and Msalato wards fall under unschooled and primary school level of education; the CCD is argued to conduct extensive education and awareness campaigns to enhance the understanding of the master plan to the households. This could be achieved through capacity building of the grassroots leaders by the CCD to ensure the master plan agenda is a part of the quarterly meetings. Integrating the master plan agenda at the grassroots level is anticipated to increase awareness and ownership of the master plan among the local community members.

Nevertheless, the study was limited to two wards out of the 41 in the CCD which might have excluded insights of the households from the remaining ones. However, the biases were counterbalanced by the inclusion of the multiple stakeholders from the grassroots level, public and private sectors, and ministries. Furthermore, the study

suggests a comparative study to evaluate the local community participation in master planning and implementation processes in other cities of Tanzania. The comparative study will gauge how the needs and interests have been incorporated into the master plans.

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Capital Development Authority (CDA) is a government agency mandated to manage all urban development activities of the National Capital City. It operated for more than forty (40) years (1973-2017); it was dissolved by the president due to inefficiency in managing the high rate of urbanization of the city, especially the inability to supply planned and surveyed plots due to influx of people and institutions as a result of the shift of the government city from Dar-es-salaam to Dodoma.

<sup>2</sup> The 2012 census was used because the 2022 new census results were not yet published by the government.

<sup>3</sup> Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

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