



**NATIONAL CRIME RESEARCH CENTRE**

*Fighting Crime through Research*



**A RAPID ASSESSMENT STUDY ON URBAN AND PERI-URBAN  
RESIDENTIAL HOUSING-RELATED CRIMES/OFFENCES IN  
NAIROBI, MOMBASA AND KISUMU CITIES IN KENYA**

**SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.0 Summary of Major Findings.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1 Types and prevalence of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.2 Perpetrators and Victims of Urban and Peri-urban Residential Housing-related Crimes/offences .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.2.1 Perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.2.2 Victims of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.3 Modus Operandi of perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.4 Factors Contributing to Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.5 Consequences of Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.6 Perceptions on Effectiveness of Measures and Institutions involved in addressing Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.7 Challenges Faced and Possible Solutions for Addressing Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.8 Key Recommendations .....</b>	<b>17</b>

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.0 Introduction

Residential housing forms an important part of the Government's key agenda on "Affordable Housing" in the Big Four Agenda. Housing is given emphasis by a number of instruments, key among them the Kenya Constitution 2010 which explicitly recognizes the rights of all citizens to accessible and adequate housing and to reasonable standards of sanitation, and the Kenya Vision 2030 development which blueprint seeks to transform Kenya into a middle-income country, providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment. The latter instrument prioritizes the annual production of 200,000 housing units and installation of physical and social infrastructure in slums in 20 urban areas as a key flagship project.

The delivery of the housing agenda has not been spared by the problem of crimes/offences. Incidents of residential housing-related crimes continue to be reported in the country and especially in the urban areas and their close surroundings- (that is, the peri-urban areas). If not strategically and evidentially addressed, this trend has the potential to negatively affect the Government's plans and commitments in the housing sector. It was against this background that the National Crime Research Centre undertook the rapid assessment study whose main objective was to examine urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu Cities in Kenya with a view to informing relevant policy planning, formulation and programming. The specific objectives were to: establish the types and prevalence of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences; identify the victims and perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences; examine the modus operandi (modes of operation) of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences; examine the factors contributing to urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences; appraise the consequences of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences; ascertain the measures that have been put in place to address urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences; and identify the challenges faced and possible solutions for addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences.

The study was carried out in: Kibra, Kamukunji, Langata, Makadara sub-counties of Nairobi County; Kisauni and Nyali Sub-counties of Mombasa County; and Seme and Kisumu East Sub-counties of Kisumu County. Purposive sampling and random sampling were used to select the Sub-counties and household respondents. To complement the data from sampled respondents, key informants drawn from different sectors were also involved in the study. Data was collected using interview schedules and key informant interview guides. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 24 while qualitative data from key informant interviews and semi-structured interviews were analyzed thematically. A total of 581 sample respondents were interviewed. The key informants were drawn from the relevant agencies with a mandate related to the subject of the study.

## 2.0 Summary of Major Findings

Findings reported by at least 1 out of 10 sample respondents are captured in all the sections that follow.

### 2.1 Types and prevalence of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences

Information on the types and prevalence of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences is captured in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Types and prevalence of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Specific type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Responses in percentage		
			Nairobi	Mombasa	Kisumu
Crimes/offences related to purchase of land for construction	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of the land for sale/purchase in this locality	False advertisement	60.7	60.9	33.3
		Advertisement of grabbed land	37.5	43.5	66.7
	Crimes/offences related to payments for the land for sale/purchase	Multiple sale of land	41.7	73.5	81.3
		Obtaining by false pretence	33.3	23.5	12.5
Falsified payments		25.0	2.9	6.3	
Crimes/offences related to actual construction of residential houses	Crimes/offences related to house drawings/ designs	Absence of designs	52.8	100.0	-
		Unregistered architectures	27.8	-	100.0
		Unqualified professionals	13.9	-	-
	Crimes/offences related to permits and/or approvals of construction works	Forgery of stamps	70.0	-	100.0
		Unregistered architectures approvals	26.7	66.7	-
		Missing approvals and permits	6.7	33.3	-
	Crimes/offences related to materials for construction	Substandard materials	57.1	7.4	-
		Theft of materials	50.0	92.6	100.0
	Crimes/offences related to expertise of the constructors/builders	Unqualified professionals	82.1	88.9	100.0
Poor workmanship		17.9	11.1	-	

General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Specific type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Responses in percentage		
			Nairobi	Mombasa	Kisumu
	Crimes/offences related to actual site construction works/activities	Vandalism and/or stealing of construction materials	90.0	-	-
Crimes/offences related to sale/purchase of residential houses	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of the houses for sale	False advertisements	63.6	53.3	100.0
		Obtaining by false pretence	27.3	40.0	-
		Multiple/repeat advertisement of already sold houses to unsuspecting customers	13.6	6.7	-
	Crimes/offences related to payments of the houses for sale/purchase	Obtaining by false pretence	41.7	5.9	-
		Double payments	33.3	88.2	50.0
		Swindling	25.0	5.9	50.0
Crimes/offences related to leasing/renting of residential	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of houses to let	Fake advertisement	91.8	100.0	100.0
		Obtaining by false pretence	70.7	50.0	41.7
	Crimes/offences related to payments for houses to let	Tenants refusing to pay rent	26.8	50.0	58.3
Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	Irregular water supply and manipulation	47.7	38.4	28.6
		Artificial frequent shortage	27.1	52.3	14.3
		Illegal connection and supply	20.0	5.8	14.3
		Supply of unsafe and/or contaminated water	9.7	3.5	42.9
Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	Illegal connections and theft of electricity supply-related items	89.2	38.8	100.0
		Exaggerated electricity bills	10.8	61.2	-
Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	Illegal dumping of waste	73.2	75.6	78.3
		Vandalizing and/or blocking of sewerage lines	28.5	22.2	21.7

General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Specific type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Responses in percentage		
			Nairobi	Mombasa	Kisumu
Crimes/offences related to maintenance of residential houses	Crimes/offences in relation to maintenance of residential houses	Theft of house maintenance items	50.0	57.1	-
		Extortion during maintenance work	50.0	42.9	-

## 2.2 Perpetrators and Victims of Urban and Peri-urban Residential Housing-related Crimes/offences

### 2.2.1 Perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences

The major perpetrators are as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Perpetrators of crime/offences related to sale/purchase of land for construction**

General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Perpetrator	Percentage
Crimes/offences related to purchase of land for construction	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of the land for sale/purchase in this locality	Real estate /house owners	31.7
		Brokers and Cons	24.6
		House agents and caretakers	17.4
		Government officers	11.4
		General public	11.4
	Crimes/offences related to payments for the land for sale/purchase	Brokers and cons	26.7
		house owners	24.4
		House / Real estate agents	20.7
		Min of land officers	11.1
		Financial institutions	9.6
Crimes/offences related to actual construction of residential houses	Crimes/offences related to house drawings/ designs	County government officials	43.8
		Engineers, Land developers and contractors	32.4
		Surveyors and physical planners	20.0
		Public works officials	12.4

<b>General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Perpetrator</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	Crimes/offences related to permits and/or approvals of construction works	County government	65.9
		Public works officials	21.7
	Crimes/offences related to materials for construction	Engineers, Land developers and contractors	53.3
		Builders and constructors (Casual labourers)	16.7
		Suppliers (timbers yards and hardware)	15.3
		Youths	12.7
	Crimes/offences related to expertise of the constructors/builders	Contractors	74.3
		Owners of construction site	12.4
	Crimes/offences related to actual site construction works/activities	Engineers, Land developers and contractors	57.8
		Casuals	15.7
		Government officials	12.0
		Owners of construction site	9.6
Crimes/offences related to sale/purchase of residential houses	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of the houses for sale	House agents/ Real estate agents	<b>59.0</b>
		House owners and land owners	<b>15.4</b>
		Government officials	<b>14.1</b>
		Local leaders / Village elders	<b>11.5</b>
		Local residents	<b>10.3</b>
	Crimes/offences related to payments of the houses for sale/purchase	Real estate firms and house owners	<b>36.4</b>
		Financial institutions	<b>19.5</b>
		House agents/ Real estate agents	<b>15.6</b>
		Local leaders/Village elders	<b>13.0</b>
Government officials		<b>10.4</b>	



<b>General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Perpetrator</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Crimes/offences related to leasing/renting of residential	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of houses to let	House agents/ Real estate agents	51.6
		Landlords	28.8
		Caretakers	25.5
		Brokers	15.7
	Crimes/offences related to payments for houses to let	Landlords	41.5
		House agents/ Real estate agents	40.0
		Caretakers	17.5
		Tenants	14.5
Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	County water supplies	75.9
		Water boozers' operatives	14.3
		Cartels	9.8
Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	KPLC	68.9
		Landlords and house owners	15.1
		Members of public	10.5
Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	Members of public	38.1
		County governments officials	31.8
		NEMA officials	11.8
		County sewerage companies	11.1
		Landlords	10.7
		Tenants	9.7
Crimes/offences related to maintenance of residential houses	Crimes/offences in relation to maintenance of residential houses	Landlords	70.2
		County Governments Officials	14.5

## **2.2.2 Victims of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

### **2.2.2.1 Levels of victimization in urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

The study went further to inquire if the sample respondents had been victims of any of the urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences. The results were as presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Proportion of sample respondent confirming that they have been victims of different urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

Type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Percentage
Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	52.9
Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	50.2
Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	37.4
Crimes/offences related to payments for houses to let	26.2
Crimes/offences related to maintenance of residential houses	19.5
Crimes/offences related to advertisements of houses to let	14.8
Crimes/offences related to payments for the land for sale/purchase	8.7
Crimes/offences related to materials for construction	8.4
Crimes/offences related to permits and/or approvals of construction works	8.0
Crimes/offences related to actual site construction works/activities	5.7
Crimes/offences related to expertise of the constructors/builders	5.6
Crimes/offences related to advertisements of the land for sale/purchase	5.4
Crimes/offences related to payments of the houses for sale/Purchase	5.0
Crimes/offences related to house drawings/ designs/plans	4.4
Crimes/offences related to advertisements of the houses for sale	3.7

#### 2.2.2.2 Categories of victims of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences

Table 4 below captures categories of victims of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences

**Table 4: Categories of victims of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Victim	Percentage
Crimes/offences related to purchase of land for construction	Crimes/offences related to advertisement of land for sale/purchase	Land buyers	44.8
		Members of the public	39.5
	Crimes/offences related to payments for the land for sale/purchase	Land buyers and family	56.5
		Members of the public	24.0
		Potential investors	10.4

<b>General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Victim</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Crimes/offences related to actual construction of residential houses	Crimes/offences related to house drawings/ designs	Prospective owners/investors	45.2
		Members of the public	29.8
		Land developers	20.2
		Government officials	17.3
	Crimes/offences related to permits and/or approvals of construction	Prospective home owners	50.4
		Members of the public	22.1
		Land developers, Engineers and Contractors	16.8
		National Government Officers	15.9
	Crimes/offences related to materials for construction	Landlords/owners of residential housing	56.1
		Land developers, Engineers and Contractors	27.3
		Prospective home owners and investors	14.4
		Members of the public	13.6
	Crimes/offences related to expertise of the constructors/builders	Landlords/owners of residential housing	46.8
		Members of the public	26.6
		Land developers, Engineers and Contractors	16.5
		Prospective home owners	13.9
Crimes/offences related to actual site construction works/activities	Landlords/owners of residential housing	47.1	
	Casual labourers	15.3	
	Constructors	15.3	
	Land developers, Engineers and Contractors	12.9	
	Members of the public	10.6	
Crimes/offences related to	Crimes/offences related to	Home buyers/prospective home	59.4

General category of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Broad type of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Victim	Percentage
sale/purchase of residential houses	advertisements of the houses for sale	owners	
		Members of the public	31.3
	Crimes/offences related to payments of the houses for sale/purchase	Prospective buyers	61.2
		Members of the public	22.4
		Tenants	10.6
Crimes/offences related to leasing/renting of residential	Crimes/offences related to advertisements of houses to let	Tenants	67.2
		Members of the public	24.8
	Crimes/offences related to payments for houses to let	Tenants	75.5
		Landlords	17.6
		Members of the public	13.4
Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	Crimes/offences related to water supply in residential houses	General public	64.4
		Tenants	36.6
Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	Crimes/offences related to electricity supply in residential houses	General public	45.2
		General public	44.7
		KPLC Officers	15.1
Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	Environmental crimes/offences related to residential houses	General public	69.9
		Tenants	34.6
Crimes/offences related to maintenance of residential houses	Crimes related to maintenance of residential houses	Tenants	81.0
		General public	14.0

### 2.3 Modus Operandi of perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences

The main modes of operation of perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences were as indicated in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Modes of operation of perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

<b>Modes of operation of perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Percent age</b>
Exploiting residents because they lack knowledge(ignorance)	14.5
Illegal water connection and creation of water shortage so that the private companies can benefit	13.4
Brokers and agents putting up false advertisements along the roads to entice the potential clients	13.2
Bribing of the administrative officials/ corrupt decisions	12.9
At the site there is stealing of building materials by the workers and also there is interference of	12.5
Environmental pollution by dumping of wastes	11.1
Kenya power distributes power to few landlords then they aid them in redistributing it illegally	10.4
County water and sewerage colludes with the private garbage collectors to charge fees	9.9

## **2.4 Factors Contributing to Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences**

The main factors are captured in Table 6 below.

**Table 6: Factors contributing to urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

<b>Factors contributing to urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Lack of money/income	36.5
Greed and corruption by government officials	23.9
Unemployment	15.9
Poor planning and/or housing services	9.6

## **2.5 Consequences of Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences**

The major consequences of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences are listed in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Consequences of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

Consequences of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences	Percentage
Damage and/or loss of property (including finances)	36.6
Deaths, injuries and other health hazards	26.6
Violence, emotional and sexual abuse	9.5

## 2.6 Perceptions on Effectiveness of Measures and Institutions involved in addressing Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences

The perceptions on effectiveness of measures and institutions involved in addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences are captured in Table 8 below.

**Table 8: Perceptions on effectiveness of measures and institutions involved in addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

Measure	Agencies and their rating of effectiveness in percentage		Response in percentage on the overall rating of the measure		
			Effective	Not effective	I don't know
Demolition	National Government Executive	61.1	65.2	34.8	-
	Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning	27.8			
	National Construction Authority	8.3			
	Kenya Power and Lighting Company	2.8			
Revocation	National Government Executive	55.8	27.7	70.2	2.1
	National Construction Authority	4.7			
	National Land Commission	39.5			
Prosecution	National Government Executive	87.5	43.8	56.3	-
	Judiciary/Courts	17.6			
Records digitalization	National Government Executive		33.3	66.7	-
streetlights	National	25.0	100.0	-	-

Measure	Agencies and their rating of effectiveness in percentage		Response in percentage on the overall rating of the measure		
			Effective	Not effective	I don't know
	Government Executive				
	Non-Governmental Organizations and Donors	25.0			
	House Owners	50.0			
Slum upgrading	County Assemblies	71.4	50.0	50.0	-
	County Government Executive	28.6			
Construction/renovation of roads	National Government Executive		44.4	55.6	-
Water connection and supply	Non-Governmental Organizations and Donors	2.2	38.1	61.9	-
	County Government Executive	66.7			
	Kenya Forest Services	22.2			
	Community groups	8.9			
Drilling of boreholes	National Government Executive	40.0	50.0	50.0	-
	Kenya Forest Services	60.0			
Provision of public toilets	Non-Governmental Organizations and Donors	50.0	100.0	-	-
	County Government Executive	50.0			
Garbage collection	County Government Executive	60.7	55.2	44.8	-
	Community groups	26.2			
	Landlords	13.1			
Provision of electricity	Non-Governmental Organizations and Donors	3.7	50.0	50.0	-
	House Owners	7.4			
	Kenya Power and Lighting Company	88.9			
Controlled development	National Construction Authority	70.6	42.3	50.0	7.7
	County Government	29.4			

Measure	Agencies and their rating of effectiveness in percentage		Response in percentage on the overall rating of the measure		
			Effective	Not effective	I don't know
	Executive				
No burning of waste products/garbage	House Owners	17.4	37.9	62.1	-
	National Environmental Management Authority	78.3			
	Youths	4.3			
Community policy	Landlords	19.0	55.6	44.4	-
	Nyumba elders Kumi	71.4			
	Chiefs	9.5			
Police enforced the law/regional administration/private security guards	National Government Executive	54.8	62.9	37.1	-
	Landlords	11.9			
	Tenants	11.9			
	Chiefs	21.4			
Registration of contractors and surveyors	National Government Executive	87.5	37.5	62.5	-
	National Construction Authority	12.5			
Noise regulation	Landlords		100.0	-	-
Planning regulation	County Government Executive	23.1	33.3	66.7	-
	Local land board	76.9			
Agreement contracts	Landlords	40.0	80.0	20.0	-
	Tenants	60.0			
Verification of adverts made	House Owners		100.0	-	-

## 2.7 Challenges Faced and Possible Solutions for Addressing Urban and Peri-Urban Residential Housing-Related Crimes/Offences

### 2.7.1 Challenges faced addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences

The main challenges are as captured in Table 9 below.



**Table 9: Challenges faced in addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

<b>Challenge faced</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Corruption	28.7
Political influence and interference	12.1
Lack of cooperation with relevant authorities	12.1
Ignorance from the county government and residents	12.1
Increased population that requires massive funding for slum upgrading	11.6

### **2.7.2 Possible solutions for addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

The main possible solutions are listed in Table10 below.

**Table 10: Possible solutions for addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences**

<b>Possible solutions for addressing urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
The government to empower people with skills and knowledge to enable them handle their situations	12.3
Imposing penalties on corrupt activities	11.2
Government crackdown on rogue officials	9.6

## **2.8 Key Recommendations**

1. The Government through the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning (MoLPP) should enhance the efforts of issuance of title deeds to all demarcated lands and roll out mechanisms to conduct land adjudication for non-demarcated land throughout the Republic of Kenya.
2. It is recommended that the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning fast-tracks the process of digitizing title deeds and be rolled out in the 47 counties in Kenya.
3. The Ministry of Interior and Co-ordination of National Government and Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) to work closely in identifying the perpetrators of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences, conduct arrests and prosecution.
4. There is need for all public agencies at all levels of government which have a mandate related to residential housing to work in a multi-agency approach in enforcing relevant regulations in the housing sector in order to ensure that cases of urban and peri-urban residential housing-related crimes/offences are minimized.
5. It is recommended that all advertisements for houses on sale and/or to let are sanctioned by the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing, Urban Development and Public Works in collaboration with the Ministry responsible for ICT especially

- towards addressing false or fraudulent advertisement of non-existent houses for sale or to let. A centralise portal system for advertisement of land and/or houses on sale or let would minimize incidents of fraud in the housing sector above facilitating collection of the necessary fees and taxes.
6. Utility service providers in urban and peri-urban areas need to enhance timely supply and affordable access to the utilities towards addressing illegal connections and supplies driven by the demand which is not addressed by the official supply.
  7. The Kenya Private Sector Alliance needs to play an active role in the Government's agenda on affordable housing especially with regard to a structured public-private partnership, engagement and accountability in the delivery of residential houses in urban and peri-urban areas.
  8. There is need for enhanced sensitization of the public by relevant state and non-state actors spearheaded by the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing, Urban Development and Public Works with regard to building regulations and laws.
  9. The Environment and Land Court to expeditiously conclude land-related cases within a set time frame to address delays which may hinder the smooth delivery of residential houses.
  10. The Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning should review the Estate Agents Act, 1984 Cap 533 Laws of Kenya to ensure that there is strict regulation and punishment of Estate Agents who conspire to defraud through the sale, renting, or management of homes, lands, and buildings. Such regulations will ensure vetting; an investment guarantee fund is deposited with the Estate Agents Registration Board as a regulator before such firms are allowed to go public with land and or property sales, including advertising.

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