

**REVISITING THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN
LOCAL-LEVEL PLANNING: UNCOVERING MISSING
LINKS IN THE PRACTICES OF THE URBAN
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF SRI LANKA**

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Master of Spatial Planning, Management and Design

Department of Town & Country Planning

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master
of Spatial Planning, Management and Design

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis/dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholder engagement in local area planning began around 20th century. In Sri Lanka, stakeholder engagement became a significant factor in preparation of local area plans in 2000. Different studies have conducted globally of stakeholder engagement in local area planning but the critical analysis of literature showed that the said topic has been discussed in Sri Lankan context remained limited.

Urban Development Authority of Sri Lanka served as the prime responsible institution responsible for preparation of local area plans of the country. The current planning process involved 10 basic steps which stakeholders are involved in only two stages. Another significant gap was that the implementation stage of prepared local plans has been ignored. Only few stakeholders are involved in preparation of local plans. Therefore, there is a gap in proper identification and engagement of stakeholders.

The study aimed to revisit the Stakeholder Engagement in Local Level Planning: Uncovering Missing Links in the Practices of the Urban Development Authority of Sri Lanka. A qualitative approach was adopted with semi structured questionnaire was applied to get the perception of professionals engaging in preparation of local plans.

A situational analysis was done based on historical background, legal framework of the UDA deeply analyzing the current planning process incorporating the surveyed data. The major outcome was that there was no continuous stakeholder engagement process throughout the process.

The proposed framework institutionalized stakeholder engagement by identifying mechanisms to capture and integrate existing stakeholder concerns and perspectives within planning institutions to enhance participatory decision-making.

Promoted professional capacity enhancement and inter-departmental collaboration by recommending strategies for the optimal deployment of technical expertise across institutional divisions.

Key Words: Stakeholder Engagement , Frameworks, Development planning process, Urban Development Authority

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