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Sabrina Tan: Building a Housing Business Around Local Partners

Lhoopa combines property data, a network of local agents and contractors, and financing relationships to bring lower-cost homes to market in the Philippines. Co-founder Sabrina Tan leads its people-centred side

Sabrina Tan · President and co-founder · Lhoopa
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Housing begins with a coordination p

Affordable housing is often di as a matter of price and supply. For a family trying to buy, the path also runs through finding a suitable property, confirming its value, arranging renovation or construction, meeting lending requirements and coordinating people who may work in different parts of the market.

A PATH TO HOMEOWNERSHIP

Lhoopa is a Philippines-based property technology company built around that coordination challenge. Its model uses technology to identify and assess housing opportunities, then works with local brokers, agents, contractors and notaries to acquire, renovate or build homes. Sabrina Tan is its president and co-founder. The distinction matters: the company's current CEO and co-founder is Marc-Olivier Caillot, while Tan leads as president.

Sabrina Tan

Lhoopa's official story says the founders saw gaps in the process that made it harder for ordinary households to access homes. The company's network-based approach turns local partners into part of the operating model. This is not a pure marketplace that stops at matching a buyer and seller; the company is involved in the property pipeline and the work required to bring a unit to market.

A capital structure with a development purpose

In July 2024, Lhoopa announced US$80 million in combined equity and debt commitments. The company said the package included a US$20 million equity round co-led by the International Finance Corporation and Wavemaker Partners, alongside commitments for up to US$60 million in debt facilities from development-finance institutions and other lenders. The mix is important. Housing projects require capital tied to physical assets and delivery timelines, while software and partner operations need the company to coordinate many smaller decisions.

The US International Development Finance Corporation's project summary describes an expected development impact from a potential loan of up to US$20 million. It says the project would support acquisition, renovation and construction of approximately 6,000 affordable housing units for low-income salaried workers, and would use a technology platform to connect contractors and sellers. These are project expectations and financing commitments; they should not be described as 6,000 homes already completed.

TechCrunch's reporting on the 2024 fundraise described Lhoopa's focus on lower-cost housing and its network of local partners. The company said it planned to expand its Philippine presence, enter new markets and develop green-housing options. Those plans underline a tension in the model: expansion can increase reach, but housing is local. Land, building standards, affordability, buyer financing and construction capacity vary from place to place.

The people in the platform

Tan's background differs from that of a conventional property executive. Lhoopa's account says she studied psychology and later trained in school psychology before returning to the Philippines and working with children and families. That experience shaped her interest in the human barriers behind unequal access to opportunity. The company story frames her role around understanding people and building a model that can include local partners.

The claim should not be turned into a simple origin myth. A founder's previous profession does not automatically prove that a housing platform works. The relevant question is whether the company's process serves households reliably: how units are selected, what they cost, what financing is available, how construction quality is managed and how buyers are protected.

Lhoopa's technology is meant to support that work through data and process digitisation. Its network has to bring technology and human judgment together. Local partners may identify properties and deliver work that software alone cannot do; digital tools may help evaluate, coordinate and track those activities. The operating challenge is to make the experience dependable as the number of partners and projects grows.

GCEIP View

Sabrina Tan's leadership story sits at the intersection of housing and partnership design. Lhoopa is trying to organise a complicated supply process so more homes can reach households at lower price points. Its financing commitments and stated unit targets show ambition, while the real test remains delivery: completed homes, verified affordability, construction standards and buyer outcomes. A housing business earns trust one transaction and one household at a time.