

The case of  
**Nairobi, Kenya**  
by Winnie Mitullah

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Source: CIA factbook

## I INTRODUCTION: THE CITY

### A. THE URBAN CONTEXT

#### 1. National Overview

Urbanisation in Kenya has a long history with urban agglomeration in the form of trading centres being found along the Kenyan coast as early as the 9th Century AD (Obudho 1988: 3). However, the growth of many urban centres can be traced to the pre-independence period when they were used as centres of administrative and political control by the colonial authorities (UNCHS 1985). **Table 1.0** shows that the process of urbanisation in Kenya, which had been rapid in the 1979-1989 period, seems to be declining. The proportion of Kenyans living in urban centres<sup>1</sup> increased from 5.1 per cent in 1948 to 15.1 per cent in 1979, to 18.0 per cent in 1989 and 34.8 per cent in 2000. There are currently 194 urban centres, with 45 per cent of the urban population residing in Nairobi (GOK 1996:35; GOK 1989:74; GOK 2001).

The growth of the urban population, which has resulted from both natural population growth and rural-urban migration, has led to an increased demand for resources required to meet the consequent demand for infrastructure services (Olima 2001). Statistical analysis shows that the rank size distribution of the urban places that comprise this urban population is and will be well distributed, corresponding to what regional geographers would consider as balanced (GOK 1993:7)

The evident slowing<sup>2</sup> of growth of the urban population in Kenya opens up possibilities for social and

economic consolidation, aimed at bringing about a balance between rural and urban growth (GOK 1993:6). However, while demographic projections show that rural migration will also slow down, the position in respect of the economy has not been good. Economic growth has slowed from an average of 3.8 per cent per annum in 1986-90. It further continued to decline, from 1.8 per cent in 1998 to 1.4 per cent in 1999, -0.2 per cent in 2000 and increased marginally to 1.2 per cent in 2001 (GOK 2002). As is clear from **Table 1**, Nairobi continues to have the dominant share of the national urban population. With an urban primacy index of 2.6, Nairobi has continued to develop as a primate city in Kenya, based on the "Eleven-City Index" on urban primacy (GOK 2002:236).

#### 2 History of Nairobi<sup>3</sup>

The City of Nairobi owes its birth and growth to the Kenya Uganda Railway (KUR). The railhead reached Nairobi in May 1899 "enroute" to the present day Kisumu part of what is now Uganda. The moving of the railway headquarters from Mombasa to Nairobi by its chief engineer, Sir George Whitehouse resulted in the subsequent growth of Nairobi as a commercial and business hub of the then British East Africa protectorate (Situma 1992:167). By 1900, Nairobi had already

**Table 1: Kenya: Trends and Patterns of Urbanisation by Province, 1962 to 1999**

Province	Urban Population					Share as % of National Urban Population		Intercensal Growth Rate (%)	
	1962	1969	1979	1989	1999	1989	1999	1979-89	1989-99
Nairobi	343,500	506,286	827,775	1,324,570	2,087,668	34.1	38.9	4.7	4.5
Central	35,407	45,955	128,932	309,821	354,017	8.0	6.6	8.8	1.3
Coast	195,834	283,652	406,991	588,470	894,311	15.2	16.7	3.7	4.2
Eastern	28,746	37,965	233,316	354,359	265,280	9.1	5.0	4.2	2.9
Nyanza	28,068	43,829	207,757	352,527	423,183	9.1	7.9	5.3	1.8
Rift Valley	112,517	148,576	341,696	672,177	940,311	17.3	17.5	6.8	3.4
Western	3,939	10,645	105,743	186,049	270,503	4.8	5.1	5.6	3.7
North Eastern		63,486		90,724	125,644	2.3	2.3	3.6	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>747,651</b>	<b>1,079,908</b>	<b>2,315,696</b>	<b>3,878,697</b>	<b>5,360,917</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>

Source: GOK (2002), p235

become a large and flourishing place with the settlement consisting mainly of the railway buildings and separate areas for Europeans and Indians, the latter being mainly the labourers employed on the construction of the railway. There was practically no African Settlement. In the same year, 1900 Nairobi assumed the function it was to perform as the capital of Kenya, with the boundary of the urban centre being defined.

**Table 2: Population of Nairobi Between 1906 and 1999**

YEAR	AREA (hectares)	POPULATION	% INCREASE IN POPULATION	DENSITY (persons per hectare)
1906	1,813	11,512		6
1928	2,537	29,864	159.4	12
1931	2,537	47,919	60.5	19
1936	2,537	49,600	3.5	20
1944	2,537	108,900	119.6	43
1948	8,315	118,976	9.3	14
1963	68,945	342,764	188.1	5
1969	68,945	509,286	48.6	7
1979	68,945	827,755	62.5	12
1989	68,945	1,324,570	60.0	19
1999	68,945	2,143,254	61.8	31

Source: Compiled from Olima 2001

In 1907, Nairobi became the capital of Kenya. In 1950, it became a city. The population density in Nairobi has shown an increasing trend as **Table 2** clearly shows.

### 3. The Physical City

Nairobi<sup>4</sup> lies at the southern end of Kenya's agricultural heartland, 1.19 degrees south of the Equator and 36.59 degrees east of meridian 70. Its altitude varies between 1,600 and 1,850 metres above sea level. The climate is generally a temperate tropical climate, with cool evenings and mornings becoming distinctly cold during the rainy seasons. There are long rainy periods between April and June, while the short rains come in November and early December. There is a constant of 12 hours of daylight. Average daily temperatures

range from 29° C in the dry season to 24° C during the rest of the year.

### 4. Spatial Development of Nairobi

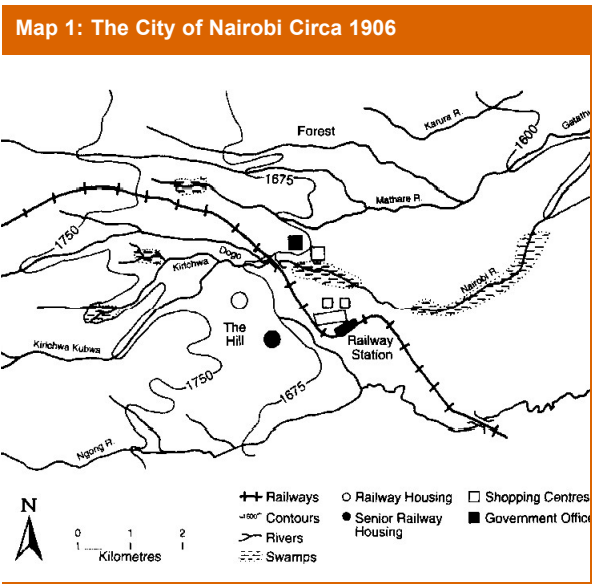
From its earliest times, emerging spatial patterns in Nairobi showed segregation between the Central Business District (CBD) and European, Asian and African residential areas. **Map 1** shows the extent of Nairobi around 1906. By 1909 much of the internal structure especially the road network was developed. The boundary of Nairobi was extended in 1927 to cover 30 square miles (77 km<sup>2</sup>) as a result mainly of the rapid growth of the urban centre both in terms of population and infrastructure.

From 1928 to 1963, this boundary remained the same with only minor additions and excisions taking place. In 1963, the boundary of Nairobi was extended to cover an area of approximately 266 square miles (686 km<sup>2</sup>). There have not been any boundary changes since then. From this early growth, the city's functions have developed and expanded such that today it has achieved an overwhelming dominance in the political, social, cultural and economic life of the people of Kenya and the whole of the Eastern Africa region.

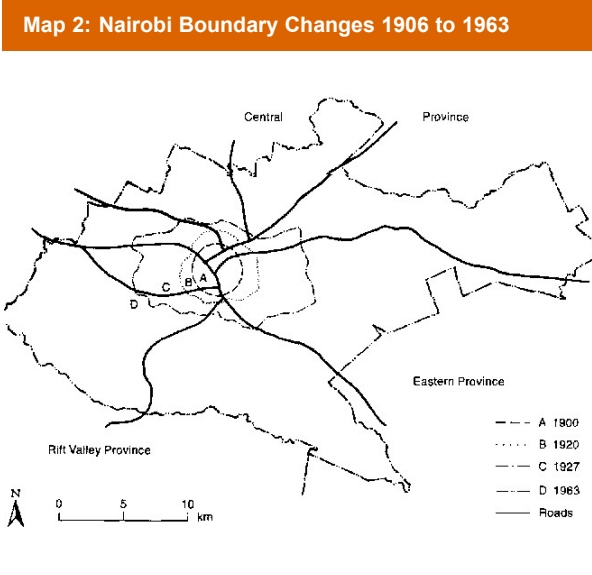
The Nairobi Municipal Committee Regulations of 1960 defined the initial boundaries for the then Nairobi town as:

*"The area within a radius of one and a half miles [about 2.25 km] from the offices of the sub-commissioner of the then Ukambani Province" (Morgan, 1967:102 in Obudho and Aduwo, 1992: 51).*

**Map 2.0** illustrates the boundary changes that took place from 1900 until 1963 after which they have not changed. The population of the town has also changed significantly. Its main sources of growth have been immigration especially from Central Province. The long distance sources have been mainly the Eastern, Nyanza and Western Provinces of Kenya (Obudho and Aduwo 1992:58). Other sources of population growth have been the boundary changes and natural growth factors.



Source: White et. al. 1948:11



Source: Obudho, R.A and G.O. Aduwo (1992:53)

By 1963 the Africans, who formed a major part of the population, lived in the eastern parts, while the Europeans and Asians lived in the western suburbs with access to better services. This position is reflected today not so much in terms of race, but rather in terms

of incomes as well as population densities. The people living in the western suburbs are generally the more affluent while the lower and middle-income elements of society dominate the eastern suburbs. Nairobi displays a complex surface structure, making it difficult to decipher the distinct land uses of the city surface. Inevitably, there are wide variations in population density reflecting different land use patterns within what Obudho and Aduwo (1988) see as six distinct and different land use divisions, namely; the Central Business District (CBD); Industrial Area; public and private open spaces; public land; residential areas; and undeveloped land. The spatially divided internal structure is based on land uses and income levels (Olima 2001).

### 5. Demographics of Nairobi

Apart from both the CBD and industrial areas which contain low population densities and a low incidence of housing Obudho and Aduwo (1988) indicated five residential areas of varying population density and social mix, also depicted in **Table 3**. These are:

- Upper Nairobi lying to the west and north of the CBD. This is an area of low density, high-income population (2-25 people per hectare in 1980) and comprises many of the former well-known expatriate residential areas such as Woodley, Kileleshwa, Kilimani, Lavington, Bernard, Thomson and Muthaiga.
- Parklands, Eastleigh and Nairobi South, an area of medium income, medium density population (30-40 people per hectare in 1980) and consists of mainly owner-occupier housing (many owned by Asians).
- Karen and Langata, to the south and south-east, are also high income, low-density residential areas, typified by large housing, gardens and paddocks. These areas are in transitional phase in that several mid-income estates often owner-occupied by civil servants are growing to absorb the population spilling from the other areas.
- Eastlands in the marginalised urban fringe to the east of and away from the CBD, is a low-income densely-populated area (50-300 people per hectare in 1980) with the core region of old NCC housing areas and new institutional housing estates (Race Course, Ngara, Shauri Moyo, Pumwani, Mathare Valley, Eastleigh, Kariobangi, Kaloleni, Bahati, Jericho, Mbotela, Dandora - bywords for urban deprivation and disadvantage) reaching densities of 200-300 people per hectare in 1980).
- Mathare Valley to the east of the city and Kibera to the west form the most famous, largest uncontrolled urban settlements in the city, reaching staggering densities of 1,250 people per hectare in 1980. The populations of these (and other areas like Korogocho and Kawangware) grew by 220% between 1969 intercensal period. They are characterised by the uncontrolled, spontaneous mushrooming of squatter settlements<sup>5</sup>

created by low-income migrants fleeing from the rapidly rising costs of living in the city but fleeing into cardboard cities along valleys close to the CBD itself. Here there are rapid shifts and movements of the population, shortages of accommodation, high rents and overcrowding. Here is to be observed the starkest interrelationship between income structures and housing and schooling opportunities and the inadequate distribution of schooling and educational opportunities despite the high profile of social demand for education in the country as a whole. It is a sharp illustration of “*subsistence urbanism*”.

**Table 3: Population Sizes and Densities in a Select Number of Areas in Nairobi**

Settlement/ Estate	Pop.	No. of households	Area (hectares)	Density (persons per hectare)
<b>Low Density or High Income Areas</b>				
Karen	9,764	3,381	2730	4
Muthaiga	6,786	1,681	1410	5
Lavington	18,966	5,815	1100	17
Loresho	15,784	5,131	950	17
<b>Medium Density or Middle Income Areas</b>				
Langata	16,118	5,051	4450	4
Highridge	46,642	13,019	4230	11
Parklands	11,456	3,369	460	25
Kitisuru	27,459	8,603	2090	13
<b>High Density or Low Income Areas</b>				
Kibera Silanga	16,518	6,281	20	826
Korogocho Gitathuru	22,899	7,415	30	763
Mukuru Nyayo	36,232	10,224	230	158
Mathare	69,003	24,525	150	460

Source: Adapted from GOK 1999: pp. xxxiii - xxxiv.

### 6. The Urban Economy of Nairobi

In Nairobi, 86.3 per cent of the people aged between 15 and 64, are economically active (GOK 2002: 210). Since independence, there has been considerable growth in wage employment in the modern sector. As illustrated in Figure 1.0, access to formal sector employment declined marginally by -0.43 per cent between 1998 and 2001. In spite of this decline, Nairobi still dominates urban formal sector employment, contributing 29.3 per cent of the active population.

However, there has been a decline in wage employment in the public sector in Kenya owing to the restruc-

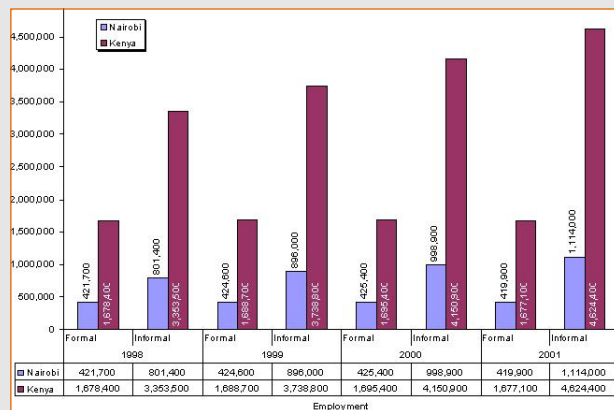
turing and privatisation programme introduced in 1990. Wage employment in Nairobi includes the following: in 1998 67,900 individuals in Nairobi’s labour force were in manufacturing industry; 39,700 in building and construction; 57,300 in trade, restaurants, and hotels; 42,200 in finance, insurance, real estate and business services; while community, social, and personal services employed 155,900 people (Government of Kenya 1999a. 48).

The livelihood of most inhabitants of Nairobi comes from informal economic activities, and formal wage employment has been decreasing, as the public sector continues to retrench its employees. The informal sector where most of the poor belong has been noted to generate more employment than the formal sector. Estimates of the size of the informal sector vary. The 2002 Economic Survey, (GOK 2002), as illustrated in **Figure 1** shows that the contribution of informal sector employment has grown by 176 per cent compared to -0.43 per cent from the formal sector.

Those with relatively little capital can accede to informal income-generating activities as the unregulated and unprotected production of goods and provision of services. Earnings from many informal sector activities in Nairobi compare favourably with those from urban unskilled or rural agricultural wage employment. The formal and informal sectors are generally thought to be symbiotic, with the vitality of the informal sector depending upon the wages and demand generated by formal sector (House, 1978). Mbogua (2000) argues that the lack of employment opportunities in the city has led to informal trading manifested in the form of haphazardly distributed kiosks some of which are licensed by the City Council but the majority of which trade without a valid license.

The most important way in which women generate income in the informal sector is through the marketing of farm and imported manufactured goods. The first category is comprised of women engaged in trade at either retail or wholesale level, mostly in the low-income

**Figure 1.0: Comparison of Formal/Informal Employment Patterns 1998 - 2001**



Source: Adapted from GOK 2002:208-212

zones. Some sell in large quantities and regulate the major supplies to urban areas. The majority engages in retail trade in small kiosks that sell consumables. Others are engaged in distributing sisal products such as ropes for making “*kiondos*,” a type of local basket. The second category comprises urban women who sell a variety of goods ranging from food and jewellery to imported new and old shoes and clothing. Such women live within low and medium-income zones in Nairobi (Mwatha 1988).

The informal sector contributes significantly to Nairobi’s economy and has strong backward linkages with commercial and public enterprises. The creation of employment opportunities in this sector is not necessarily dependent upon direct public expenditure and commitment of public investment in advance. The other advantages of the informal sector are that it uses simple technology appropriate to the resource base of the communities and that it produces jobs at lower costs. Despite the growth of this sector, unemployment is particularly widespread among young urban dwellers and women.

### 7. Governance

In terms of governance, the City of Nairobi falls under the Nairobi City Council (NCC), which is composed of elected members who form the council and the executive staff who run the day-to-day activities of the council. The Nairobi City Council is governed in its operations by a variety of legal statutes and administrative decrees from the Office of the President (OP) and the Ministry of Local Authorities (MOLA). The Local Government Act, Chapter 265 of the Laws of Kenya is the main legal statute that governs the operations of the NCC. Currently the statute is under review.

In effecting its mandate, the NCC is divided into operational departments, which are supervised by overseeing committees made up of councillors, as shown in **Figure 3**.

The full council consists of 55 elected councillors and 18 nominated councillors, giving a total number of 73 councillors in the Nairobi City Council. These councillors, for purposes of policy making and overseeing are organised into committees as is shown in **Table 4**.

The Nairobi City Council (NCC) provides a wide range of services, through the various departments shown in **Table 4**. In this role, the NCC’s efforts are augmented by a number of government agencies and private sector organisations, which are active in the process of infrastructure delivery and management as illustrated in **Figure 4**. **Figure 4** shows the partnerships and interactions between these various agencies. These partnerships have been characterised by a lack of co-ordination, and at times outright hostility in their actions. The sufferer has increasingly been the urban resident, and more so those who live in the informal settlements.

**Table 4: Committees and Departments of the City Council of Nairobi**

COMMITTEE	DEPARTMENTS
Finance, Staffing & General Purposes	Town Clerk
Education	City Treasurer’s Department
Water & Sewerage/Sanitation	Water and Sewage Department
Public Health	Educational Department
Environmental	Public Health Department
Public Works	City Engineer’s Department
City Planning	City Inspectorate Department
Social Services & Housing	City Planning Department
City Inspectorate	Social Services and housing Department
	Department of Environment
	Housing and Development
	Nairobi City Library Services

Source: Author’s construct 2002

With the advent of multipartyism and an era of more openness and transparency in the conduct of public affairs, new multi-stakeholder partnerships have evolved. Examples of these include the Nairobi Informal Settlements Co-ordinating Committee (NISCC), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF). These partnerships have evolved out of a number of concerns, namely:

- The increasing poverty in the informal settlements
- The need for increasing the resource base of local authorities
- The deteriorating housing situation in the informal settlements
- Recognition of the need to incorporate local communities in prioritising poverty reduction interventions

The partnerships have included the private and public sectors, civil society and donors in their efforts aimed at facilitating sustainable access to affordable and decent shelter for all, particularly vulnerable groups such as women and children. The principle of multi-stakeholder partnerships in addressing economic development issues has been embedded in the national planning process. Consequently, the principle is also being applied in addressing urban problems, including slums. It is still too early to make a definitive statement regarding the efficacy of these partnerships.

However, it suffices to say that one of the benefits that they have brought to the whole process has been that of expanding opportunities of residents of informal



Figure 2: The Urban Governance Framework - Nairobi City

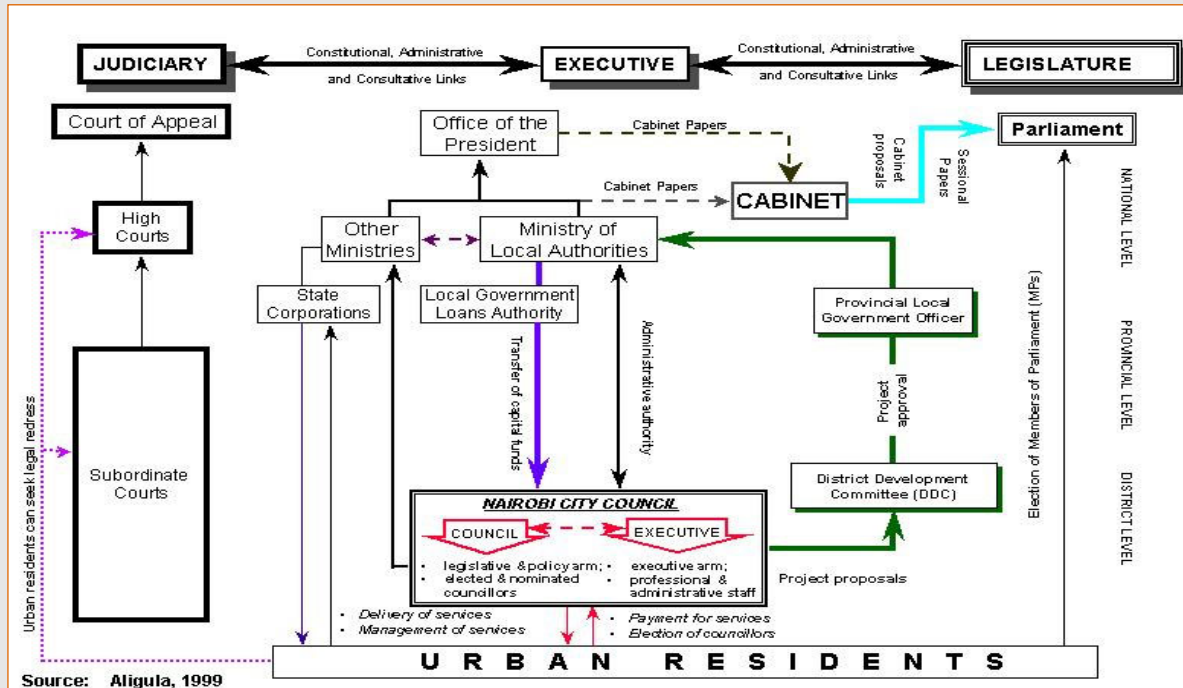


Figure 3: Council and Committee Structure of the City of Nairobi

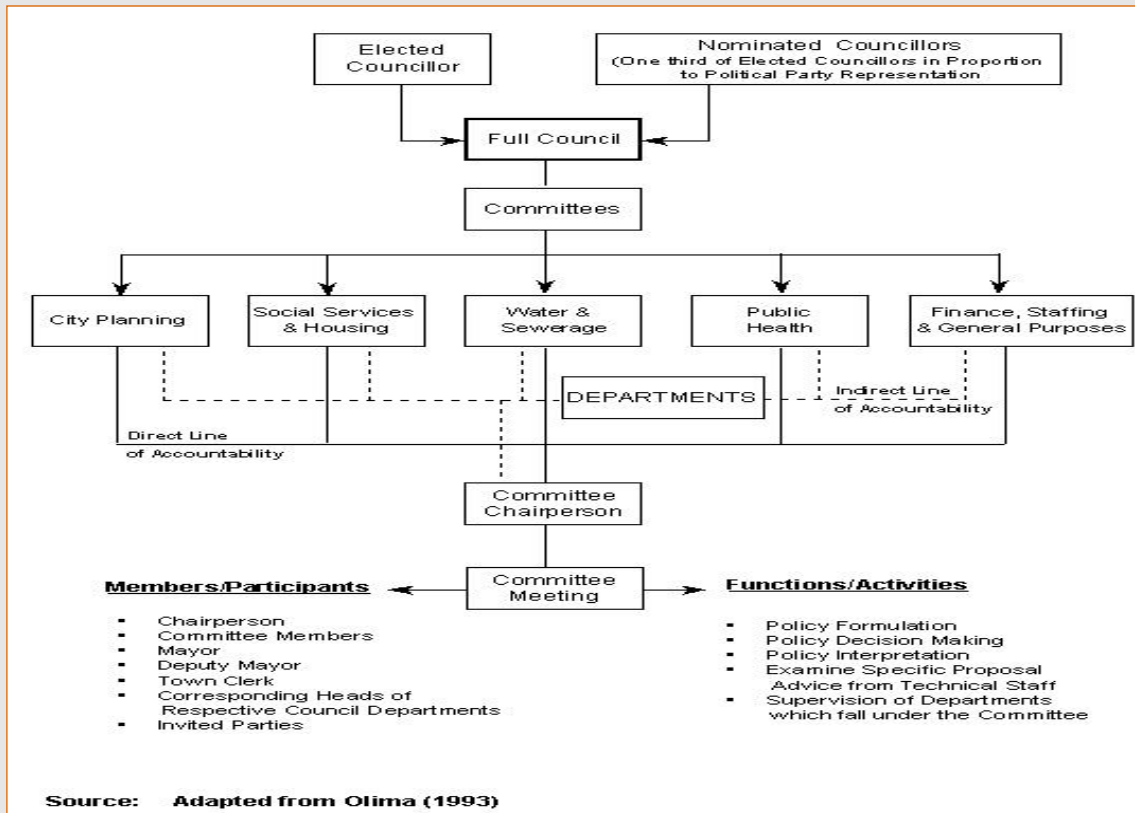
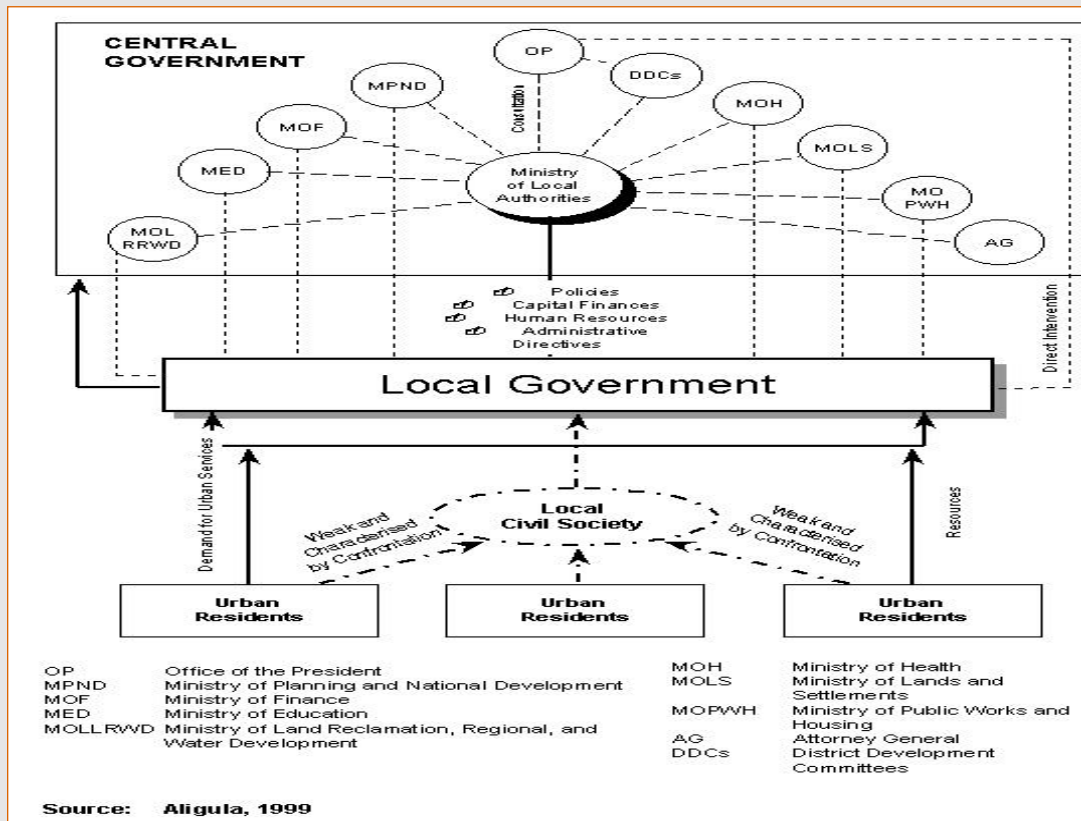


Figure 4.0: Agency Partnerships and Interactions in the City of Nairobi



settlements. In this regard, a rapid survey of participants in these partnerships notes that “although authorities and communities press for quick results, development agencies must also emphasise the process, for it remains important” (World Bank and DFID 2002:v). A major problem that has been observed, was that each of the supposed partners has evolved parallel service delivery approaches which has tended to weaken the process of infrastructure service delivery in local authorities (ibid).

However, the performance of the NCC, which is a key partner in all efforts aimed at resolving the problems in informal settlements, has been poor. Commentators on the management of NCC are invariably in agreement on this point. A noted commentator on urban issues in Kenya observes that

*“The provision of basic urban services has not kept pace with the rapid growth of the city. The vast majority of the urban poor do not have access to such services, which are inadequate and not properly maintained. Whereas the urban population has doubled in size during the past decade, infrastructure development has proceeded far more slowly. The result has been an ever-widening gap between the need for and the supply of essential services. Revenue is collected primarily from property taxes (80 per cent in 1986/87), and from*

*fees (4 per cent), rents (15 per cent), and other sources, but is not adequate to finance urban services”* (Mazingira Institute, 1993, p. 10).

Revenue sources have been depleted because of the central government abolition of the Graduated Personal Tax. Although a Local Service Charge Tax was introduced in 1988, (and later withdrawn in 2000) because of corruption, mismanagement, and cross-indebtedness between the central government and the NCC between 1973 and 1988 the NCC is still running a serious financial deficit (Obudho 1997).

The revenue problem is compounded by the extensive and pervasive corruption that permeates NCC as documented by the Centre for Law and Research International (CLARION 2001:23-28)<sup>6</sup>. In support of this view the NCC, was ranked the fifth most corrupt public sector organisation in a recent survey by Transparency International. This poor performance by the NCC has had a negative impact on the large population of people living in Nairobi’s informal settlements. Thus, any efforts at improving the lives of slum dwellers must also address the poor governance and performance of the Nairobi City Council in terms of service delivery to the urban poor.

## II. SLUMS AND POVERTY

### B. TYPES OF SLUMS

Slums in Nairobi are generally of two types, namely squatter settlements and those that arise out of illegal sub-divisions of either government or private land. A number of slums are located on land unsuitable for construction, especially of residential housing.

#### 1. Location of Major Informal Settlements in Nairobi

Informal settlements are widely located across the city. However, their location has largely been defined by their proximity to areas where their residents are able to get employment, as is shown in **Map 3**. For example, Kibera, one of the largest slums has access to the Industrial Area. Most slum dwellers walk to work in the morning to the industrial area and nearby sources of employment.

#### 2. Population Characteristics of Informal Settlements

Slums accommodate the majority of the city population. They have high densities compared to both middle and high-income residential areas, as is evident from **Table 5**. Calculations for one of the slums, Huruma, shows household densities in five villages in the area covered:

- Kambi Moto 539 households on 0.4 hectares with densities of 1,347 people/ha
- Mahiira 384 households on 0.427 with densities of 899 people/ha
- Redeemed 259 households on 0.96 hectares with densities of 269 people/ha
- Ghetto 813 households on 0.28 hectares with densities of 2,309 people/ha
- Gitathuru 311 households on 1.75 hectares with densities of 177 people/ha

### C. OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF SLUMS

The concepts slums and informal settlements are often used interchangeably in Kenya and there is no official definition of slums or informal settlements. Instead, different works have provided characteristics of slums and settlements. The MATRIX study of 1993 provides a good summary of these characteristics:

- Structure owners have either a quasi-legal right of occupation or no rights at all
- Structures are constructed largely of temporary materials and do not conform to minimum standards
- The majority of structures are let on a room-to-room basis and the majority of households occupy a single room

- Densities are high, typically 250 units per hectare compared to 25 per hectare in middle income areas and 15 per hectare in high income areas
- Physical layout is relatively haphazard making it difficult to provide infrastructure
- The majority of the inhabitants have low or very low incomes
- Urban services such as water and sanitation are non-existent or minimal
- Morbidity and mortality rates caused by diseases stemming from environmental conditions are significantly higher than in other areas of the city

The informal settlements/slum dwellers seem to also share the view of slums/informal settlements as being difficult areas, which lack most basic services and infrastructure. In a rapid assessment of 30 households in Korogocho, the majority of respondents indicated poor sanitation and infrastructure as a key characteristic of slums. This was followed by characteristics such as poor housing, crowding, violence, lack of recreational facilities, lack of tenure and cheap rent. The respondents provided some concepts used in reference to slums, with the concept slum being the most dominant. Other concepts included:

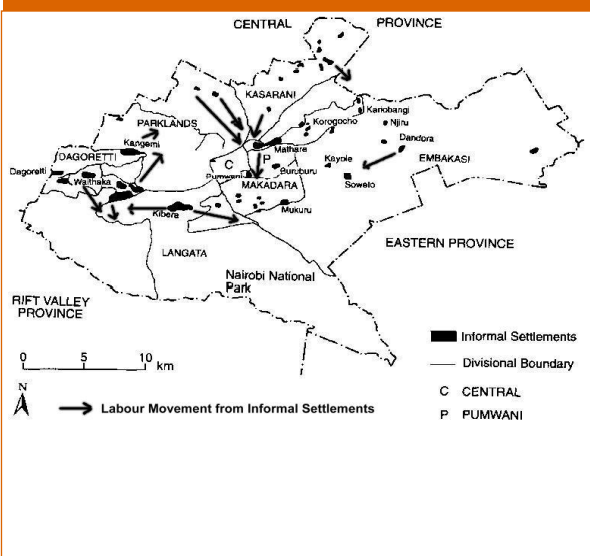
- Muddy areas
- Ghetto
- Poverty stricken settlements
- Filthy settlements
- Kijiji or vijiji<sup>7</sup>
- Mud city
- Dumping site and
- Beggars' zone

Most NGOs, Central Government and Local Government officials share the views epitomised in these definitions. However, a few divergences emerge. Pamoja Trust<sup>8</sup> includes the concept of temporary structures, insecure tenure, overcrowding, and poorly constructed housing. They observe that the definition of slums should be broadened to include other buildings such as one-roomed tenements, which have secure tenure.

Another unique perspective is that of the city authorities. Like civil society, they view lack of basic services and infrastructure, as characteristics of slums, an aspect that slum dwellers do not put emphasis on. The inclusion of the concept of livelihoods or sources of livelihoods for the poor constitutes one of the most significant changes in the definition of slums.



Map 3: Informal Settlements in Nairobi and Labour Movements



Source: Adapted from Syagga et. al. (2001:142)

Table 5.0: Informal Settlements in Nairobi - Estimated Population and Population Densities

Admin. Division	Area Covered by Informal Settlements (Hectares)	1993		1999	
		Informal Settlement Pop.	Density (Persons per Hectare)	Informal Settlement Pop.	Density (Persons per Hectare)
Makadara	85.40	102,480	1,200	155,943	1,826
Langata	229.20	251,040	1,095	382,006	1,667
Kasarani	215.00	143,155	666	217,838	1,013
Dagoretti	373.50	186,250	499	283,416	759
Embakasi	73.00	31,890	437	48,527	665
Pumwani	14.50	11,890	820	18,093	1,248
Parklands	24.40	7,326	300	11,148	457
All Divisions	015.00	734,031	723	1,116,971	1,100

Source: Reconstructed from Matrix (1993) on the basis of a 1989/99 intercensal growth rate of 6.18% for Nairobi

2,250 calories was estimated to be Ksh. 927 per person per month in rural areas and Ksh. 1,254 in urban areas. These define the food poverty line. When non-food necessities were added, the overall poverty line in the rural areas was taken as Ksh. 1,239 per person per month and for urban areas as Ksh. 2,648. Over the past decade, data on the incidence of poverty come from three Welfare Monitoring Surveys (1992, 1994, and 1997) and two Participatory Poverty Assessments (1994 and 1996). Earlier estimates were derived from a Rural Household Budget Survey (1981-82), an Urban Household Budget Survey (1982 – 83) and the Integrated Rural Survey (1974 – 75).

A rapid survey of NGOs showed that some of them viewed absolute poverty as lack of basic needs. Local government officials on the other hand perceived poverty to mean the inability of persons to access basic needs. Central government officials interviewed said that poverty was a state of deprivation, whereby people cannot afford adequate quantities of basic requirements such as food, shelter, healthcare and water.

**Absolute Poverty Approach** A household was considered poor if its members could not afford the recommended food energy intake plus a minimum allowance for non-food consumption.

Literature on poverty in Kenya recognises it as being a multi-dimensional phenomenon (Ayako and Katumanga 1997:6; Karirah-Gitau 1999:17; GOK 1998:16; GOK 1998b: 34). Officially, poverty is defined using two concepts, income poverty and food poverty, as shown in Table 6. The measurement of poverty in Kenya has been undertaken since the 1970s reflecting the persistency of poverty and government concerns with it, although it is only from the late 1990s that poverty has become a front line development issue. Manda et. al. (2001) point out that poverty estimates in Kenya have been carried out through the Integrated Rural Surveys of 1974/75, Rural and Urban Household Budget Surveys of 1981/82 and Welfare Monitoring Surveys of 1992, 1994 and 1997. They suggest that one notable feature of these surveys was that they were all household based. Thus, in the light of recent developments, certain social groups, such as street families, beggars, and women in destitute conditions were excluded. Many of these are urban based.

A summary of the resulting poverty estimates is presented in Appendix 1. GOK (1998) in its discussion notes the following reasons for the changes over the years in the various poverty concepts, approaches and definitions adopted in respect of poverty measurements:

- Restricted coverage of the measures in measuring poverty. Subsequent measures broadened their scope but retained the previous measures for purposes of comparison
- Attempts to measure up to international comparisons as well as developments in thinking on poverty measurements

### C. OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY

The poor are defined as those who cannot afford basic food and non-food items (World Bank 2001) In 1997, the minimum cost to satisfy a daily requirement of

Table 6.0: Official Definitions of Poverty<sup>9</sup> in Kenya

APPROACH	DEFINITION	POVERTY LINES DERIVED
Absolute Poverty Approach	A household was considered poor if its members could not afford the recommended food energy intake plus a minimum allowance for non-food consumption. Poverty line derived from monetary value of the consumption of food and non-food items distinguished the non-poor from the poor	Poverty Lines per Adult Equivalent Kshs. 1,490 per month in 1994
		Food Poverty Line Entails diagnosis of the magnitude of food poverty defined as consumption levels below a pre-set normative minimum standard, taking into account nutritional needs.
		Total/Absolute/Overall Poverty Line Captures the basic minimum non-food allowances in addition to the minimum food consumption
Poverty Index	Summarises information on the incidence, intensity (depth) and severity of poverty, for either poverty line, food, overall or hardcore poverty.	Incidence of Poverty Measures the numbers in the population living below the poverty line
		Intensity of Poverty Measures the aggregate poverty gap, which reflects the average distances of the poor below the poverty line

Source: GOK (1998b)

- Scarcity of figures on urban poverty
- Focus only on households, which neglects other marginalised groups such as street families
- The need to understand the spatial distribution of poverty

The rapid assessment of Korogocho households shows that poverty is viewed as lack of basic necessities such as food and shelter, begging, inability to invest and own anything, living in a poorly constructed house, inability to survive on one's own capabilities, disability and lack of income.

Most civil society organisations interviewed perceived poverty in a "rights" perspective. They use concepts such as state of deprivation, where people cannot afford basic needs, inability to influence public decisions, inequitable distribution of resources, lack of access to resources and assets, as well as lack of an enabling environment.

While there seems to be no one definition of poverty common to all slums and communities, one aspect seems to be mentioned in all definitions in Kenya: inability to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, health and education for children (AMREF/GOK 1997). Changes to definitions of poverty over time have mainly extended the definition beyond income to lack of physical necessities, including basic services and assets (Ayako and Katumanga 1998) and rights to infrastruc-

ture services and assets. This change has been influenced by the development of the Human Development Index that broadly considers the realisation of full human capacity.

## E. ORIGINS OF THE SLUMS TYPES

The growth of slums in Nairobi has resulted from a variety of factors, historical and contemporary in nature. Olima (2001) has argued that:

*"the forces that have contributed to urban spatial segregation in Nairobi are many and varied. Some are legal and economic whereas others are cultural. During the colonial period, the people of Kenya witnessed a large-scale government sanctioned spatial segregation based on race and reinforced by planning laws as well as exclusionary zoning regulations.*

*The segregation/division along racial lines divided the city into four distinct sectors; North and East defined as the Asian Sector (Parklands, Pangani and Eastleigh); East and South East defined the African Sector (Pumwani, Kariokor, Donholm); South East to South marked another small Asian enclave before it was bounded by the Game Park (Nairobi South, Nairobi West). Finally, the line North and West marked the European area."*

Syagga et al (2001:30-31) in a further elaboration of this point out that the forces of rural-urban migration and income differentials between the rural and urban areas, as well as within urban areas have contributed to the growth of slums in Nairobi. Other factors include unemployment and underemployment, and increased population densities in the rural areas that have forced especially the young to move to urban areas. Majale (2000:4) points out that in the colonial era, slums essentially developed because of three main factors:

- Displacement of Africans to make room for European Settlers
- The Colonial Government's policy of racial segregation, accompanied by a de facto policy of not allocating enough resources to cater for the housing needs of the Africans, and
- Clearance of "sub-standard" housing

Independence, with the consequent relaxation in policies and laws that prohibited movement of Africans to Nairobi, resulted in a major shift in population to Nairobi, without a concomitant rise in housing provision. Indeed, as Shihembetsa (1989) pointed out, the independence government allowed new immigrants to put up shacks within the city as long as they were not located near the Central Business District (CBD). This was accompanied by state action that protected some settlements while demolishing others (Syagga et. al. 2001:34). As shown in **Table 7**, slums in Nairobi have continued to grow in

number as well as in population. It is important to point out, that these figures remain estimates as long as no in-depth survey of the slums is undertaken<sup>10</sup>.

## F. DATA ON SLUMS

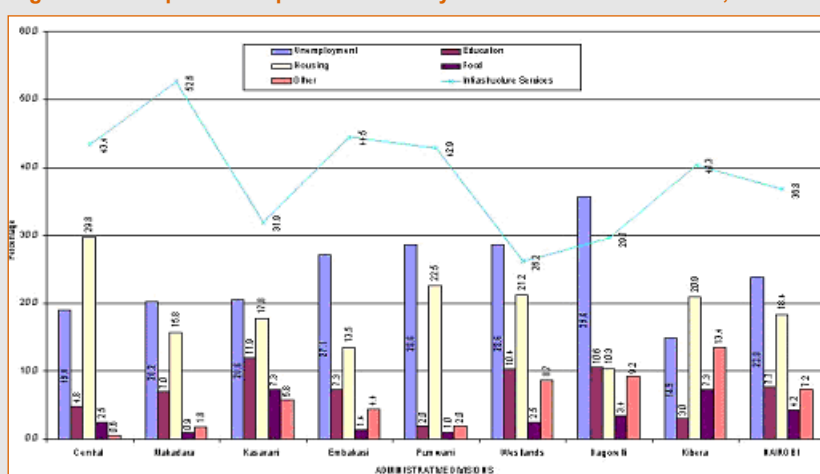
The data on slums is limited, with the exception of a few slum areas, which have been heavily researched, for example Kibera. Pamoja Trust has a major project on slum enumeration. The organisation has a plan to enumerate all slums in Nairobi. The information available shows a pathetic situation. For example, Karirah-Gitau (1999) notes that *“Between 40-60 per cent of Nairobi’s residents stay in areas devoid of infrastructural facilities for example: clean water, sanitary waste disposal, access roads, drainage, health and educational services, decency and privacy. Moreover, the housing is of poor quality and inadequate.”*

Figure 5 clearly shows that the slum residents feel the need for infrastructure services. When the need for housing is added, the problem of access to housing and infrastructure services in the slums of Nairobi becomes starkly apparent.

Table 8 presents the results of two studies, the Nairobi Cross-sectional Slums Survey of 2000 and the Kenya Demographic Health Study of 1998. Wasao (2002) noted that slum residents are worse off when compared to residents of other urban areas in terms of their access to services and amenities. For instance, they observe that about 24 per cent of slum households

in Nairobi have access to piped water as compared to 92 per cent for the whole of Nairobi. This position is confirmed by other studies which have shown that slum residents tend to pay significantly higher charges for water services, representing major fiscal burdens for the urban poor (Aligula 1999; Wasao and Bauni 2001; and Aligula 2002).

Figure 5: Perception of Important Needs by Slum Residents in Nairobi, 2002



Source: Adapted from Wasao(2002),pg. 19

## III. SLUMS: THE PEOPLE

Slums owe their origins to six factors: migration during the struggle for independence, rural-urban migration and urban population growth without corresponding housing provision, resettlement due to new developments, upgrading or relocation in suitable sites, and extension of city boundaries. Inclusion of rural parts into urban boundaries often changes the characteristics of the settlements as more urban residents and new migrants get attracted to such areas. Most slums have no security of tenure, a fact that has been used to explain the reluctance to improve housing and related infrastructure. Slums have different forms of land ownership: public land held by the government on behalf of citizens, local authority, private landlords and other precarious forms of ownership which cannot be legally justified. The latter are the most problematic since the ‘owners’ ensure that influential public figures and urban authorities protect their investment. The global campaign for secure tenure has identified the provision of secure tenure as essential for a sustainable shelter strategy, and as a vital element in the promotion

Table 7: Growth of Informal Settlements in Nairobi<sup>11</sup>

Year	No. of Informal Settlement Villages	Population	Units	% of Pop.
1971	50	167,000	-	33
1990	78	2,000,000	74,165	40-50
1993	36	748,991	-	55
1995	134	1,886,166	77,600	60

Source: NACHU, 1990; Matrix, 1993; and Ngau, 1995

Table 8: Access to Household Amenities, 2002 (%)

Household Amenity	SOURCE			
	Kenya Demographic Health Study 1998			Nairobi Cross-sectional Slums Survey 2000
	Kenya	Nairobi	Other Urban	
<b>Electricity</b>	14.5	60.1	61.5	17.8
<b>Drinking Water</b>				
<b>Bought</b>	-	-	-	74.8
<b>Piped</b>	23.2	77.6	43.6	21.7
<b>Public Taps</b>	11.0	14.5	34.5	2.7
<b>Other</b>	65.8	7.9	22.0	0.8
<b>Sanitation</b>				
<b>Flush Toilet</b>	11.8	56.0	33.3	7.3
<b>Traditional Pit Latrine</b>	65.9	29.7	51.7	78.7
<b>Ventilated Pit Latrine</b>	6.9	13.2	8.9	5.4
<b>Total with some Sanitation Facility</b>	84.6	98.9	93.9	91.4
<b>No facility/Bush</b>	15.4	1.1	6.1	8.6
<b>Main Floor Material</b>				
<b>Mud, sand, dung</b>	63.4	16.7	22.4	30.6
<b>Wood planks/wood/vinyl tiles</b>	2.7	9.0	4.2	0.3
<b>Cement</b>	33.6	74.3	73.2	69.0
<b>Other</b>	0.0	-	-	0.1
<b>No. of Cases</b>	8,380	856	1,156	4,564

Source: Wasao, Samson (2002) p. 15

of housing rights. The majority of the respondents covered in the rapid survey of Korogocho had lived there for between 3 and 7 years, while one had stayed for 20 years and another two for 15 years. In the Pamoja Trust Data Base, which covered 18,386 households in Korogocho over 25 per cent of the households, had stayed in Korogocho for over 20 years. The data further shows that there are many elderly people living in Korogocho, which justifies the long period of stay within the settlement.

## 1. Who Lives in Slums?

Slums are homes to urban residents who earn comparatively low incomes and have limited assets. Livelihoods are earned through different forms of economic activities, which include employment as waiters, bar men and maids, drivers, watchmen, shop assis-

tants, casual labourers in factories and construction sites, artisans, small business owners, and other income generating activities such as herbalists, entertainers, carriers of goods and any other assignment with money attached. An enumeration in Huruma by the Pamoja Trust shows that the largest single occupation group is small scale enterprise, followed by casual labourers, artisans, and formal employment as watchmen, domestic workers, clerks, and waiters.

The majority of those living in slums are male-headed households who are struggling with their families, while a significant percentage are female-headed households who in many cases take care of their children, grandchildren and other relatives. Most of them have no immovable property, and only own basic furniture, utensils and clothing as reflected in **Box 2** and the case studies for this report in **Appendices 2 - 5**. Cases are also beginning to emerge of households headed by children, mainly the result of the devastating AIDS pandemic that has hit Kenya. They also result from situations where both parents are dead, single parents abandon their children, or have been convicted or hospitalised for long durations.

## 2. Household Indicators

### 2.1 Household Type and Size

The rapid survey carried out in Korogocho for this case study shows that all the 31 households except 7 were male-headed. The survey further shows that the most common household size was 5 followed by 4, 7, 8, 2, 10 and 1. Twenty-five respondents were married; four were single; while two were widowed. The majority were under 35, while the youngest respondent was 23 years old and the oldest 48. A total of 19 respondents had primary level education while 10 had secondary level education, with only 1 of each having no formal education and post secondary education respectively. In the sample only 12 respondents were in formal employment, the rest were in informal employment (7), engaged in small-scale enterprises (9), while three were not engaged in any income earning activities.

All respondents except six had dependants ranging from 1 to 20. The majority of them had dependants ranging between 1 and 5. The Shelter Afrique study by Karirah-Gitau (1999) has shown the extent of overcrowding in slums. The study indicates that over five people per household live in one little room on average 10 by 12 feet (3m x 3.5m) and undertake all household functions in the same room. In some cases, over eight people live in one room, while in others four people live in a two-room unit. Ngau (1995) gave an average occupancy rate of 4.4 persons per room in slums.



**BOX 2: Life in Mama Jane's Household**

Mama Jane who lives in Mathare 4B talked about her problems openly. She said that her daughter had three children. Although all of them are of school age, they had not attended school for even one day. *“Jane went to school up to standard seven but I had no money to send her to secondary school although she had passed well. After staying at home for two years, she took off to the city and started earning her living there. She used to bring me money every week. I even managed to send her brother to a secondary school. However, the children started coming one after the other. With my own small children to take care of, I had to stop buying and selling vegetables. We depended entirely on Jane’s income. Unfortunately, eight years ago, Jane came home sick. She attended many hospitals but her situation got worse. We did not know what was wrong. She died five years ago (three years after coming home). We later learnt that she had AIDS. The son she left behind is also sick and my friends think he might be suffering from the same disease that killed his mother. However, I have no money to take him to hospital. A volunteer community nurse comes to see him here at home. I really do not know what to do”.*

Mama Jane said the son who went to secondary school with Jane’s support completed school four years ago. He could not do any training because of lack of money. He has never been employed but he does odd jobs. He married a year ago and the wife is expecting. The whole family still lives in two tiny rented rooms. The mother (Mama Jane) has been forced to get back to her hawking business but the income is so low that she can hardly feed the family. The son pays the rent. When times are bad, he does not earn enough and they are perpetually under threat of eviction.

Jane’s children look sickly and they are small for their ages. During the interview, session four children came in. Two were Jane’s children and the other two were Mama Jane’s. They were carrying something in two dirty plastic bags. Mama Jane said the children had gone to Wakulima Market popularly called ‘Marikiti’ to collect thrown away vegetables and any other foodstuffs. They collected foodstuffs to supplement family meals. In the second bag, they were carrying waste paper and tins for sale to recycling firms in the nearby slum area. Mama Jane explained that *“everyone’s contribution is vital for his family’s survival. It is only this sick one who stays home. However, he even helps in sorting out foodstuffs and the waste paper. This is the life many female-headed households in Mathare”* she concluded.

Source: Extracted from Ngau and Mitullah (1997)

**2.2 Number of Children**

The rapid survey of Korogocho showed that all respondents except 4 had children with the number of children ranging from 1 to 8 as reflected in **Table 9**.

**2.3 Household Income**

In the rapid assessment conducted for this case study, most households were earning between Ksh. 5,000 and 7,000. However, the Pamoja Trust Database, which is more comprehensive, shows that average monthly earnings come to about Kshs. 2,712.00

**2.4 Types of Tenure and House Ownership**

All interviewees in the rapid survey except one household were renting. This trend has been reflected in almost all studies on the slums and informal settlements. The Shelter Afrique study (Karirah-Gitau 1999) found that over 80 per cent in five of the six slums covered were tenants, with owner-occupiers in four of the five slums being less than 10 per cent. There were also less than two per cent in each of the six slums not owning and not paying rent. These are likely to be caretakers or relatives and friends of owners of the units. Pamoja Trust Data Base shows that of the 18,386

**Table 9: Number of Children by Age Group**

Number	Age 0-5	Age 6 -13	Age 14-17	Age 18 & above
0	9	13	24	27
1	13	6	3	2
2	7	8	4	1
3	2	4	-	1
<b>Total</b>	31	31	31	31

Source: Rapid Field Survey 2002

households living in Korogocho, the occupier status of 2,904 are unknown, 10,291 are tenants, 1,088 sub-tenants, 3,848 structure owners, while a total of 255 structures were vacant (Pamoja Trust Database 2001) This shows that the tenants constitute 56 per cent; although when the unknown and the vacant houses are considered the percentage of tenants are likely to increase.

**2.5 Literacy Rates**

The rapid survey shows that most household heads had primary level (61.3 per cent) and secondary level education (32.3 per cent). Only one respondent in each case had no formal education and post secondary education. In the Shelter Afrique study most household heads had attained at least upper primary level of



education, although in one of the six slums, which was predominantly Muslim had 45.9 per cent of household heads with no formal education. There seems to be a trend of slums with comparatively older people having low levels of education. This follows the national trends which show that literacy levels increased during the 1970s and 80s, although the poor economic performance during the late 1980s and 1990s has reduced literacy levels since many families cannot afford education.

Although literacy levels are high in Kenya, a gender perspective shows that men have better education than women. In an in-depth study of 10 female headed households in one of the largest slums in Nairobi, Kibera none of the 10 women interviewed had secondary education, seven were primary school leavers, while three were illiterate (Mitullah 1997).

In a more recent enumeration in Huruma it was revealed that more boys than girls are enrolled in schools within slums. Furthermore, of those who were enrolled between 5 and 20 per cent dropped out before completion (Pamoja Trust Database 2001) as a result of several problems including, financial shortages and finding employment to supplement the family income and being pregnant.

### 3. The Cost of Living in Slums

#### 3.1 Income and Costs of Services

Most slum dwellers earn very low incomes ranging between Ksh. 88 and 28,000 with the majority earning between Ksh. 5,000 and 7,500. The majority of those living in slums such as Korogocho use public means of transport for going to work. The dominant mode is 'matatus' (minibuses operated by individuals), followed by buses and walking. Only one respondent indicated using a bicycle as a mode of transport. Most of them pay an equivalent of KSh. 40 for a return trip. Depending on the location of the work place some household heads pay more than Ksh. 100 for a round trip. The time taken to get to work is between two minutes and two hours, for a distance of between 0.2 and 15 kilometres depending on the location of the workplace and the mode of transport used.

Apart from transport, slum dwellers incur costs in food, housing, fuel, water, education, health and other items. Food and education take the highest percentage of their budgets. The cost for food ranges between 1,500 Ksh. 12,000 with the majority spending less than Ksh. 5000 on food. Education follows food in the expenditure of slum dwellers. However this expenditure is skewed with some households paying as little as Ksh. 57, while others pay over Ksh 5,000. This depends on the nature of the education service. The ones paying the lower amounts are often in poorly run informal schools, which do not follow any curriculum. The education provided does not allow children to get into the regular

national programmes. They merely provide the children with a certain level of literacy, which is not recognised by public and market forces.

Housing falls third in the expenditure of slum dwellers. The cost of accommodation ranges between Ksh. 600 and 3,500. In the Pamoja Trust database, which covered 18,201 households in Korogocho, the average rent paid was Ksh. 486 per month. While most secondary data shows that slum dwellers are exposed to many health problems, this is not reflected in the health expenditure of slum dwellers. This ranges from Ksh. 100 to 2,000 with the majority spending between Ksh. 500 and 1,000. This does not imply that slum dwellers are healthy; instead, they are unhealthy and only visit medical facilities when it is absolutely necessary. They also prescribe drugs for themselves, which are often not correct, and in some cases they do not take the right dose. This has resulted in many slum dwellers being resistant to a number of drugs and not being properly healed.

The cost of fuel is similar to that of health. Most slum dwellers spend between Ksh. 180 and 2,000 on fuel, while water is the cheapest expenditure item. Households spend between Ksh. 100 and 300 on water per month. Other expenditure items which they incur relate to social life: households tend to belong to several kinship, welfare and credit associations which act as insurance for their livelihoods. In most of these associations, some fee is paid periodically as a means of raising funds and showing commitment.

#### 3.2 Common Ailments

Common ailments include malaria and waterborne diseases such as typhoid and cholera. Other common ailments include measles, flu, HIV/AIDS, and TB. The poor environmental conditions including crowding and lack of clean water contribute to most of the ailments within slums. In a study on Population and Health Dynamics in Nairobi's informal settlements, it was noted that lack of toilets is the most commonly cited health-related problem, followed by poor drainage and water supplies and lack of health services (APHRC 2002).

#### 3.3 Discrimination, Victimisation and Psychological Trauma

Discrimination, especially along ethnic lines exists within slums, with most ethnic groups conglomerating in particular areas/sections of slums. In most cases, the names given to such areas indicate the dominance of the original communities' ethnic background. At the same time tenants prefer to rent rooms where the structure owners come from their ethnic background. In a few cases, clashes between ethnic groups have been experienced. The growth of settlements along ethnic lines is also influenced by the place a migrant settles first. This is usually in a relative's, clan members/rural neighbour's urban residence. Thus, most slum areas

have one or a few dominant ethnic groups, often that of the original settlers (UNCHS 2001).

Lack of security of tenure is also a threat to slum dwellers. Slums in Kenya are highly commercialised and evictions, often violent, occur at the whim of the structure owners. Defaults in rent payments result in evictions and are hardly negotiated by the highly commercialised structure owners. Consequently, the forces operating in rental markets can easily push out the poorest individuals. In some cases, arson is used by the unscrupulous structure owners to evict non-complying households or the residents of entire slums. Discrimination is also felt slightly in the areas of education, employment, health and social setting.

Neighbourhood victimisation is more common in slums than individual and mass evictions. This type of victimisation is that in which outsiders are viewed as not belonging, and are regarded with suspicion. In some cases, this is associated with violent behaviour, which also arises because of the difficulties slum dwellers face. Households are not able to satisfy their basic needs while at the same time living in quite dehumanising environments. The youth have neither privacy nor freedom and have to share rooms with parents and other younger siblings. Such environments push both the youth and their parents to the streets, where they suffer psychological trauma, which exposes them to violent behaviour.

A recent victimisation survey in Nairobi (UNCHS 2001) indicates that residents either residing or passing through low-income areas were more likely to be victims of physical assault than those in other areas of Nairobi. They also identified unemployment and poverty as the most common causes of crime. General idleness and the quick rewards that crime brings were also noted as causes of crime. These factors partly explain the high prevalence of crime and victimisation within slums. However, studies have also shown that poverty is not a direct cause of crime. Crime is more a consequence of exclusion from social services, education, health care, governance and politics. The study argues that the extent to which people feel valued, respected and recognised by society determines the extent to which they themselves value society in return. Social exclusion has eroded moral values and broken down social support structures such as the family and the community resulting in individuals and groups being at risk of falling into crime and violence (UNCHS 2001: 11).

#### 4. Assets Available to Slum Dwellers

Slum dwellers have very few assets, which are mostly movable. In a study covering female-headed households in four slum areas, no women owned the structures they lived in nor did any own land in the countryside. The few who had assets had pooled resources through associations to acquire small urban plots on which they planned to put up commercial buildings

when money became available. A few of them owned kiosks in which they operated their small businesses, and it was difficult for them to acquire credit from conventional financing institutions (Ngau and Mitullah 1997).

At the household level, very few women had bought any durable household items within the last year. Inside their houses, the main furniture items were the parents' beds, small coffee tables and a few wooden stools. A few had battery operated radios and/or radio cassettes. Other items included utensils and water containers, laundry basins, buckets and clothing for the family. Most household members use mitumba (second hand clothes and shoes). In the case studies for this report, the female-headed households had basic furniture and household effects, as reflected in **Appendices 2-5**).

#### 4.1 Financial, Human and Physical Capital

Generally, the slum dwellers lack sources of finance and most of them have to rely on associations, money-lenders and family members. This is because many financial institutions cannot lend to the poor due to lack of collateral. The poor are active members of associations which act as insurance for their livelihoods. Most slum dwellers rely on home-based enterprises and do not have security of tenure. An assessment of human capital shows a poor situation. Both education and health are poorly provided for in the slums. In the rapid survey, the majority ranked the two as either bad or fair with very few noting that they were good.

## G. SLUMS AND POVERTY: THE POLICIES

Several studies have noted the lack of any clear policy that would facilitate and guide urban development in Kenya. This lack has resulted in most interventions being made on an ad-hoc basis, a situation reflected in the blindness of the city authorities who for decades continued to dump garbage close to the residence of the poor slum dwellers. Furthermore, most slums are located on sites not planned for housing and residents are exposed to different forms of pollution including industrial pollution. Industries emit hazardous waste indiscriminately near poor settlements.

Various interventions continue to be undertaken by the government and city authorities with the support of donors, civil society organisations, including Community Based Organisations (CBOs). In some slums such as Mathare 4A, Kibera, Huruma and Korogocho housing and infrastructure programmes are being put in place through joint efforts of the government, donors and civil society organisations. These interventions aim at addressing the problems of slums or informal settle-

ments. They have had mixed results as shown in **Table 8** which has classified them into themes. The main positive effects have included:

- Increased housing stock
- Expanding opportunities for communities
- Addressing the financing gap in LAs
- Involving communities in setting priorities
- Involving communities in monitoring applications for funds

The negative effects of these policies and interventions include:

- Proliferation of new slums
- Excluded target groups
- Failure to consider ability and willingness to pay of low-income households
- Subsidies not targeted
- Non participatory approach – top-down planning
- Gentrification
- Focus on environmental improvement rather than the well-being of households
- Inadequate partnerships characterised by poor networking and co-ordination
- No replicability possible
- Top down and apparently unsustainable approaches

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Urban centres in Kenya are classified as towns when they have a population of 2,000 or more inhabitants (Olima, 2001)

<sup>2</sup> In the recent past, population growth trends in Kenya, which exhibited some of the highest growth rates in the world at some point in time, have considerably declined. This has been because of declining birth rates. A trend in the demographic data that should be a cause of concern has been the increased mortality occasioned by AIDS (Aligula, 1999)

<sup>3</sup> The name Nairobi is derived from the Maasai community who referred to the current location of Nairobi as “Enkare Nairobi.” This means, “ place of cold waters.”

<sup>4</sup> The cool and healthy climate in Nairobi attracted European railway engineers constructing the Kenya-Uganda railway (KUR) in the year 1899, when they chose it as a base camp for the further extension of the railway from Mombasa into Kenya’s interior. The decision to move government headquarters to Nairobi brought an influx of labourers who were building the railway, and native Kenyans from the hinterland and settlers.

<sup>5</sup> In the past, these were often bulldozed down by the NCC, but increasingly one is beginning to see gangs of youths who come and clear out people from land that is occupied by squatters, ostensibly claiming that the private developers wish to develop such property.

<sup>6</sup> This report catalogues a series of corrupt activities carried out by officials from the NCC and the Central Government, as well as a retinue of politicians, lawyers and private firms. It is testimony to the well-established “partnerships” between officials in these sectors. The import of this is felt through the impact it has on the revenue generation and utilisation capacities of the NCC and therefore of its ability to direct the necessary resources towards efforts at mitigating the lack of services in the informal settlements.

<sup>7</sup> Swahili word meaning communal settlement/s

<sup>8</sup> This is an NGO which works closely with slum dwellers

<sup>9</sup> Overall or absolute poverty lines are based on the cost of purchasing a basket of basic food items representing the amount of calories sufficient for survival (a daily allowance of 2,250 calories per adult) and of essential non-food items, such as clothing, shelter and transport (GOK, 1998)

<sup>10</sup> Syagga et. al. (2001:35) note significantly that the variations in population levels for slums reflect the different methodologies adopted in arriving at the estimates, because every person generates baseline data of their own and this a recipe for controversy.

<sup>11</sup> There are clear deviations in the population figures depicted in Table 5 and Table 7.0. These differences relay a difference in the manner in which the data was conceived and generated. However, they point to the clear problem of high population densities in the informal settlements.

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LATF	Local Authorities Transfer Fund
MOLA	Ministry of Local Authorities
NCC	Nairobi City Council
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NISCC	Nairobi Informal Settlements Coordination Committee
OP	Office of the President
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements

## FOREIGN EXCHANGE EQUIVALENT

As of Thursday, 04 July 2002

1 US \$ = Kshs. 78.30

## ACRONYMS

AD	Anno Domini
AMREF	African Medical Research Foundation
CBD	Central Business District
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CLARION	Centre for Law and Research International
GOK	Government of Kenya
KUR	Kenya Uganda Railway
LAs	Local Authorities



**APPENDIX 1:**
**Summary of Previous Poverty Estimates for Kenya**

Author	Reference	Data Source	Poverty Incidence
FAO 1977	Not shown	Food balance sheet, 1972-74	30% of population
Crawford and Thorbecke 1978	1974/75 1976	Integrated Rural Survey I (1974/75) 1976 Employment Earnings in the Modern Sector Integrated Rural Survey II	38.5% of households 44% of population
Collier and Lal 1980	1974/75	Integrated Rural Survey I Smallholder	34.2% of smallholder population 29% of all population
Vandermoortele	1976	Integrated Rural Survey I (1974/75)	33.1% of smallholder 15.3% of urban households
Crawford and Thorbecke 1980	1974/75	Integrated Rural Survey (1977)	25% households
Greer and Thorbecke 1980 Jamal 1981	1974/75 1976	Integrated Rural Survey (1977) Not shown	38.6% of smallholders 32% of populations
Bigsten 1987	1976	National Accounts	40%
World Bank 1991	1981/82	1981/82 penal survey and complimentary statistics	22% of rural population
World Bank 1995 and Mukui 1993	1981/82 1992	1981/82 Rural Survey and 1992 Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS) I	Rural: 48% for 1981/82 & 46% for 1992 Urban: 29.3% for 1992
Narayan and Nyamwaya 1996	1994	Participatory Poverty Assessment	Widespread poverty in rural areas results similar to 1992 WMS above
Government of Kenya 1998	1994	1992 WMS I	46.8% Rural Population 29% Urban Population 40% National Estimates
Mwabu et. al. 2000	1994	1994 WMS II	39.7% Rural Population 28.9% Urban Population 38.8% National Population
Government of Kenya 2000	1997	1997 WMS III	52.9% Rural Population 49.2% Urban Population 52.3% National Population

Source: Adapted from Manda, Damiano Kulundu; Mwangi Kimenyi and Germano Mwabu (2001) p. 16

**APPENDIX 2: CITY REPORT CASE STUDY 1****KURIA: A MALE HOUSEHOLD HEAD**

Kuria [not his real name] is 45 years old and has a secondary education. He first came to Nairobi in 1980 when his father was transferred to Nairobi from Nakuru, 150 kilometres from Nairobi. The father has since retired and is living in rural Kenya. Kuria stays with his mother who is 52 years old, and sister who is 19. The other three brothers [34, 33 and 27 respectively] and two sisters [31 and 29] have moved out, but the brothers live in Nairobi. The other two sisters are married and staying with their husbands [in slum or formal housing]. The family does not own any land in the rural or urban areas but they own the structure in which they live.

The structure has 4 rooms [three used to be rented]. However, the tenants have moved out due to disagreements over rent, which they wanted lowered after the rent issue was politicised during the Kibera rent crisis, which affected most slums in Nairobi. The rooms are built of mud walls, cement floor and iron sheet roof. The room has basic furniture, chairs, a table, bed and utensils. The family owns a makeshift toilet and bathroom within their compound, and do not share it with neighbours. Some of their neighbours use nearby unoccupied houses as both bathrooms and toilets. This has been a nuisance to Kuria's family. They are exposed to foul smells.

There are shops and bars near the structure, while water is available outside the plot. The family has an income of Kshs. 4,000 and the other brothers who do not live in the house chip in occasionally. The family gets water from the neighbouring plot and spends Kshs. 150 per month on it. The family spends a total of Ksh. 2,000 on food, Ksh. 1,000 on health and Ksh 1,000 on education. Kuria and his brother are paying fees for a cousin who is living and studying in a rural area. The Ksh. 1,000 is part of the fees, which goes towards books and pocket money.

Kuria worked with Nation Newspaper between 1995 and 2000 as a casual labourer. After five years, he was not offered any more casual work. He believes that he was pushed out since his godfather who was a permanent employee with the firm was sacked. In spite of this, he was grateful that the casual work with the group inspired him to start a newspaper vending business on which he survives.

**APPENDIX 3: CITY REPORT CASE STUDY 2****MUGAMBI: A MALE HOUSEHOLD HEAD**

Mugambi [not his real name] is 45 years old with incomplete primary level education. He first came to Nairobi in 1965 and stayed with a brother in a planned low-income residential area of the city, Makadara. He later moved out of his brother's house and stayed within the same estate. He moved into the slum in 1980 after being sacked from his job. He had declined a transfer out of Nairobi. He first worked as a storekeeper in an Indian firm between 1971 and 1976. He then joined Bata Shoe Company between 1976 and 1978 as a packager before being sacked. Mugambi does not have land or plots in rural or urban area.

During his formal employment, he learnt to repair machines, which still provides him with casual employment. After losing his job, he had to rely on casual work which is unreliable and did not enable him stay in a planned housing estate. He now lives in a slum, earns about Ksh. 5,000 per month, and does not have any other source of income or support.

Mugambi lives with his wife, six children and an orphaned niece who is only three and a half. He is a tenant and spends Ksh. 600, 2,000, 150, 420, 500 and 1,500 on rent, food, water, education, health and transport respectively. The family lives in two rooms constructed of mud walls, mud floor and iron sheet roof. The family only has clothing for the family, stools, a table, bed and utensils. The sanitation around the structure is very poor. The family has no access to a toilet and relies on a neighbour's toilet. There is no bathroom and the family bathes in one of the rooms, this somehow helps in damping the dust. Although there are shops and bars within the plot, the family has to fetch water outside the plot.

Mugambi knows about existing associations within the slum but does not want to be a member because most of them require money, and he is struggling to feed the family and provide other necessities. He appreciates the work of the Catholic Church. One of the priests used to pay fees for two of his children and since the priest left the parish, his children are often out of school.

Mugambi aspires to start his own business because employment has become difficult to get. He thinks that this will allow him to employ his children and create employment opportunity for others. He also wishes to buy a plot in the rural areas so that he can engage in farming to supplement the income he gets from casual employment in Nairobi.

**APPENDIX 4: CITY REPORT CASE STUDY 3****ANYANGO: A FEMALE HOUSEHOLD HEAD**

Anyango [not her real name] is a 45-year-old lady living in two rooms of about 10 by 8 feet (3mx2.5m) in Korogocho. She and her husband were living in their rural home, but due to acute suffering and lack of basic necessities, they decided to move to Nairobi in search of greener pastures in 1983. She joined her husband who had come to Nairobi earlier and settled in the same slum, where they currently live. Her intention was to engage in small-scale economic activities in order to supplement her husband's income. He was a casual labourer in a construction firm. A single lady who did not have any dependants initially accommodated her. The lady has since died.

A large part of Anyango's life has been occupied by working as a house help for different middle and upper income families in Nairobi. She has no formal education and could not get any formal employment. Her husband has been co-operative as Anyango goes to work for other families. He takes care of the children while she is away. As the number of children increased with the birth of a grandchild, she had to stop being employed as house help and engage in small-scale enterprise. This also allowed her to take care of the children. She has several dependants: her husband, 4 children, a grandchild, and two brothers. The family lives in two rooms constructed of mud walls, plastered floor and an old rusty corrugated iron sheet roof. What serves as a seating room has 4 wooden stools, a wooden table and a bed at the far end. The other room is used as kitchen and bedroom for the children. It had an old mattress on the floor where all the children sleep. One child was seated on the floor doing homework while another four-year-old boy was washing plates on the floor.

Anyango used to save about Ksh. 500 per month during her employment. She used the savings for starting her business in 1984, after leaving employment and she began with a grocery kiosk but has been changing the type of business according to demand. At the time of the interview she was selling boiled maize, yoghurt, fresh milk and vegetables.

Anyango spends Ksh. 600, 2000 and 2000 on rent, food and medical bills respectively per month. She also spends Ksh 350 per month for the three children who are in primary school. The two in lower classes pay Ksh. 100 each while one in upper primary pays Ksh. 150. She is a member of a self-help women's group, which is strong and presents dances at political rallies. The interview took place when she had just arrived from a political rally organised by the ruling party. Occasionally she borrows money from the group. Anyango enjoys a good relationship with her neighbours. In particular, there are three other households within her area with which she has close associations and they always assist each other when there is need.

There were no windows in any of the rooms, and the rooms were extremely dark. A little tin lamp had to be lit to facilitate the in-depth discussion. Sanitation around the house was poor, no drainage but a stagnant and stinking trench, with rubbish strewn around the house. Anyango prefers to live in a slum because the rents are low and the cost of food is also reasonable. Although she lives in a congested environment, in her rural home she has a 1 acre piece of land, which is not used. What she referred to as a bathroom was a makeshift corner, covered with plastic paper with a sewage with a wooden structure put on top. The family shared a toilet with several other households. Discussions indicated that the toilet often gets full and those who use it join hands to drain it physically, by using a plastic container on a drum which is disposed of by handcart. There is a water point near the house provided through a joint effort of the Kenya Government and some Australian donors. Water costs Ksh. 2 per 20-litre container. There are six general grocery shops within the vicinity selling most of the family's requirements. Anyango observed that there used to be many bars around the house but these had been closed down due to insecurity. There are many health and educational facilities within the vicinity, which are profit-making and are accessible so long as one can pay. The only nearby public school is expensive and admission is not easy to get.

Anyango lamented three problems in the slums: the level of insecurity within the slums, poor sanitation and congestion. She noted "there is constant theft regardless of time – the only advantage of living in slums is just cheap housing and cheap food prices". Her final comment was that these advantages "can cost one their life as insecurity is too great". She aspires to save money and be able to invest and educate her children. She does not want her children to have a bad future similar to the one she experiences due to lack of education. She noted that adequate savings will not only enable her to educate her children but she will also be able to build a house in her rural home, purchase livestock and install a posho mill. Anyango has the political ambition of being a chairlady of a national body of women's self help groups.

## APPENDIX 5: CITY REPORT CASE STUDY 4

### NYAWIRA: A FEMALE HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Nyawira is a 38-year-old widow living in a single room of about 12 by 10 feet (3m x 3.5m). The room has mud floors and walls, with a rusty galvanised iron sheet [mabati] roof. It is in a pathetic state. The wall is falling down and one can see through the structure but there is no window and the door has to remain open to light the room. The room has three easy chairs, a wooden table, a bed and a few utensils.

Nyawira came to the city in 1973 to join her husband who was then employed at Karen Country Club and living within the affluent suburb of Karen where the club is located. Her husband died in 1993 and left her with 9 children. She then had to relocate to her rural area. Life turned out to be unbearable since the brothers-in-law did not accept her. Her husband was an only child born to parents who had worked and lived outside Kenya [Uganda]. The husband's immediate family sub-divided land in their absence. Since no allocation was given to him, she had no land left in her name. Her house which had been put up for her before her husband died, due to the brother-in-laws' hatred, was demolished. She was left with nowhere to live with her 9 children. She left for her maiden home but during the same year, she decided to come back to Nairobi with all her 9 children to look for a source of livelihood.

Nyawira came to live in the slum because she had heard that rents were cheap and food was affordable. She started working in 1993 washing clothes for Somali families within the slum at a cost of Kshs. 50 per day. She continued saving some of the money with a plan of starting a small-scale business. Meanwhile all her children were out of school due to lack of school fees. With Kshs. 300, she started selling githeri [cooked maize and beans]. She continued to supplement the income from this business by washing clothes. During hard times, she uses her working capital for basic needs and has to go back to washing clothes until she makes adequate savings to enable her start all over again.

Nyawira has no other source of income and she does not make adequate savings. The profit margin from the economic activities she does are so small and she has several dependants. After her husband's death she bore another child making a total of 10. She also takes care of three of her dead sister-in-law's children. Only six of her children go to school. Three others have attained school-going age but cannot be admitted to a nearby public school since she has fee arrears for the other six. She is required to clear these arrears before the others can be admitted. The three other children belonging to her sister-in-law are all at home even though they have attained school age.

Nyawira spends Kshs. 500, 500, 100, and 150 on rent, food, health and education respectively. She noted that occasionally the family goes hungry and often cannot afford health services.

She faces a number of difficulties of which feeding the family is a major one. Others include lack of school fees and medical expenses. Insecurity is another major problem. Several times, she has had her house broken into and almost everything stolen. In one incident she had to borrow blankets.

Her aspirations are to educate her children to be able to assist her in future. She also aspires to expand her business or establish a bigger business to bring in income to improve the family's livelihood and purchase a piece of land to establish a home for her 10 children. Sanitation is poor with drainage passing right in front of the door. The family has access to a makeshift bathroom and toilet and the children relieve themselves on the pathways. There is a common water source where water is bought at Kshs. 1 per 20-litre container. Several small general shops surround the house and illicit brews [changaa and busaa] are sold in most households. Some of the illicit brews are brewed in the surrounding households while others are purchased from elsewhere. Drugs are also sold around the household with security forces being part of the syndicate.