

THE ROLE OF INFORMAL SECTOR IN RURAL
DEVELOPMENT : A CASE STUDY OF WOOD-CARVING
INDUSTRY IN WAMUNYU LOCATION, MACHAKOS
DISTRICT.

BY

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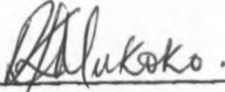
A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
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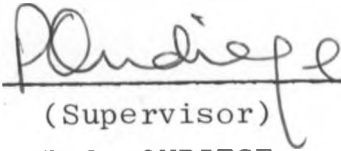
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DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signed 
(Candidate)

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with
submitted for examination with my approval as
University Supervisor.

Signed 
(Supervisor)
P.O. ONDIEGE

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my Mother from whom I learnt the art of struggle and patience which is essential for the attainment of knowledge.

A C K N O W L E G E M E N T

I am indebted to a number of people and institutions for the successful completion of this study.

First I am grateful to the Government of Kenya for offering me a scholarship to pursue this degree in the University of Nairobi.

I feel particularly indebted to Mr. Jason Mochache whose suggestions at the initial stages influenced the form in which the study has taken.

I wish also to express my sincere thanks to the people within the study area more especially the Wamunyu Handicraft Artisans, the Cooperative Society Officers, Chief and Assistant Chiefs of Wamunyu Location, Officers of Masaku County Council and Officers of the varied Ministries visited during the study for their assistance and cooperation in providing the necessary data and information.

I also owe special thanks to my supervisor Dr. P. Ondiege for his helpful guidance and contributions to the accomplishment of this project.

I am also indebted to My Mother for her efforts and sacrifice during the course of my education.

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Finally, I am grateful to Mrs. Serah Lugusa and Mrs. Mary Muthigo for producing a highly professional typescript.

ABSTRACT

Most developing countries have recently recognized the informal sector as a viable sector in their economic progress. The small-scale industries and handicrafts have hitherto received very little attention from policy makers and as a result little government assistance. The colonial governments in most developing countries had pursued strategies of growth which neglected the development of such activities in favour of heavy industrial establishments and consequently, the activities remained unexploited. Recent evidence shows increased awareness of the need to encourage their exploitation. In Kenya, the recognition of the sector is provoked by the increasing problem of unemployment, the need to improve on the life of the rural people and the need to moderate the growth rate of the major towns. This study examines the contributions of handicraft component of the informal sector. The study has found out that the activity has a significant role to play in the development of Wamunyu location in terms of provision of employment, income generation and growth and expansion of Wamunyu market centre and thus should be encouraged as part of the broader policy of promoting rural development and raising rural incomes.

The study further examined the factors hampering the development of this form of informal sector and found the major problems being lack of raw materials, lack of appropriate marketing organizations, and lack of suitable working places. Towards these problems, the study has proposed measures that will help create an appropriate environment for the operation of the activity which include - strengthening of the existing handicraft cooperative societies and formation of a central marketing organization to facilitate marketing of the products; research on alternative wood species for the industry to reduce over-dependency on the depleted species, establishment of a small forest reserve to ensure long-term supply of raw material; expansion of the operations of the institutions charged with promotion of small scale enterprises to cater for handicraft sector, and provision of sites for informal sector activities in the up coming urban centres.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION:

Development policies in most developing countries have favoured promotion of economic activities in the rural areas. This lies in the fact that majority of the population of these countries unlike in the developed countries live and get their living from the rural areas. It is again realized that the rural areas had been neglected by the colonial governments. On attaining their independence, developing countries have concentrated their efforts in diversifying and promoting development activities in the rural areas in order to attain balanced economic development.

In Kenya like in most developing countries, the colonial government policies for economic development interfered greatly with the indigenous development trends. The colonial government was mainly concerned with developing an economy complimentary to their home economy and hence showed little concern if any in stimulating the existing indigenous development activities. Agriculture remained the principal occupation of most people and was greatly encouraged. Industries coming up were large sized located in the major urban centres mainly in Nairobi and Mombasa

and essentially processing goods for 'mother' countries. The industries were attached to multinational corporations hence indigenous Kenyans had no key role to play. Other activities promoted were 'modern' enterprises located in the rural areas plus part of the public sector which was engaged in activities of an enterprise nature.¹ Previous studies show that small scale and traditional Cottage Crafts using traditional skills such as basket weaving, pottery, blacksmithing, stone carving, ornament making, which were part of indigenous economic activities were limited and suppressed and some deteriorated under colonial rule.² The activities were somewhat overlooked and considered as establishments which did not constitute promising opportunities for development. This policy trend as it is observed did not change much after independence. The country continued to pursue development policies favouring establishments in urban areas, large scale farms and other 'modern' enterprises. The second National Development Plan 1970-1974 considered "--- an active and growing participation of Kenyan Citizens in management and ownership of industry" but the 'open door' policy for large foreign investors who continued to interfere with the indigenous activities

1. Bryce (1965): 'Policies & Methods for industrial Development'.
2. Mikkelsen (1974): 'Rural Industries in Kenya.' pp. 44.

continued.³ On the basis of the performance of the economy, it was with time realized that continuation of such development policies would lead to limited industrial growth which in turn could affect employment opportunities and that over concern with development at the major urban centres was neglecting the rural economy where most of the country's population live.

Interpretation of development of the nation underwent a shift in emphasis from exclusive concern with agriculture and urban sector 'integrated' development more especially in the rural areas. This came as a result of the Kericho Conference recommendations of 1966 which came about as result of the government's request for a forum to examine issues of education, employment and rural development. The strategy prescribed was to promote economic growth within an integrated and balanced economy in which planned expansion of the industrial and agricultural sectors stimulate and supplement each other. The government in realization that rural development or development of the nation as a whole is besides increased farm production built upon other 'elements', adopted various policies and programmes to effect development. Among them is the industrialization policy aimed decentralizing industries to the rural areas and

3. Republic of Kenya: National Development Plan 1970-74 pp. 176.

stimulating growth of the existing ones especially those which are resource based utilizing indigenous skills interalia. It is on the basis of this policy that the small scale enterprises and traditional handicrafts both in urban and rural areas gained recognition.

According to the National Development Plan of 1970-74, rural development should not be seen as concerned with only a particular sector but as encompassing all sectors. While the spearhead programmes are on the agricultural front, it is deemed necessary to increase and diversify development activities. It was also recognized during the plan period that rural development implies rising urbanization not only in the major cities but through growth of small commercial activities in the small-trading centres.⁴ The tendency during the colonial period and even at present has been to concentrate most of the industrial, commercial and other activities at the major urban centres leaving the peripheral areas and centres lagging behind.

The latest development plans of 1974-78, 1979-83 and 1984-88 gives priority to promotion of small scale and handicraft activities in the rural areas. In 1979-83, Development Plan, it is recognized that "-- There is

4. Ibid pp. 176.

potential in the sector for producing profitable goods for export."⁵ In the same line, the 1984-1988 Development Plan says that emphasis is to be put on skill based industries producing goods for export and as a result, a cottage industry division was established in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to promote the industries. These are reasonable moves taking into account that the country is not endowed with high value minerals which can provide basis for heavy mineral based industries. Promotion of small-scale manufacturing enterprises using traditional skills and local raw materials would help in alleviating income and employment problems existing in most regions of the country especially in the marginal zones where harsh environmental conditions renders most of the people unemployed or under-employed.

Wamunyu location in Machakos district is taken as a typical marginal area where no heavy manufacturing industries are found but small scale informal activities such as wood carving, basket and drum, making, vegetable selling, motor and bicycle repairs among others are found. These activities have evolved in a bid to offer employment and supplement low production of food crops. Although wood-carving

5. National Development Plan 1979-1983: pp. 344.

enterprises in particular are predominant and quite developed in Wamunyu location and other parts of Machakos rural, it is observed that their development and contribution is inhibited by several problems. It is their development and the constraints facing them that the study aims at examining.

The problem

The emphasis on the promotion of small scale manufacturing industries lies in the government realization of the need to shift planning process from large and national based programmes to small and regional based programmes. It also lies on the importance attached to the District Focus Approach* which is seen as a strong foundation for national development. The emphasis has further been provoked by the increasing problem of unemployment in the country. Handicrafts and other small scale industries are important occupational elements in the rural areas. They offer employment opportunities to people in the rural areas. In a number of large instances, the sector offers part time employment. It is particularly

* District Focus Approach - Kenya Government Development Strategy aimed at shifting the responsibility for planning and implementing rural development from Headquarters of Ministries to the Districts.

convenient in agricultural districts where full employment occurs only at one or two peak moments in the year leaving many persons wholly or partially unemployed for the rest of the time (Mouly and Costa, 1974). Recognition of this sector is a recent phenomenon in the country. Taking that the country is poor in terms of resources and only a small part of it can be classified as high potential farm land, there is limitation therefore to the ability of agriculture to absorb a big number of the labour force. The same thing applies to the industrial sector. On this basis then the small scale enterprises of all nature becomes one sector which can absorb some of the labour force. Recognition of this sector is gradually becoming an official policy as Aboagye (1986) noted. The recognition of the activities goes back to the International Labour Organization (ILO) report on Kenya in 1972 when the experts pointed to the government the potential of the sector in providing employment. The Presidential Committee on unemployment of 1982 and the Sessional Paper Number I of 1986 pointed out the potential of the sector as well. The change in attitude has recently manifested itself in government's action of constructing working sheds for the Jua-Kali Industrialists* in Gikomba belt and Kamukunji area in Nairobi

* Jua-Kali Industrialists - Local term used to refer to small scale informal activities oftenly operated in the open or in temporary structures and informal environment.

town and including a funding scheme for them in the 1986/87 National Budget. But a great deal remains in translating the attitudes into action and directing them to clientele group. Surveys on rural informal activities reveal that despite the official recognition and promotion of the informal activities, the rural cases have not been accorded much attention. The tendency has been to consider the sector as a whole with much of the attention being directed to the urban informal sector. The rural informal sector activities are very crucial in revitalizing the rural economy but there seems to be no specific policies and strategies being pursued by the government to make the informal sector operations in these areas more viable. Their potential and growth has been obstructed by several problems such as lack of access to institutional credits, lack of proper organization and working spaces, problem of marketing channels among others. Wamunyu location in Machakos district is widely known for informal wood carving activities. The Akamba people of Wamunyu location have for years evolved an art in wood carving to supplement their incomes especially in the slack agricultural seasons. The activity has developed from a Traditional craft to a successful commercial industrial operation which is offering casual and regular

employment to a number of people in the area. Although the craft is playing a big role in reducing poverty in Wamunyu in terms of generating incomes for the people, it is however, observed that the industry is not well organized and managed to provide maximum benefit to those engaged in it. The activities are operated in poorly organized working spaces and are torn into small business units of individuals operated in different market centres and homes. The organization and management of the business is very poor hence resulting in low incomes to those engaged in the business and high profits to people not directly engaged in it. The concern of the study is therefore to examine the nature and extent of wood-carving crafts in Wamunyu location as an industry and assess their contribution to the people in the location. It is also the aim of the study to highlight on the major constraints to the performance of the craft in particular marketing constraint. The study will examine the organization of the whole industry to get insight into who benefits from it and whether the activity provides reasonable income for the artisans and how much of it is ploughed back to the location. The study will propose measures of how the industry can be organized and improved to generate more income to the operators, Wamunyu Location and the country as a whole.

Justification and Relevance of the Study:

The fact that the informal sector activities in our country are officially recognized as having potential for development, itself seems to justify a critical investigation of their development and contributions. The government has since independence followed a policy of promoting development in the rural areas where about 80 percent of the population live. In realization that the development of the nation can not be realized by relying on limited sectors, the government embarked on integrated rural development programmes which include promotion and encouragement of small cottage industries. With these programmes, it is found that each industry and resource besides being studied collectively, needs to be isolated and studied to give the inherent specific contributions and problems hence providing further planning base.

A number of scholars have carried out surveys on small scale industrial activities development throughout the country. These include the International Labour Organization (1972) House (1978), Killick (1979), Lone (1979), Chesaro (1981), National Council for Science and Technology (1984), Mochache (1985), Aboagye (1986) among others. However a close examination of the rural handicraft component

of the informal sector has not drawn many scholars attention. Most research done related to these activities have dwelled on the urban areas. Little is therefore known about the extent, nature and constraints of the handicraft activities in the rural areas particularly the most popular wood-carving industry which is currently earning the country substantial foreign exchange. Kenya External Trade Authority (K.E.T.A.) in 1981 recorded that handicrafts earned the country over Kshs. 15 million foreign exchange and 63% of this came from wood carvings. Noting the significant contributions of the industry and other related activities, the government should intervene to organize them in order to increase their potential. Wood-carving enterprise has not been studied on a comprehensive scale to show whether or not there is potential in traditional art based informal activities and how they can be assisted if need be. Interests in informal sector has mainly centred on urban based informal activities. Elkan W(1958) did a social research on the Kamba trade in Wood carvings but his study was kind of a historical analysis of the activity by that time and it gives little information which can be used as a guide in assisting the artisans. No thorough research has attempted to generate a data base which could be

used to plan for the promotion or discouragement of such activities. 'Child (1977), Okello (1973), Ministry of finance and planning (N.C.S.T. Department, and others have carried surveys on rural industrial activities but their studies have not included this activity. This study therefore attempts to look into the aspects of wood carving industry with the aim of gaining insight into the evolution and nature of the industry, its organization and management to expose benefits or otherwise of the industry and show how much it earns those engaged in it, constraints to further development of the activity with particular regard to marketing of the products and to indigenous raw materials availability in Wamuyu location and problems associated with their overutilization.

Study objectives

The study objectives are:-

- (1) To examine the evolution of the wood-carving activities in Wamuyu location with reference to:
 - (i) Factors that led to the development of carving industry in the location.
 - (ii) Factors that have led to collective carving at Wamuyu market centre and other centres in the location.

- (2) To examine the contribution of the activity to those engaged in it and Wamunyu location in terms of:-
 - (i) income and employment generation
 - (ii) physical growth of Wamunyu market centre.

- (3) Examine the constraints to further development of the activity with particular attention to raw materials, marketing, policy framework and physical or spatial organization of the working places where these activities are carried out.

- (4) Suggest measures of how the industry can be organized and improved to generate more income for the Wamunyu people.

Study Assumptions/Hypothesis:

In line with the objectives laid out, the study is based on the assumption that small scale rural informal activities more especially traditional handicrafts although significant to the operators, do not seem to receive significant government attention. We hypothesise that rural non-farm activities such as handicrafts if supported and organized are able to stimulate rural change for broader community benefit by creating productive employment, providing basic

needs, promoting agriculture and stimulating and strengthening rural market centres in which some of them are operated.

Scope and limitations of the study

The study focuses on wood-carving industry in the context of rural development. It examines the problems of rural development in Machakos District and in Wamunyu location in particular. It further examines the role rural informal sector activities especially handicrafts plays in raising the standards of the people in the rural areas. The study also examines the constraints or problems facing the rural handicraft industry with a view of coming up with suggestions on how best the activities can be organized to benefit the people engaged in them and the rural communities as well.

The scope of this study was limited by amount of time and resources available to a selected informal activity of handicraft nature in Wamunyu location.

Admittedly, the activity considered may not represent the whole handicraft component of the informal sector spectrum and may not also give a

complete picture of the rural handicraft industry. This was due to the short time allocated for the study. Lack of comprehensive statistical data on rural cottage industries as it has been observed by many researchers also limited the depth of the investigation. Further, due to limited time, the study did not go in to detailed economic and sociological analysis of the activity which are deemed necessary if one is to come up with a comprehensive study of the role of handicraft industry in rural development. Despite these limitations, it is hoped that the study will serve as an inspiration for more extensive studies on the handicraft component of the informal sector.

Research Methodology

The survey examined wood carving artisanal activities in Wamunyu location Machakos district. As previously mentioned, Wamunyu location was selected for the study because is one of the Machakos rural areas with high concentration of wood carving enterprises. In order to examine the nature of the wood carving activities, their potential role in the development of Wamunyu location and constraint to their development, the study employed two types of data acquisition methods namely - primary and secondary methods. Primary data :

questionnaire, personal interviews and observations.

Two types of questionnaires were drawn :-

One for the people engaged in the production of carvings and another one for commercial businessmen in Wamunyu market centre. Information in the wood carvers questionnaire aimed at establishing the historical development of carving activities, factors that have led to many people get involved in the activity, potentiality of the sub-sector interms of generation of employment and income; issues and problems which have had an effect on the development of the enterprise in Wamunyu.

The commercial questionnaire was to establish the contribution of wood carvings to the growth of Wamunyu market center since for a long period of time most of the activities have been operating in the town. The questionnaire focused on the time when most businesses in Wamunyu market were started, type of businesses conducted, sources of starting capital, former occupations, of the businessmen, reasons for locating their businesses in Wamunyu market, volume of sales before and after the wood-carvers had moved to the town, changes noticed in the town over time, benefits from the wood-carving business, among others. Suppliers of the raw materials

mainly wood and local buyers of the carvings were also interviewed to get the role they play in promoting the industry.

Methods of questionnaire administration:

The research consisted of a survey of the wood carving activities in the whole location.

Sample was drawn as follows:-

A list of the universe to be sampled was not available so a general survey of the whole location was done in order to get a general picture of the spatial distribution of the activities. A preliminary listing of all people in the location engaged in the business was done with assistance of the locations Chief and assistant chiefs. The number identified to be stationed in Wamunyu location was 529 excluding the artisans who have migrated to do the businesses in Mombasa, Nairobi, Nanyuki, Nakuru and other towns outside the location. The number of people operating outside the location was reported to be higher than those currently operating in Wamunyu. This number also excludes those stationed in the location engaged in purchasing the curios (middlemen), those employed by the middlemen as finishers and suppliers of the raw materials. The artisans were found to be

clustered in the trading centres and homes with Wamunyu Market Centre having the largest number and others in Yathui, Miondoni, Savuku and Kilembwa trading centres.

The study is based on a sample of 80 artisans, 30 businessmen operating in Wamunyu Market Centre and 10 middlemen. A sample of 45 artisans was interviewed in Wamunyu market cent, 25 from each other centres and 10 from homes. The choice of the person to be interviewed from those found in cluster was on random basis.

To obtain further information on this activity, further informal interviews were conducted with various institutions such as Wamunyu Handicraft society, Masaku County Council, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Kenya External Trade Department), Ministry of Culture and Social Services (Cottage Department), Kenya Craft Union, Nairobi Handicraft Cooperative Soceity, among others.

Secondary data:

This was obtained from literature review of books, reports and other documents related to informal sector activities and handicrafts. Maps, Photographs, tables are also used for further illustrations.

Structural Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters.

Chapter One: Comprises an examination of governments' approach to national development and the approaches used to promote development in all parts of the country. The Chapter also consists of the statement of the problem, aim of the study, study objectives, scope, assumptions and research methodology.

Chapter Two gives the theoretical framework
Chapter Three - gives the general background information of the study area. Chapter Four gives the analysis of the gathered data and their implications. Chapter Five - gives the summary of findings, suggestions on how the identified problems can be solved and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR : A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

There is lack of comprehensive literature on small scale industries in the rural areas in particular handi-craft activities. There is nonetheless, a number of works and research done which are somewhat relevant to the issue under consideration. Among these are works on - Small scale industrial enterprises, Cottage Industries and Rural development, climatic conditions and development of non-farm activities.

Development of the rural areas is a major concern to most developing countries especially the ones with few industrial potentials. The importance and emphasis on rural development lies in the fact that in most developing countries unlike in the developed economies, majority of the population reside in the rural areas.

Kenya like many other developing nations has since independence pursued policies aimed at promoting development in the rural areas. This is because about 80 percent of its country's population live and earn their livelihood in these areas. The recent government emphasis on the district as the focus for development implies that the rural areas are going to assume more attention as areas needing further development considerations. This came as a result of the recognition of the untapped or underutilized resources existing in the rural areas.

Heyer and Ireri (1974) in their definition of rural development contend that 'national development' in essence is concerned with rural development. They hold that national development is dependent upon progress and prosperity of the rural sector. Thus rural development is the backbone of national development.

Aziz, S (1978), noted that the major problems of third world countries are - absolute poverty, unemployment and inflation and that the starting point of rural development is the objective of eliminating rural poverty and meeting rural populations basic needs. He says that rural development is a social transformation of the rural society and adoption of varied strategies which will accelerate rural development. He goes further to say that "a rapid and sustained increase in agricultural productivity is the first important objective of rural development but itself cannot ensure a continuous improvements in living standards particularly in countries with limited agricultural potential". Rural development therefore according to Aziz does not only involve promotion of the agricultural sector but also promotion of non-farm activities.

Killick, T (1979) enhanced the idea by arguing

that rural development cannot be limited to agriculture if it is to be successful but has to incorporate development of other sectors especially rural non-farm activities which are sources of rural employment and income with about 43 percent of small holder income being generated in this way. Rural development according to Umalele (1975) is an increase in the economic and social welfare and it involves a positive change in standards of living of the people in the rural areas. It involves improving the general welfare of the rural people in terms of providing employment which results in a rise in incomes and thus reduction of poverty.

Mbithi (1972) argues that rural development can be seen as a multi-sectoral set of action programmes aiming at among others increasing employment opportunities of rural people and arresting the steady stream of people from rural areas to urban centres through diversification of occupations in agriculture, industry and commerce in the rural areas. Therefore rural development can be seen as a strategy that encourages the introduction of a wide range of programmes to increase employment opportunities through promotion of industrial activities by removing all obstacles in the way of those engaged in them.

One of the most escalating problem in most developing countries is of rural-urban migration. This phenomena has led to over concentration of able bodied people in the urban areas leaving the old and the young in the rural areas. The attempt in most countries has been on stemming down the migration and this has been approached through development of the rural areas. In Kenya, rural development has also hinged upon the development of the rural centres. This implies, increasing development not only in the major urban centres but also in a number of small trading centres from where benefits are expected to spread to the surrounding hinterlands,

The 1970-74 National Development Plan designates rural growth centres as focii for trade, social services and communications which serve the surrounding farm areas and significantly alter the pattern of migration and provide more even development of the nation as a whole. Thus rural development should embrace not only farm areas but also local centres which provides goods and services of lower order. It is also recommended that for the purpose of rural development, the local market centres are of critical importance and endeavours should be concentrated at this level.

It is further noted that informal sector activities carried out by entrepreneurs in rural market centres are important in the provision of demand for goods and services in the centres. The activities generate income to the entrepreneurs who in turn provide market for goods generated by other businesses in the centre. Again the market centre residents provide a market for raw materials from the surrounding farm areas. This encourages and promotes the growth of the rural centres. Todaro and Harris (1970) argue that given the present nature of rural to urban migration, it is unlikely that increased employment opportunities in the urban areas will reduce the problem of the unemployment. So the only solution is to increase and promote rural and small-town employment opportunities,

It is further suggested that the flow of urban migrants can be reduced by stimulating growth of small rural centres through promotion of small scale enterprises operated in the centres. From this it can be observed that rural development does not only involve promotion and development of varied activities like small scale enterprises be they cottage or otherwise and stimulation of small trading centres,

Development of semi-arid lands has hitherto received substantial attention in Kenya. The areas comprise over 80 percent of the land in the country and support more than 20 percent of the population and hence the need for development attention. It is observed that families in these lands exist in extreme poverty due to low level of agricultural production. It is thus inevitable in such areas that people develop off-farm activities to generate income. Studies carried out in Kenya and elsewhere show that under marginal and medium potential conditions, farmers tend to engage in other income generating activities other than farming as a measure against risk. It is also observed that farmers engage in non-farm occupations of varying degrees depending on the agricultural potential of the farms and also on the level of adoption of recommended agricultural practices. From these findings it would appear that farmers in high potential agricultural areas will be less inclined to engage in non-farm occupations compared to those in marginal and medium potential zones.

Wilsner and Mbithi (1973) in their study on "Drought in Eastern Kenya" also observed that human beings for getting a living have evolved such that they continue to function within the range of physical conditions. When rainfall fails or falls below the expected limit, the farmer employs practices or adjustments which reduces

the damage. Man is seen as a creative actor who attempts to cope with an environment which is constantly changing and exhibiting unreliable patterns. Through choice of technology, man 'adjusts' to and improves upon his environment to increase its productive capacity and reduce risk.

Carlsen (1976) in his study of the historical development of non-farming activities in Kenya seem to agree with Mbithi that the degree of engagement in non-farm activities depends on the potentiality of an area. His survey in four districts - Kisumu, Kwale, Taita and Kisii found out that non-farm activities in Kisumu and to some extent Taita and Kwale were more developed than in Kisii. He observed that trade and non-farm activities were developed out of the need for the people to supplement their low production of food crops due to nearly marginal conditions. Specialization and non-farming activities seem to have been less developed among the Kisii people. This is probably due to much higher and stable rainfall in Kisii highlands. This in essence implies that some non-farm activities like wood carving and other small scale enterprises in addition to being taken up as a source of employment by the unemployed rural people, in some instances they develop as a means of adjustments to the environmental conditions of an area. These

activities as Schadler, K (1968) in his study on crafts and small scale enterprises found plays an essential role in the economy of most countries especially in countries where there is shortage of capital and low industrial potential. The activities as Dandekar (1966) notes are concerned with processing of local raw materials for local markets and for export using simple techniques. He found out that the major problem facing the traditional handicrafts of most developing countries is lack of demand; inefficient equipments used and unimproved designs. Stimulation of demand within the country and exploration of markets abroad are among the principal measures needed to keep alive this class of industry. He also recommended that development programmes should aim at organizing the industries in appropriate organizations so as to facilitate sales, marketing and financing of their production. He further advocated for development of large number of small towns widely distributed over different parts of the country into industrial townships with planned provision for small scale and light industries. This will create a new link between the rural and urban areas, increase employment in the country, and promote regional self sufficiency.

Heavy manufacturing industries processing products as Karsten (1972) found out results in

reduction of small scale enterprises and traditional crafts. This results to unemployment of the craftsmen involved. The study calls for adoption of safeguarding policies. On the question of development, the study stated that establishment of industries in major towns leads to 'evacuation effect' whereby the rural areas lose part of their capacity to the urban centre. To prevent this, Karsten calls for cautious policy of regional development. This is the only way of fighting the problems of mass unemployment and high migration in the developing countries.

Douglas Fisher (1968) in his study on small scale undertakings in India has said that handicrafts have a part to play in the explicit purpose in addition to providing employment opportunities of reviving interest in arts and crafts in order to preserve the national heritage.

The World Bank report on small scale enterprises in Kenya found out that the activities be they agricultural processing industries, blacksmithing, brick making, tailoring, carpentry, wood carving, furniture making among others play an essential part in rural development of most developing countries. They nurture entrepreneurship in training, improve technical

skills, generate savings, tap resources and help to stem migration to metropolitan areas.

In his report on 'Rural Informal Firms' Child, F. (1977) found out that the rural informal sector is growing at an accelerated rate. He noted that despite their small sizes, the business provide average income for the owners. Also the rate of return on invested capital compares favourably with modern sector. He further pointed that capital invested in the sector creates more jobs than does an equivalent amount of capital formation in the modern sector and is preferred to subsistence agriculture and unemployment. He recommended for removal of legal impediments restraining the activities. and advocated for.

- provision of infrastructure for the sector
- expansion of small-business extension services
- modification of the goods produced:

Elkan, W. (1958) did an analysis of the historical development of the Akamba Trade in wood carving. In rather a praising manner, he said that the Akamba are singled out from many other people of East Africa not because of their talent as carvers but by the fact that they have turned a traditional craft into a flourishing commercial enterprise.

The business according to the report was growing rapidly in the post-war period and was providing an alternative source of income to the people. The activity was not well organized to cope with demand from several parts of the world. The main problem facing the trade then was restrictions on street hawking. This had effect not only of concentrating opportunity from many Kamba hands into few but even more of laying the field open to non-Africans who had hitherto played a minor part in the sales of carvings. The study however did not give details of contribution of the industry to the development of the area where it is located neither did it closely examine major problems arising from the undertakings of the craft.

Aleke-Dondo (1986) in a paper on the rural informal sector, notes that the rural informal sector presents opportunities and advantages that have not been stressed. The sector:-

- provides sources of cash income to peasant farmers who make out a subsistent living from their small holdings. Some are less affected by seasonality than sales of crops and they do occupy the time of rural people productively when agricultural labour is not demanded.

- They are preferred to agriculture especially in marginal zones.
- May help in discouraging migration to major towns by offering some alternative employment in the rural areas and attract migrants back to the rural areas.
- Also help in development of entrepreneurial talents and technical skills.

Aleke further noted that some difficulties have to be overcome if the sector is to realise its potential and make the cited contributions. These are the problems of demand for the products and dependence on urban informal sector.

Despite the identified potential in the informal sector, as the influential International Labour Organization (I L O) group in Kenya 1972 found, there has been a considerable neglect of the activities (be they urban or rural based) in as far as development policies are concerned. The activities have suffered an eclipse possibly because of the early emphasis on large capital units. There is a bias in research towards the large scale enterprises and technical enterprises thus neglecting the small production units in the country. The group urged the government to have a positive attitude towards the sector. They pointed out

that emphasis of research organizations should be concerned with technology for rural small scale enterprises of all nature. It is by recognition of this sector that the country can realise the skills inherent in the people and utilize them in industrial activities which could supplement the domestic product requirements.

The common problems inhibiting development of handicrafts as observed by the International Conference on Handicraft export (1981) and World Bank study on Employment and Development of Small Scale enterprises are - quality control, pricing, marketing lack of streamlined government policy, lack of access to institutional credits, raw materials, better tools and difficulties of obtaining permits and licences.

Although Kenyan governments response to the ILO report initially appeared responsive, little has been done to translate the general prescriptions into precise policy measures. The government has in its development plans recognised the potential in the informal enterprises as demonstrated in the National Development Plans of 1979 - 83 and 1984 - 88. It even goes further to give strategies of how it will go about to promote the sector. The Sessional paper Number I of 1986 on

economic management for Renewal Growth also stresses the the importance of the sector in contributing to renewed economic growth of the country. It also sets out strategies on how the sector can be promoted.

Recent works by several scholars like House (1980) Kabagambe (1975), Chesaro, L. (1981) Nor Cliffe, (1981), ILO sponsored report of 1986, Mochache, J. (1985) and others on the informal sector in the urban and rural areas in Kenya shows that the sector is still hampered by the same handicaps which the previous Government Development plans set out to alleviate. Their findings lead one to accept the proposition that the informal sector no matter where it is located cannot grow unless the government turns its recommendations into actions.

On the other hand we have scholars who have a pessimistic view of the informal sector. The sector has been described as a reservoir of entrepreneurship for the formal sector and as a place where people go when they do not find their way into productive employment in the urban and rural areas. Kitching (1980) expresses his doubts about the profitability and future growth and development of the informal sector. He sees the sector as activities which the

unemployed undertake in order to keep themselves alive while waiting and hoping for the economic system to provide the more remunerative occupations which will make upward mobility a possibility. Allen, H. (1977) said that the fact that the informal sector employs increasing number of people is not a sign of growth potential but index of increasing number of unemployed people whose needs must be served. It should be seen as a reflection of the general economic level of Kenyan society than an agent of growth in its own right. He concludes that effective indigenous industrial growth cannot be expected to emerge from the informal sector but probably for a situation of 'comprador' accumulation at the top.

Bryce, M. (1965) in an attempt to discuss the best method of industrialization had dismissed traditional crafts and other small scale enterprises from further consideration by pointing to the poor quality of their products and inefficient methods of production.

These observations are counteracted by Muench Louis findings on informal sector in Kenya that the traditional sector has turned out to be saviour for several key problems of development and must therefore be seen as an area requiring attention.

From the reviewed literature, it can be noted that rural development means changes occurring among a given rural population and in time indicating a rise in the standard of living and favourable changes in the way of life. Rapid and sustained increase in agricultural productivity is the first objective of rural development but itself will not ensure a continuous improvements in living standards particularly in countries with limited agricultural potential. Rural development therefore in addition to promotion of agricultural sector, involves promotion of rural non-farm activities of any nature.

This study agrees with Schadler (1968) and Aleke (1-86) that rural non-farm activities like traditional crafts using traditional skills and local raw materials have an essential role in rural development. The future development of some developing countries as Schadler noted can emerge from the nuclei of small cottage activities and other small scale enterprises and as such countries should design policies to promote them. India gives a good example of a country whose economy has significantly been boosted by small scale enterprises of varied nature.

From the available literature, it can be observed that there is lack of research addressed to the development

of traditional rural handicrafts more so in Kenya. A number of the scholars cited so far have carried out surveys on rural industrial undertakings but none of them has intensively studied the aspects of traditional industrial crafts like wood carving in a bid to come up with policy recommendations on how they could be reorganized and promoted to enhance their improvements noting that the activity is unique from the other informal sector activities. Studies done on cottage activities in Ethiopia, India and Tanzania among others give a broad and general background as demonstrated in the literature cited earlier, a point where research on specific handicraft activity can start. Moreover studies related to rural informal industrial activities show certain common trends. They have mainly considered the economic, sociological and political aspects of the activities. However none of the studies have incorporated physical and management aspects in an attempt to show how the activities can be organized for further development. This study is in line with the suggestion by House (1977) that the constituent component of rural informal industrial sector should be isolated and analysed to show the problems behind the activities. The study therefore aims at examining wood-carving activities of rural informal sector in Wamunyu rural setting in an attempt to show their potential role in rural development and complexities behind their

operations and give policy recommendations from planning point of view.

KENYAN POLICY ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMAL
SECTOR

Government policies, goals and objectives towards rural development are explicitly spelt out in the National Development Plans. The policies adopted aims at improving the standard of living of the rural population and making the process of their development self sustaining. The government over the time has realized that it is through accelerated rural development that balanced economic development can be achieved, that the necessary growth of employment opportunities can be generated, and that the people can participate in development process (1970 - 74 National Development Plan). The policy goals on rural development include -

- encouragement of agricultural technologies likely to increase production
- provision of infrastructural facilities to provide economic stimulus
- Encouragement of small scale rural based industries, and
- rising urbanization in the small trading centres.

Consideration of non-farm activities mainly the informal activities as important elements of national development is a recent phenomenon in the country. Despite its long existence, the sector had not until very recently received much government attention. Since the I L O report (1972) on employment and income in Kenya, there has been inconsistent concern of the development of the informal sector in the country. The sector has only received government attention during the current National Development Plan. In the past, the government had noted the potential of the sector without working out a strategy that will enable exploitation of the sector's potential. The importance of the sector has been stressed in the 1984 - 1988 National Development Plan and the 1986 National Sessional Paper Number I on Economic Management for Renewed Growth. In attempt to promote the small scale industries, the government has established small industries division in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to monitor the implementation of small industries development programme and to provide assistance to the development extension services. A programme of building sheds for the artisans has been started. Initiatives are being undertaken to expand access to credit facilities for the businesses and other related assistance. The newly adopted strategy of District focus for Rural Development aims at strengthening rural development by encouraging

the policy makers and the local people to come together and consider every viable development activity in the district in the development programmes. This is important because experience has proved that the agricultural sector cannot be relied upon to meet the needs of the rural population and hence other activities such as informal sector activities have to be encouraged.

CHAPTER THREE

PHYSICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF STUDY AREA:

This chapter examines briefly the physical, social and economic characteristics of Wamunyu location in order to show the conditions that surround the development of the informal sector activity under discussion.

Location and Size:

Wamunyu location which is the area under study is situated on the eastern part of Machakos district at about 45 kilometres from Machakos district town along the Machakos - Kitui road. The location is bordered on the northern part by Mwala Location, Masii on the Western part, Kibauni and Muthetheni on the south and Yatta on the eastern part. Figure II shows the position of the location in Machakos district. The location covers an area of 188 kilometres. Administratively, Wamunyu location is divided into 7 sub-locations namely - Kambiti, Kwakala, Kyamatula, Kyangulumi, Kilembwa, Kyawango and Kaitha.

Physiographically, the location is found in the eastern plains of Machakos district which are lowlying (915 - 1460 m) with gently sloping plains. The terrain is at some places uneven due to distortions mostly caused by water erosion.

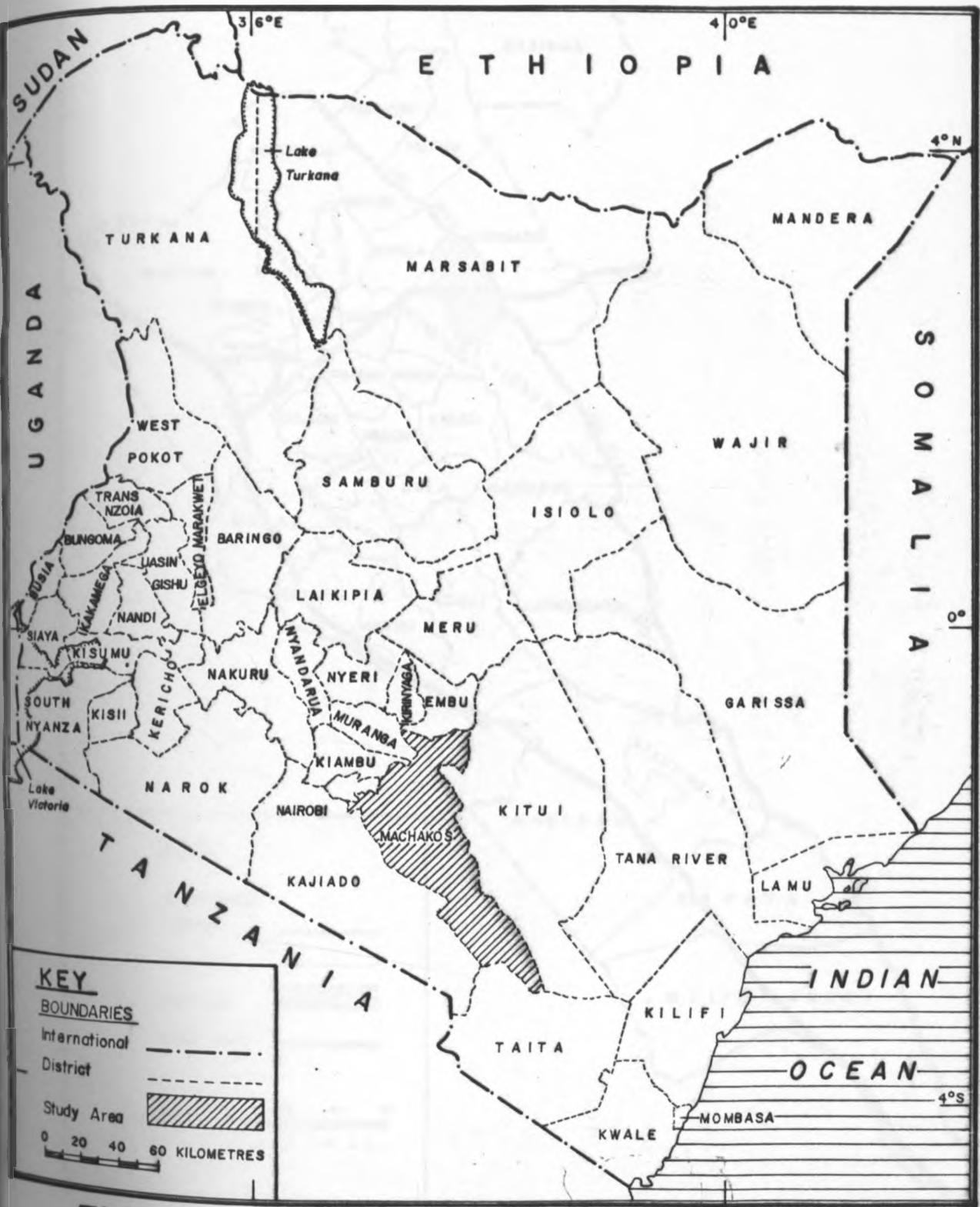


FIG. 1: THE POSITION OF MACHAKOS DISTRICT IN KENYA

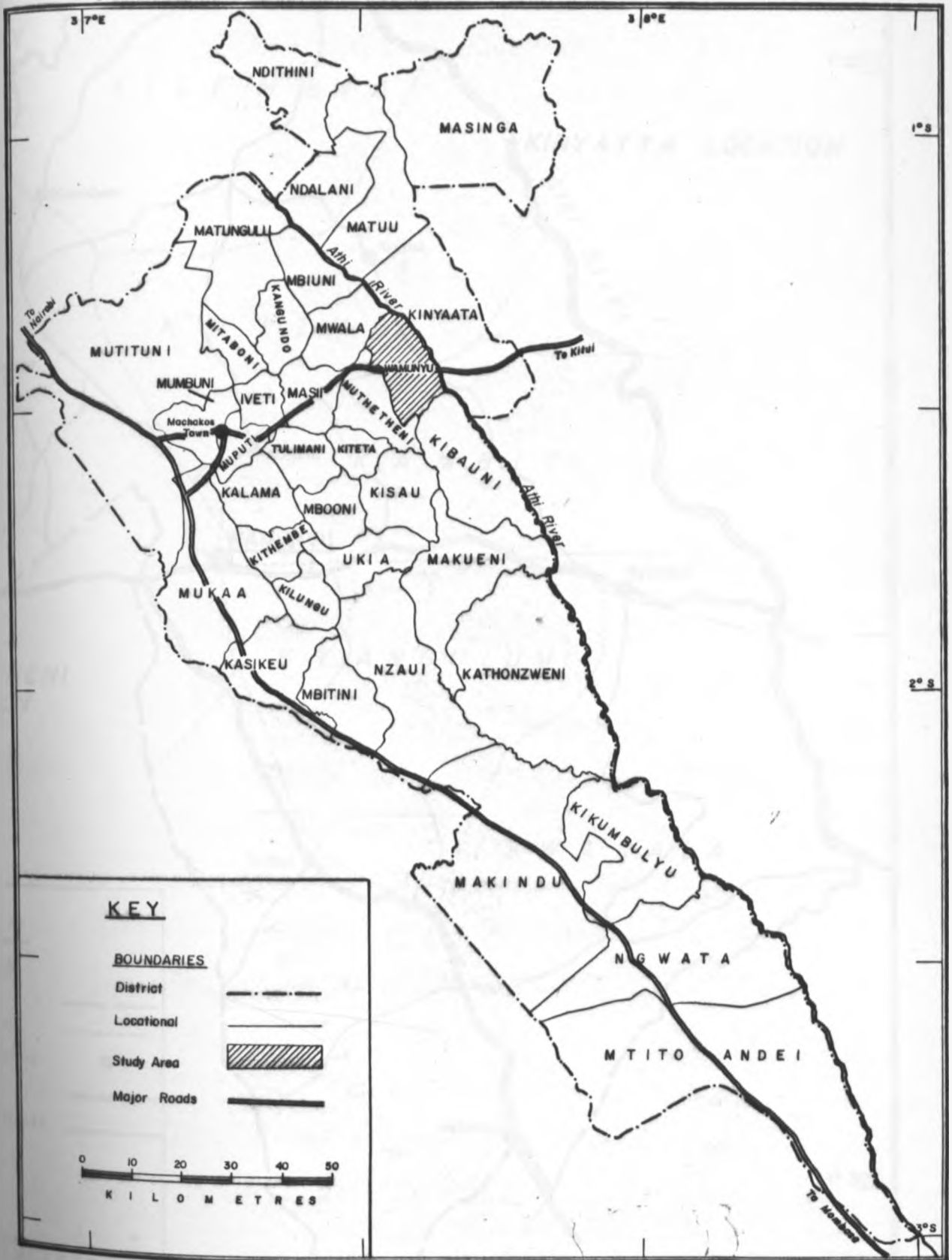


FIG. 2: THE POSITION OF WAMUNYU LOCATION IN MACHAKOS DISTRICT.

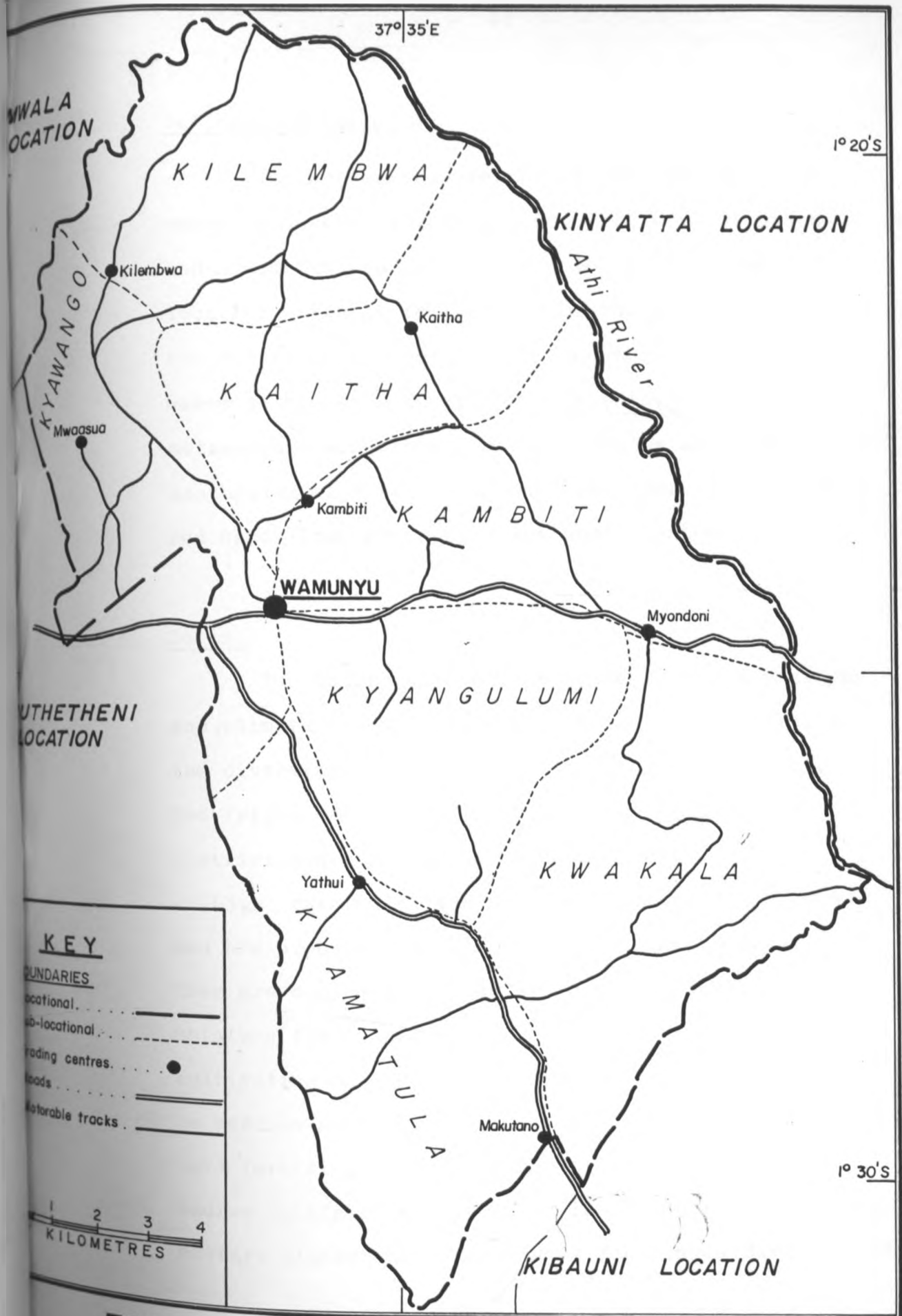


FIG. 3: WAMUNYU LOCATION
 B-LOCATIONS, WAMUNYU MARKET, LOCAL TRADING CENTRES AND ROAD NETWORK

Geology and Soils:

The present day relief of Machakos district rests on basement, rock system, Tertiary volcanics and sediments; and pleistocene volcanics. Wamunyu location which is to the east of the hill masses of the district is underlain by precambrian rocks of basement system. These consists mainly of the metamorphosed sediments such as shales and limestone. weathering of these rocks have resulted to dark and red sandy loam soils of a low humic content.

Soils:

The nature of the underlying rocks, topography and climate plays an important role in accounting for the diversity of soil types in Machakos district. Red friable clay covers less than a third of the district and corresponds with the belt of high rainfall. The soils are dark reddish brown and are products of volcanic and basement rocks. They are medium-humic and are capable of retaining moisture for a long period. In this belt, unplanned cultivating methods and clearing of trees have led to serious soil erosion which has greatly affected the soil fertility. Areas in the district receiving medium rainfall that is areas in the south-eastern and eastern plains where Wamunyu is found have dark reddish

brown soils and dark sandy loams which are shallow with low humic contents. Overgrazing and clearing of trees in these areas have also interfered with the soil fertility.

Rainfall:

Rainfall is a very important factor in the district. This is because about 90 percent of the districts population derive their living from agriculture which depends on rainfall.¹ In the district, rainfall varies with altitude and the topography. The average rainfall in the district ranges from over 1,000 mm. in the Mua-Iveti-Kiima Kimwe hills' to slightly below 500 mm. in the lowlying south and eastern part of the district, Fig. IV gives a picture of the amount of rainfall received in the district and in Wamunyu location. Wamunyu location receives an average annual rainfall of 600 mm - 800 mm. which varies from year to year. The rainfall has a bimodal pattern with significant difference in distribution during different years. This applies to the other parts in the district. Table I gives a picture of rainfall distribution in Machakos district over different years.

1. Owako (1969): The Machakos Problem: A study of Aspects of the Agrarian problems of Machakos district.

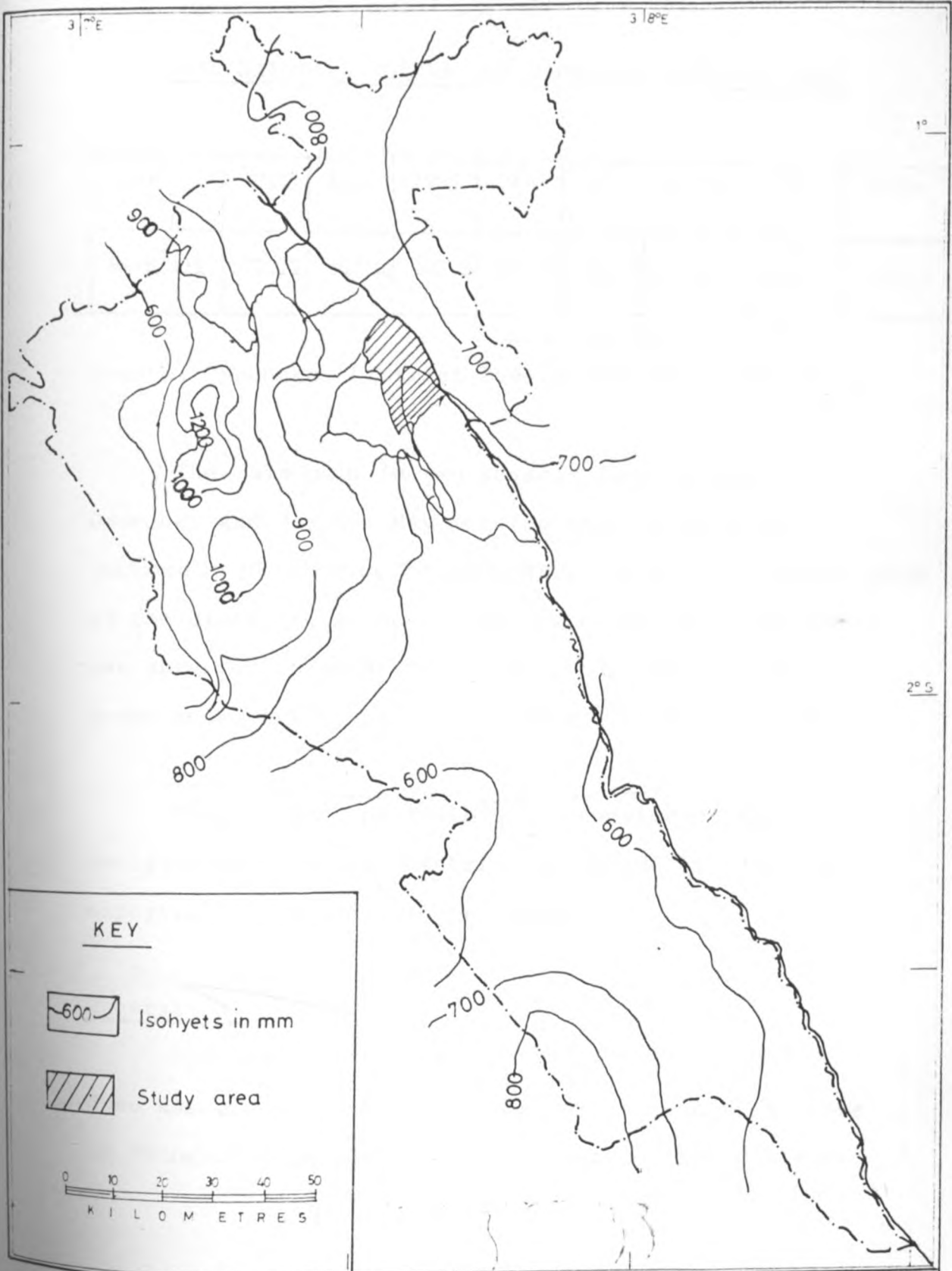


FIG. IV. AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL: MACHAKOS DISTRICT.

TABLE I

ANNUAL RAINFALL TOTALS FOR MACHAKOS DISTRICT (MM)

Year	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Rainfall	772.7	897.6	722.8	670.8	955.7	1112.9	1226.1	1021.1

Source: Machakos District Development Plan 1984-88.

The rain falls in two seasons from November-December and March - May meaning that no rain is received in the district for six months. Also a result, in most parts of the district, seasonal crops are the only ones which can survive. Drought resistant crops can also be grown where soils can hold moisture for a longer period.

Temperature of 14-18^oc is experienced in the lowlying parts of the district while the hill masses experience relatively lower temperatures.

Vegetation

The vegetation of the district is also diverse. Some associations of vegetation pattern and soil types is recognised in almost every part of the district.

In the lowlying parts of the district (eastern and south - eastern parts). Variations in soil types give rise to variation in vegetation type. Impacts of Man on the vegetation has been felt everywhere in the district. There are some remnants of natural vegetation in the hill masses of the district indicating that atleast the district had some natural forests which have been interferred with. Vegetation in most parts of the district has been cleared to give room to agriculture and others have been cut down for fuelwood and charcoal burning. What is evident in most parts of the district is scattered bushes and thickets and in some places bare ground with scattered grass. This is what is common in the lowlying parts of the district including Yatta plateau. According to Owako's classification of vegetation types in Machakos district, the area under study falls in the Acacia-Combretum zone which has tall and short acacia trees and thick acasia bushes mixed up with commiphora vegetation. Most of the acacia trees have been cleared for charcoal and other purposes including wood carving. The depletion of these trees in the area and the surrounding areas has had a serious consequences for the carvers' wood supply. People engaged in wood carving business in the area get most of the wood they need from Karura and Ngong forests which are outside the district.

The grasses associated with this zone are chloris Myrios tachya , Eragrostic superba and cenchrus ciliaris in the acacia tortilis zone and hyperrhenia dissolata and hyparrhenia filipendula and cenchrus ciliaris in the combretum zone. This is a belt of grazing and most of the grass has been overgrazed therefore bare grounds are found.

Ecological zones.

Machakos district lies within 3 types of ecological zones. (see figure v). Table II shows areas within the 3 ecological zones.

TABLE 2 DISTRIBUTION OF AGRO-ECOLOGICAL ZONES: MACHAKOS DISTRICT.

Agro-ecological Zones	% of district Agri. Area	Description of Area
High potential II	5.4	Hills of Iveti, Mua, Mbooni, Kilungu, Mbitini and Kangundo
Medium Potential III & IV	38.4	Lower slopes of hills and location of Okia, Nzau, Kisau, Mwala, Mbooni, Masii, Mitaboni, Muthetheni, Kalama
Low Potential V & VI	56.4	Yatta, Wamunyu, Kibauni, Makueni, Kikumbulyu, Ngwata, Makindu, Mtito Andei

Source: Machakos District Development Plan 1984-88.

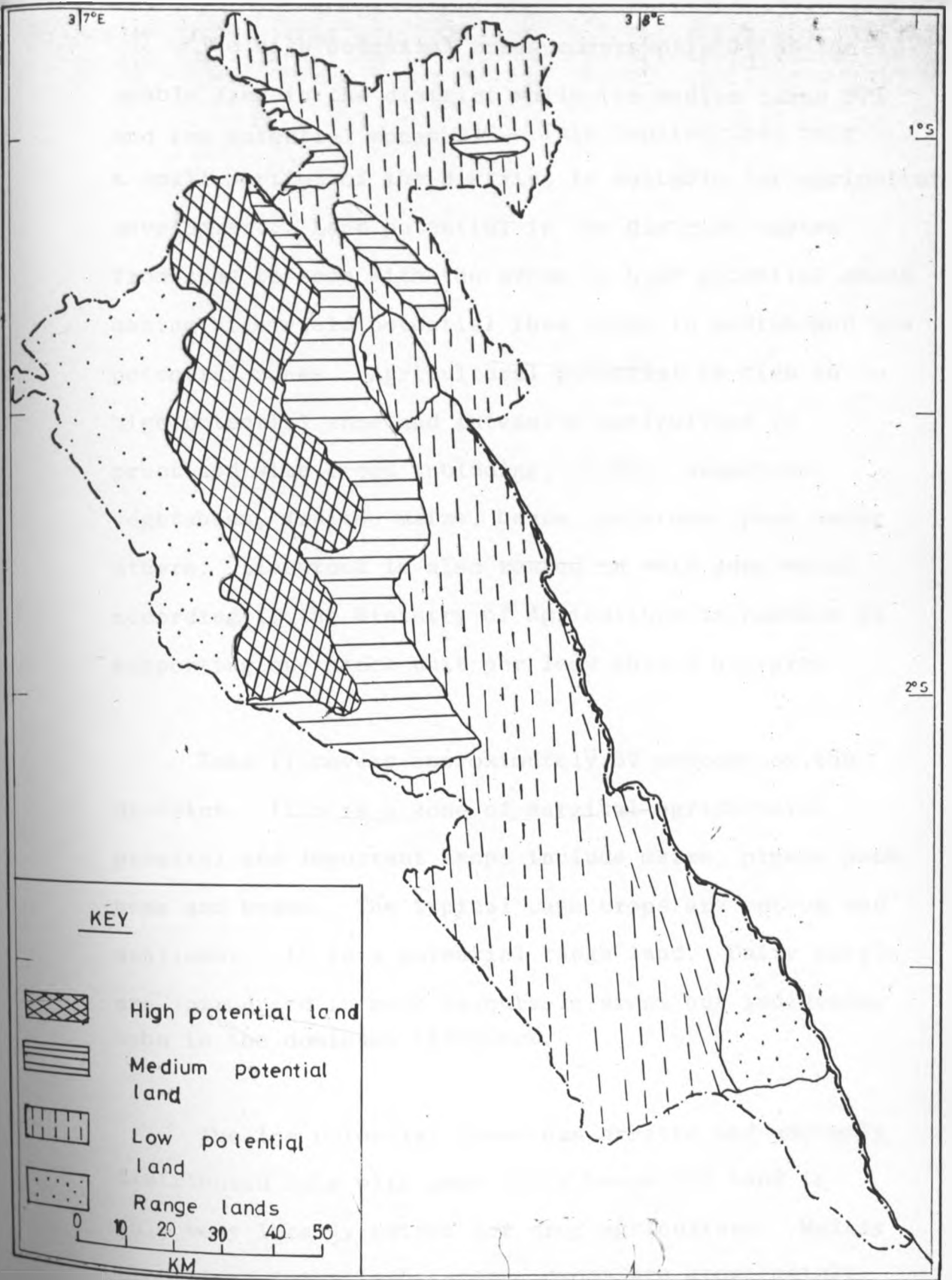


FIG. V. AGRO-ECOLOGICAL ZONES: MACHAKOS DISTRICT.

The high potential zones covers only 9% of the usable land in the district while the medium takes 57% and low potential zones 34%. This implies that only a small portion of the district is suitable for agricultural development. Land potential in the district varies from zone to zone with the areas in high potential zones having high yield potential than those in medium and low potential zones. Agricultural potential is high in high potential zone and intensive agriculture is practised with crops including, coffee, sugarcane, vegetables, fruits, maize, beans, potatoes, peas among others. Livestock is also reared in this zone which according to the Ministry of Agriculture is capable of supporting one stock unit per less than 2 hectares.

Zone II covers approximately 57 percent of the district. It's is a zone of marginal agricultural potential and important crops include maize, pigeon peas, peas and beans. The typical cash crops are cotton and sunflower. It is a potential range land. Dairy cattle are introduced in most favourable areas but indigenous zebu is the dominant livestock.

The low potential zones has erratic and unevenly distributed rain with poor soils hence the land is only very locally suited for crop agriculture. Mainly drought resistant subsistence crops are grown mainly

Katumani maize, cotton and pulses. More than 4 hectares are required per stock unit. Natural grass and the climate of the zone are suitable for indigenous cattle.

Demography

According to the 1979 national population census, Machakos district has a total population of 1,022,522. The population had increased by 44.6% from the 1969 population census at a growth rate of 3.76% per annum. Out of this total population, Wamunyu location has approximately about 14,577 with a population density of 77 persons per square kilometre. There are about 2,487 households in the location. The district by the year 2000 will have slightly over 1,522,551 people.

Economy of the Area.

Much of the development in the location has been influenced by the location of the area in the low potential zone.

There are very few economic activities going on in the location. Agriculture forms the base of the economy of the area though very limited because of the small amount of rainfall received. Most of the people in this area are small scale farmers growing mainly maize and pulses for subsistence which in most

seasons are not enough to sustain the families. Cotton is the principal cash crop but it is not extensively grown and hence not relied upon as a major source of income. Livestock is also kept mainly the local type of cattle, goats, sheep and poultry as sources of meat and occasional cash. The other economic activities in the location are mainly small scale informal activities such as retail shop business, wood carving, bicycle show repair, vegetable selling, carpentry, basket making, drum making, hide and skin businesses, etc. Many people are under-employed mainly because of the seasonal nature of agriculture. Those employed in agriculture are under-employed or earn only a subsistence income from their farm holdings. This has made many drift into the informal business of wood-carving.

Development problems in the location

There are quite a number of development problems experienced in this location. The major problems are connected with agricultural development. Machakos district like other dry areas of Kenya, has a weak agricultural base. Due to the limited arable land, people in the district are forced to exploit a harsh environment. The areas which are capable of supporting permanent agriculture are limited to the

hill areas which comprise only 9% of the total usable land in the district. The other areas are marginal in their ability to support permanent agriculture without introduction of technologies adapted to semi-arid conditions. The potential agricultural land available in the low potential areas is very limited. Table III and IV shows the potential agricultural land in the district and Wamunyu location.

TABLE 3 CATEGORIES OF AGRICULTURAL LAND MACHAKOS
DISTRICT

'000 hectares					
High potential	Medium	low	Total	Other land	Total land area
125	771	454	1315	68	1418

Source: CBS 1984.

TABLE 4 POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND AVAILABLE IN
WAMUNYU LOCATION

Location	Total area (Ha)	None Agri. land	Agri. land	Area in agri. zones	Agri land household	per person
Wamunyu	188	19	169	LM4 LM5 37 132	6.79	1.16

Source: Farm Management Hand book of Kenya 1983.

The Table 4 shows that the usable agricultural land in Wamunyu location is limited (169 ha.) with only about 37 hectares capable of supporting permanent agriculture. This shows that the population in this location does not have adequate potential land which they can cultivate to meet their requirements.

Rainfall is another factor limiting agricultural development in Wamunyu and in Machakos district. The average rainfall received in Wamunyu location is 500 mm - 800 mm. which is very unreliable especially in its seasonal occurrence and totals. Unreliability of the rainfall is either in prolonged delay in their occurrence or prolonged persistence beyond the seasons limit or in form of complete failure in a given season. This leads to dry spells which lead to failure of crops and deterioration of pasture. In terms of rainfall totals, the the location receives totals which are marginal for arable farming. (see Table 5)..

TABLE 5: ANNUAL RAINFALL TOTALS FOR WAMUNYU LOCATION (MM)

Year	1983	1984	1985	1986
Rainfall	512.3	815.7	509.4	573.7

Source: Ministry of Agriculture: Machakos District.

The number of rainy days are also a problem in that the rains do not last until the crops are ready. Thus rainfall totals and seasonal variations in Wamunyu limits the agricultural enterprise. This means that people in the area can not entirely rely on agricultural sector for subsistence and generation of income for other development purposes. Other sources of generating income has to be sought either within or outside the location.

Cropping patterns in Machakos district and in Wamunyu location in particular is another factor connected with agricultural problems as Owako (1969) found out. Crops grown in the location are very limited - mainly maize and pulses. In case of rain failure most of them are affected and this leads to problem of food shortage which is very common in the district. The state of poverty caused by these factors compels farmers in the location to sell most of the food-stuffs they get and eventually end up having food shortages.

Another development problem in Wamunyu location and in Machakos district in general is unemployment and limited employment opportunities. As it will be shown later, modern sector employment account for only

a small proportion of the total employment in rural Machakos. Large number of people are employed in small farms and in a number of cases are under-employed mainly because of the seasonal nature of agriculture. Most of the people engaged in agriculture in the district as well as in Wamunyu location are either under-employed or earn only a subsistence income from their farm holdings. The unemployment rate is, very high and those not in productive employment find their way into the small-scale businesses such as shoe repair, retail shop business, basket making, bicycle repair, wood carving among others. These problems poses a challenge to human adjustment if they are to continue deriving a living. Question is to what extent can the people adjust to this harsh environment and how are they adjusting? It is against this that the nature and extent of non-farm activities in Wamunyu location are examined. The marginal nature of the area in as far as farming is concerned and limited employment opportunities are considered as the major factors leading to the emergence of non-farm activities.

CHAPTER FOUR

WOOD CARVING INDUSTRY OF WAMUNYU: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS:

As indicated in the previous chapter, development in Machakos district is hindered by several factors ranging from physical, economic to social problems. The district is marginal in its agrarian production due to poor soils and the low rainfall received thus rendering agricultural production low. This results in recurrent famine which affects the life of the people in the district. The district has limited arable land leading to high competition for land in the favourable areas which consists about 10% of the district's total agricultural land. This is the only zone receiving enough rainfall to sustain agriculture (over 1000 mm.). The rest of the district is sparsely populated and receives below 900 mm. of rainfall. This situation has led to population pressure on the fertile areas leading to unemployment, underemployment as well as out-migration. Sparse population distribution in the drier areas makes it difficult to distribute services within easy reach of the population. Thus people in these areas have to travel long distances to reach schools, service centres, health and administrative services. With such problems survival in the district requires careful adjustment. How then do the people in the district survive? Owako (1969), Lynam et. al. (1978)

in their studies of Machakos district found out that people have evolved different ways of survival. They found out that people in the district:

- Manage through selling of livestock and the little produce they get from their subsistence farms.
- Also manage by moving out of the district in search of jobs in other districts and towns.
- Others manage to live during the famine periods through famine relief.
- Others depend on relatives who are working in towns and within the location.
- Others manage by engaging in informal enterprises.

This study examines the nature and extent of informal enterprises in Wamunyu location which is one of the locations in Machakos district with low agricultural potential. For the purpose of this study, the engagement of the Wamunyu people in wood carving activities has been interpreted as a form of adjustment to the harsh environmental conditions in the area.

Development of Wood Carvings in Wamunyu Location

Wood-carving enterprise evolved as an art introduced (during the first world war) by a soldier who had gone to the war known as Mutisya Munge from Machakos district. It is reported that Mutisya got exposed to the arts of the Makonde people whose carving traditions have been traced to the mid-nineteenth century (Bennetta Jules - Rosette 1981). Mutisya saw that the Makonde people were able to subsist on income earned from the sales of carvings and apprenticed himself and began to learn the craft. Reportedly returning to his home land in Wamunyu location in 1920, Mutisya began to supplement his livelihood from subsistence farming by selling carvings to Missionaries.¹ With time relatives, friends and fellow villagers learnt the art from him. Accounts of how the craft developed and spread to other parts of Machakos district is long. The development of the enterprise is reported to have increased as the Missionaries and British soldiers who had come during the world war exposed the carvings to their home areas and with time many Kambas in Wamunyu joined the business. The carvers could carve and travel long distance to market the products. They used to take the carvings to many parts of East and Central Africa for marketing,

1. Report from Old Wood Carvers in Wamunyu.

to Rhodesia, Sudan, Congo and even England (Alkan 1958). By 1958, there were many people apprenticed to the craft in Wamunyu location. Due to the problem of marketing the products, some artisans migrated to Nairobi and later to Mombasa. The demand of the products was growing rapidly in the post war period (World War II). According to Alkan's report, the "organization of the industry at the end of the war was hardly able to cope with orders from several parts of the world --" This is the time many people in the location joined the business. The activity increase was also very much depended on the tourist increase and this made many people to migrate from Wamunyu to tourist spots mainly to Mombasa and Nairobi. Those who settled for the carving business in these towns formed co-operatives to assist in organizing themselves as well as market their products - this formed the origin of Mombasa and Nairobi handicraft cooperative societies.

Wamunyu location is considered as the home of wood carving business which has spread to other parts of Machakos district and even outside the district mainly the major urban centres of Nairobi, Mombasa, and other tourist spot towns. Production of wood carving is intensively done in Wamunyu location, Nairobi Gikomba area and Mombasa. The production

is mainly done by the Akamba people and marketing is done by nearly everybody who is able to purchase the products.

Distribution of the activity in Wamunyu location

Carving is universal in the location although a little of it is done in the neighbouring areas and a few of the traders come from neighbouring locations. Most of the people in the location are directly engaged in the carving business. The location always has a fluctuating population of artisans since some of the carvers who moved to Nairobi and Mombasa often come home to farm. So it is difficult to know the exact number of people in the location engaged in the business. To establish the reasons/factors that made the men of Wamunyu engage so intensely in wood carving business, we asked the old respondents the village elders, administrators in the location and others who have seen the activity grow questions in regard to the factors that might have made the people take into the business. Information obtained seemed to agree on certain factors that:

1. the business grew much in the location because of the introduction of the art from the Makonde people of Tanzania.

2. the business spread in the location because of the availability of the raw material (wood mainly black and white ebony) which was found to be good for carving. This is the same wood which the Makonde people were using.

3. Many people took into the activity because they learnt that it could generate income to supplement their peasant farming.

Wood carving business is wide spread in the location. Initially, production was done at home and the products taken to the market centres within and outside the location for marketing. About 39 percent of the respondents started their business in their homes, 50% in Wamunyu market centre and 11% in towns outside the location mainly in Nairobi and Mombasa. The business has with time moved from homes to the market centres in the location. Currently, most of the carving is done in Wamunyu Market Centre, Yathui trading centre, Kilembwa, Savuku and Miondoni trading centres. The reasons given by the respondents for moving their production from home to the centres seems to concur with the held theories of industrial location. The theory of factors affecting the location of businesses/industrial undertakings hold that most business people try to

find the most rewarding location in terms of access to raw materials and market. The ideal location for a production process will be either near the source of raw material to reduce the transfer costs or the market to maximize on profit (Hoover, 1971, Mouly, 1974).

The major reasons given by the respondents for moving their production from home to the trading centres were related to the availability of wood and market for the products. Initially, production was done at home because raw materials were near and now has moved to the market centres since the suppliers of the wood from other locations and from outside the district bring them to Wamunyu trading centre. So many of them were forced to move in order to be near the raw material.

Another reason of moving to the trading centres was to be near buyers of the products. These were mainly the traders in the business who were purchasing the products from the carvers and marketing them outside the location.

Cluster according to the theory is the pattern for units oriented to inputs such as raw materials whose source locations are few. Clustering may also occur with units which find it advantageous to locate

near each other either to benefit from products of the other unit or to acquire skills from each other. Some artisans in Wamunyu moved from home to the market centre in order to acquire more skills from the other carvers who had clustered in the centres. There are others who have moved to be operating in towns outside the location permanently. These have moved mainly because of the marketing opportunities in the towns. Others move from Wamunyu to Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru and other towns seasonally to market their products.

Carving in Wamunyu market centres is done in open temporary sheds, rented rooms and in one permanent workshop. Most of the sheds are overcrowded due to the increased number of carvers in the location.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDUSTRY:

This section gives a brief description of the operating characteristics of the wood carving enterprises in Wamunyu location some of which have implication on the contribution of the business.

Production Techniques:

Production of carvings is done on individual basis and the products sold through Wamunyu handicraft cooperative society and other local carving traders.

The equipments currently in use are simple hand made which as the artisans indicated have been in use since the trade started. Like tools used by most informal sector operators, the tools used by the carvers in Wamunyu use alot of manual labour. The tools used are made from animal hides, local wood and spring steel. The tools are fashioned into Adzels, scapels, axes, wood files and seesaws. These are used in cutting the logs of wood into manageable pieces and in fashioning the wood into various models of carvings. The nature of these tools requires that a carver spend some time in cutting the wood into pieces which consumes some time which could be put. Although the respondents did not view this as a factor affecting the quality of goods or productivity, we anticipate that intorudction of faster and relatively better tools would improve production and enable marketing to be done effectively because one of the problem found to be related to marketing of the products is lack of standard produced quality products. However, the type of tools introduced should be within what the artisans can handle and still maintain the traditional traits of the skill.

Labour engaged in the business

The business is mainly done by men. The average age of the artisans was found to be 37 years ranging from less than 20 years to over 61 years. The age distribution shows that 36 percent of the carvers were between 20 years and 30 years old, 50 percent were between 31 years and 49 years while 14% were over 50 years old. This suggests that the business is being joined by young people which would be an indicative of high rate of unemployment among the young in the location.

The level of education of the artisans can influence the quality of carvings produced as well as the income generated from the enterprise. The relatively well educated artisans are able to learn new designs of carvings as well as be exposed to the complications involved in marketing of handicrafts. Table 6 summarizes the level of education of craftsmen in Wamunyu.

TABLE 6 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE CARVERS

Level of Education	Number	Percentage
None	20	25
Primary	52	66
Secenary	7	9
Total	80	100

Source: Survey data.

The table shows that about 25% of the artisans have no formal education which is rather high compared with the level of education of informal sector entrepreneurs in the urban centres which the I.L.O, study on informal sector employment in Kenya 1986 found to be about 9.8 percent. The highest level of education reported was primary education which 66% of the artisans had received. Only 9% of the respondents had acquired secondary education. The reasons which appear to explain this were given by the Wamunyu Cooperative officials who held that the activity provides a cheaper means of absorbing those who are not able to proceed to secondary education due to lack of school fees or other factors. The discussion with the artisans reveal that carving skills are not acquired through formal training. The respondents indicated that they acquired their skills from fellow artisans and family members. The skill is acquired through observation and practise. Most of them learnt from their fathers by observing how they were carving. Others learnt by attaching themselves to skilled craftsmen who taught them how to carve. Others learnt through imitation of their other carvers works. The skills are passed from one generation to the other this form of training. May be this can explain why the certisans have not changed the models of carving since the

business started. The industry can be improved by introducing variety of designs to upgrade craft skills for better quality products.

Entry Capital:

The handicraft component of the informal sector makes a favourable profit compared to its relative low initial capital and low overheads. The capital required to enter into the business was found to be low compared with other types of informal activities. About 36% of the respondents had not used any money to start the business while 43% used less than Kshs. 200 and 20% used over 200 shillings to less than Kshs. 500. Even those entering into the business at present when there is acute problem of raw materials as it will be shown later are not using alot of money. This shows that the activity like most other handicraft activities given a bit of support especially in the supply of raw material (wood) would generate more profits to the artisans.

Places of Operation and Infrastructure Available

The data indicate that most of the artisans joined the business between 1960 and 1969 (29% of the respondents) and 21% joined in the 1980s. Majority of them started their carving in Wamunyu market

centre that is about 50% of the respondents, 30% started at their homes, 7% in Nairobi, 4% in Mombasa and 7% in other towns. With time, most of the people moved their production to the local centres in the location with Wamunyu market centre taking about 62% of the respondents and 27% in other local centres while 12% remained working at home. Reasons given for the movements are varied:- some reported that they moved from their homes to market centres to take advantage of market opportunities (34%) while the others moved so as to be near the suppliers of wood and others wanted to join the other carvers so that they can learn more skills.

Operations of the carvers are fragmented in Wamunyu. As the artisans moved to these centres temporary sheds of operation came up in the centres. This has resulted to most of the centres having temporary structures wherever the carvers find space to put them up. Others operate in open air while others operate in the cooperative workshop which is currently overcrowded. The artisans operating in the local centres other than Wamunyu and Miondoni centres are faced with the problem of transportation of wood and products. There is poor means of communication between the centres. All these have

implications on the continuity of production as well as on the mobilization of the artisans into a strong efficient trade network for marketing of their carvings.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE INDUSTRY TO WAMUNYU LOCATION

Employment Generation:

The recognition of the informal sector as an entity with a significant role to play in the economic progress is a recent development in Kenya. The growing attention could be associated with the increasing focus on the problem of employment in less developed countries. Statistics show that an increasing number of labour force in most LDS is not being absorbed in full productive employment. Kenya is among the countries which are experiencing such a problem. Available data shows that the country is experiencing a high rate of population growth (4.1 percent per annum) which is resulting to increased labour force. Along side this, the modern industrial and agricultural sectors are unable to absorb the increasing labourforce. To solve the existing problem of unemployment, the country according to the estimates of the Ministry of Economic Planning and National Development has to create about 4 million new jobs by the year 2000. It is reported that currently, the economy is capable of creating only 60,000 jobs a year.¹ This implies

1. Weekly Review: 'Deteriorating unemployment situation' February 7th 1986.

that quite a substantial number of people will be out of work. The luck as many scholars and policy makers see it can be tried in small scale enterprises or the so called marginal activities which absorbs a substantial proportion of the labour force in many developing countries. Handicrafts are one component of this group of enterprises.

Small scale enterprises and crafts, play an important role in many regions of the world. According to I.L.O survey on small scale enterprises (1970), these activities are important in terms of employment and income generation both in the urban and rural areas. In the urban areas, the sector in most countries has become the main occupation of the people who do not manage to have formal employment while in the rural areas, they offer additional work for farmers during the long periods of when they can not work on their farms. The study further suggests that in most countries, the sector represents 70-96 per cent of the labour force and more than a third of the value added in the manufacturing industry. On this basis it can be argued that the activities can then help to cut down the problem of unemployment in both urban and rural areas and can also be an important source of ready cash at local level.

In this section the study examines the performance of Wamunyu craft industry in terms of providing employment to the people, generating domestic income and other direct and indirect contributions to the location.

Data on employment distribution in Kenya indicate that there is potential for employment creation in the informal sector. The table below gives the employment fields in Kenya and the population employed.

TABLE 7: EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION IN KENYA IN 1976 AND 1981 ('000)

Population of Working Age	Growth Rate		
	1976	1981 -	1976 1981
Labour force	5.473	6.598	3.8
Employment:			
Small scale agric.	2.668	3.040	2.7
Pastoralists	0.390	3.040	2.7
Modern Sector	0.915	1.086	3.5
Rural non-farm (informal)	0.990	1.80	3.6
Urban Informal	0.125	1.157	4.7
Total Employment	5.085	5.908	3.0
Residual	0.388		

Source: National Development Plan 1984-88.

Handicraft component of the informal sector is estimated to be employing about 3.5000 to 50,000 people in the country.²

2. Ministry of Commerce and Industry (KETA Dept. 1986).

These are people involved in manufacturing, handling and commercialization of handicrafts. At least about 80 percent of this group reside in the rural areas. It is indicated also that wood carvings dominant or form the largest proportion of handicraft exports and most of it comes from rural Machakos district. This means that wood carving comprise a reasonable proportion of those engaged in handicraft activities in Kenya.

As indicated in the previous chapter, Machakos district is among the districts in the country with a major problem of unemployment due to lack of employment opportunities. Majority of the people in the district are employed in small holdings while others are absorbed in rural commerce and transport. The district does not have many industrial establishments which can absorb most of the labour force. Wage employment figures for 1985 for the district indicate that the total number of people employed in the district was 37,748 out of an economically active population of 400,382 a reflection of high unemployment in the district. This shows the environment which contributes to the emergence of small scale enterprises such as wood carvings in the district. The informal sector in the district engages about 10,808

persons majority of those employed being in the rural areas. The implications of this is that the informal sector activities in the district develop as alternative source of employment.

It is difficult to make a total estimate of the number of people engaged in the informal wood carving activity in Wamunyu location with any degree of confidence because the number of artisans fluctuates through out the year and they move in and out of the location in search of market for the products. However, the industry is estimated to employ not less than 2,000 people in the location.* This includes the artisans and others on the periphery of the trade- that is carving dealers popularly known as 'middlemen', wood suppliers, carving finishers and polishers, people employed by the middlemen and those employed by the handicraft cooperative society. The industry according to the field survey constitute 26 percent of the employment fields in the location ranging second to wage employment sector which takes up 28 percent. The other employment field was found to be business (22 percent) and 24 percent of the sample constituted those with no employment.

* Estimate by the Wamunyu Handicraft Society.

It is asserted that the informal sector often offers alternative employment to the people who fail to get absorbed in the formal sector. The assertion seems to be true, in the case of Wamunyu. The survey revealed that 58 percent of those currently engaged in wood carving business had no other regular income generating activity before engaging in this form of activity. Only 14 percent had some employment. This implies that the activity offers alternative way of earning some income in the location.

TABLE 8: PREVIOUS OCCUPATION OF CARVERS

Occupation	Number	Percentage
No regular employment	30	29
Student	29	28
Wage employment	10	9
Business	5	5
Farming	30	29
Total	104	100

Agriculture in Wamunyu location is marginal due to the low potential of the zone and as a result, farms do not provide enough for the people. The survey shows that agricultural farms are small. Majority of the

farmers have less than 4 hectares which according to the classifications of farm sizes in Kenya are very small farms. This implies that there is very little agriculture practised by farmers in the location the type of agriculture practised is subsistence mainly for consumption. The major cash crop is cotton but production is low due to poor marketing system which has made most of the farmers withdraws from growing cotton in big hectarages. Cotton sales shows that the crop can not be relied upon as a source of constant income generating activity. Hence wood carving in the location has emerged as an activity offering employment to the people.

Employment in this form of enterprise is not only limited to Wamunyu location. The industry began in the rural areas and has moved to the urban areas where production in factories, showrooms and boutiques producing and selling carvings have been established. There are other independent craft firms outside Wamunyu location which produce on their own and purchase rough carvings from the main producers (mainly from Wamunyu, Nairobi and Mombasa) and do the final finishing in their workshops. This is an indication that there is quite a proportion of labour employed in the industry both in the rural and urban areas.

Income generated:

The benefits of this small scale industry is not only confined to increasing employment opportunities but the survey revealed that it generates some income which augments the incomes of the local population. As Aleke - Dondo noted " --- a small amount of extra income earned from part-time or full time in the non-formal sector can often contribute much to the provision of basic needs of the people." The analysis reveals that the wood carvers in Wamunyu have three sources of income:-

- Wood carving business
- Farming, and
- Other small businesses of different nature.

Analysis of the income earned from each of these sources indicate that the average monthly income earned from wood carving business is Kshs. 871 per month; from farming Kshs. 212 and from other businesses Kshs. 358. This shows that wood carving enterprise generates most of their incomes. The lowest basic minimum monthly wage in industry in the country is Kshs. 640 in Mombasa and Nairobi, in other towns Kshs. 589 and in other areas Kshs. 360 (After the recent increase by 11% and 13%). Compared with this,

it shows that the artisans earn reasonable income from the enterprise. The business was also identified by Mochache (1986) to have high potential for income generation. In his study on Gikomba informal sector, he found out that the people doing wood carving in the area were earning between Kshs. 800-2000 per month which shows that the activity is able to generate reasonable income to the operators. Recent study by the I.L.O on urban informal sector in Kenya (1986) shows that the minimum average income earned from informal activities in the urban areas were Kshs. 945.6 and 931.8. Income from wood carving compares well with urban based informal sector activities.

There are variations in the incomes earned by the carvers ranging from Ksh. 100 to 3,000 per month. For policy and action-oriented purposes, it is necessary to ascertain if the earnings of the artisan are related or influenced by other variables such as the levels of educations, age and location of the enterprise. The analysis shows that level of education, age as well as links with other carvers operating in other areas outside Wamunyu have some influence on the income earned. The table below potrays this relationship.

TABLE 9: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESPONDENTS AGE, EDUCATION, MARKETING AND INCOME

Age of respondents (Years)	Average income	Average education (Years)	Percentage marketing outside Wamunyu
20	900	7	0
20 - 25	1254.5	8	45
26 - 30	1127.2	6.7	54
31 - 35	869	5.6	60
36 - 40	878.6	5.2	53
41 - 45	525	0	25
46 - 50	730	2.6	0
51 - 55	587.5	1.7	0
> 56	271.4	2	0

Source: Field Survey 1986.

Education widens one horizon, enables one to acquire new ideas and sometime can enable one to acquire new skills. The artisans with some education earns more than those without any as shown on the table. Age as well has impact on the income earned by the operators. As discussed in the previous section, Some artisans in Wamunyu have links with wood carvers operating outside the location mainly in Nairobi and Mombasa. Carvers in these towns market some of their products and other time the carvers in Wamunyu

move temporarily to operate in the towns. This type of link or mobility also has some impact on the income earned as shown in the table. Age affects the the mobility of the artisans, those who are young are able to move around in search of rich market for their products. This shows that the level of education of the carvers, their age and also link with similar businesses or areas where the product can be marketed at higher prices are important factors influencing the incomes earned from wood carving in Wamunyu location. This goes further to explain why most people in Wamunyu location have migrated to do their business in the major towns mainly Mombasa and Nairobi. The migration is mainly caused by the market opportunities which have been confined to the urban areas lowering the demand of rural products. The marketing problem could also explain why the wood carvers in Nairobi earns more than those in rural Wamunyu. This has significance on the policies to be proposed for the promotion of the industry.

Wood carving enterprise do also benefit other people at the periphery of the production. These include people who purchase the curios from the producers and sell them elsewhere popularly known as middlemen. The middlemen are either stationed in

Wamunyu or come from other towns to buy the curios. The middlemen purchases the curios from Wamunyu and markets them to the outside towns of Nairobi, Mombasa, Nyeri, Nanyuki, Nakuru and a few others. Some of the middlemen have big workshops and they have employed some people to assist in polishing up the products. The largest curio dealer workshop in Wamunyu has employed 48 people permanently and about 100 people temporary. These people are paid about Kshs. 60 per day. The purchased products are sold to other dealers outside the location particularly in Mombasa and Nairobi who are licensed to export. The middlemen also gets orders to supply the exporting dealers with curios if high demands are established abroad. The middlemen interviewed in Wamunyu indicated that marketing of the products is not a problem and that they earn quite substantial amount from the business. They usually get on average orders to supply carvings to exporters of about Kshs. 25,000 to 30,000 within a month when there is high demand and this eventually earns them a profit of about Kshs. 16,000 per month.

The carving exporters who are mainly in Nairobi and Mombasa also get alot of income from the trade. They are the people who deal directly with the consumers so they are the ones who benefit directly

from wood carvings produced at Wamunyu location. It was hard to get data related to their sales hence difficult to assess their incomes from the carvings but the prices labelled on the products being sold on their curio shops shows that they earn more than the producers in Wamunyu.

Carvers produce both decorative and utilitarian products which include African Wild Life such as Zebras, Elephants, Rhinos, among others and utilitarian items such as soup bowls, sugar dishes, soup spoons, flower pots, etc. The products are sold according to sizes. There are small size figures, medium and large. Middlemen in Wamunyu buys the small size figures mainly decorative ones Kshs. 5-6 from the producers; medium Kshs. 13 - 20

large Ksh. 25 - 40.

There are sold to carving exporters at different prices of small size - Kshs. 7 - 8

Medium " - Ksh. 20 - 25

large " - Kshs. 50 - 70.

The exporters in turn market the products at higher prices. This shows that wood carving industry generates income to a varied number of people ranging from the producers to the exporters. It also indicates

that those at the periphery of the production of carving benefit more.

Apart from earning the artisans and others indirectly involved in the business some domestic income, wood carving also earns foreign exchange for the country. Total exports of handicrafts in 1985 were Kshs. 124,141,086.80. Most of which originated from sisal baskets and wood carvings. The table below show how much Handicrafts earns the country.

TABLE 10: EXPORTS OF HANDICRAFTS BETWEEN 1982 AND 1985

	1982	1983	1984	1985
Wood carvings	11,332,585.00	12,451,969.00	21,841,425.00	21,416,039.00
Baskets	5,860,434.10	11,357,659.00	35,423,622.00	91,353,360.00
Stone carvings	1,267,387.40	1,514,987.80	1,871,419.90	3,602,878.20
Banana fibre	558,244.40	423,533.75	836,928.95	460,290.00
Jewellery	464,241.40	550,730.15	3,200,868.60	4,500,822.30
Palm leaf product	199,912.00	201,375.20	238,379.15	376,300.85
Other ethnographs	2,417,531.30	1,268,382.00	2,186,485.90	2,431,396.45
Total Kshs.	22,100,334.25	277,680,635.90	65,599,126.50	124,141,086.80

Source: Kenya External Trade Authority (KETA)
Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The role of handicrafts and wood carvings in particular should not be underrated since they do create job opportunities to the unemployed and generates some income which goes along way to improve on the socio-economic welfare of the people. On this reasoning, the activities should be encouraged as part of the broader policy seeking to promote rural development and raise rural incomes.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE INDUSTRY:

Fields of Investment

The survey results shows that income earned from wood carving enterprise is used or re-invested in other fields related to development in Wamunyu location. This was obtained by inquiring on how the income earned is spent to ascertain whether the money earned is spend on development related activities. 34% of the informants indicated that they spend most of their income from the business on educating their children, 26% use most of it in improving their farms, 16% on housing and 14% on basic household needs. It is difficult to gauge the proportion of income committed to these sectors out of the total income earned from the business because the informants were unable to draw a line between money earned from the business and that earned from other activities

they are engaged in. However they indicated that most of the money they earn from wood carving business is committed to the named sectors. Table below gives the informants response in relation to investment of their incomes.

TABLE 11: FIELDS OF INVESTMENT

Field	Response	Percentage
Education	27	34
Housing	13	16
Agriculture	21	26
Purchasing farm	2	3
Basic needs	11	14
Other businesses	6	8
Total	80	100

The study did not go further into examining the details of the profit accruing from agriculture or education as a result of the income invested in them due to lack of data. However, the study here is working on the assumption that a little bit of income injected into these sectors is likely to improve on their performance which will in turn improve on the people's standard of living. Evident here therefore

is that rural informal sector activities such as the Wamunyu wood carving crafts are supportive to other developmental fields in the rural areas.

The Informal sector and urban centres:

As indicated earlier, most of the people engaged in wood carving business in Wamunyu have moved their production, marketing and supply of wood to the trading centres in the location while others have moved out of the location. Most of the artisans have moved to Wamunyu market centre which is the biggest trading centre in the location. Wamunyu market was studied in detail to examine the effects of concentration of the informal sector activities in urban centres. To get a clear picture, the historical development of the market was traced and factors that have contributed to its growth. Personal interviews with the old businessmen in the market, the chief of the area and the Machakos County Council show that there has been an increase in economic activities in the town since its start in early the 1940's. The centre started as small isolated trading centre for the people within the location. Livestock selling was the main business going on in the town by the early days of the growth of the town. Many people applied for commercial plots in the market by early

1960s. This is reported to be the time when wood carving business in the location was booming. There was a lot of export of wood carvings outside the country by the carvers as well as others who were purchasing from the carvers. This earned people in the location a lot of money which enabled many of them to acquire business plots in the market.

Other factors reported to have contributed to the expansion of the town include the tarmacking of the great Machakos - Kitui road in 1974 which passes next to the market. The upgrading of the road has provided economic stimulus in the adjacent areas in that it has enabled faster movement of goods and services. It has also brought in the town more people.

There is a small scale irrigation scheme going on along Athi river which is bordering the location on one side. Some of the horticultural crops grown in the area are sold at Wamunyu market hence drawing many people into the town. Some of the vegetable dealers have constructed vegetable kiosks in the town thus contributing to the physical growth of the town.

It is further reported that many plots in the town were purchased and others improved by 1985 when the District Development Committee (DDC) Machakos suggested in 1985 that the market centre should be made the divisional headquarter of Iveti North. But this was overtaken by events when a new division was created in 1986 - that is Mwala division which incorporated Wamunyu location. This is seen as one factor that led to the mushrooming of business premises in the town between 1985 and 1986.

The market centre though in a very dry zone, has quite a number of resident population. The population is estimated to be slightly below 2,000 people. Currently the town has 304 plots with a third of these having been allocated within the last 5 years.

To examine the significance of the contribution of wood curving enterprise to the physical growth of the town, business men in the market were interviewed in relation of source of initial capital, the catchment of their customers and reasons for choosing to locate their business premises in Wamunyu market. Out of the businessmen interviewed 48% indicated that wood carving business provided them with capital to start their businesses, 27% claimed to have build

their shops with savings from their former wage employment and 24% got their initial capital from other businesses such as butchery, bicycle repair, drum selling, hides and skin businesses among others. The study inquired the reasons that made the businessmen establish their businesses in Wamunyu market. The reason given by most of the respondents was related to the concentration of this form of activity in the centres. Increase in income of the people operating in the centre mainly wood carvers and other people in other informal activities has led to increase in level of demand for goods and services hence making it viable for businessmen to undertake investments in the centre. The activity has also brought into the centre many people who have also created a base for active commerce.

Another factor indicated as having attracted businessmen to start their businesses in this market was the tarmacking of Machakos - Kitui road which enabled easy transportation of goods to the centre and brought in many customers. There were the two major reasons given by businessmen in relation to the location of their businesses.

The respondents indicated that most of their customers were directly or indirectly related to the carving business and that their monthly incomes from their businesses were greatly affected by the performance of the industry.

This analysis proves the assertion made in the study that non-farm activities such as handicrafts are important in revitalizing rural economy and they can stimulate and strengthen rural market centres where they are operated. This further shows that concentration of informal sector activities such as wood carvings can provide an impetus for urban development which can help in arresting rural urban migration which is quite high in the dry zones of the country such as Machakos. This can also help in providing outlets for goods produced within the region thus providing a strong rural-urban linkage. It is important therefore that government efforts should be directed to assist these activities in small market centres in the rural areas.

CONSTRAINTS FACING WOOD CARVING INDUSTRY IN WAMUNYU

LOCATION

There are several constraints which have to be overcome if wood carving business in Wamunyu location is to realise its potential and benefit the people in

the location. Table 12 below summarizes the problems experienced by the carvers in running their business.

TABLE 12: PROBLEMS FACING THE ENTERPRISE

Complaints	Absolute	Relative
	Frequency	Frequency
Lack of raw materials	62	33
Problem of marketing	53	28
Inadequate capital	36	19
Poor working places	24	13
Poor org. of carvers	9	5
Inefficient working machines	4	3
Total	188	100

Most of the artisans identified lack of raw materials (wood) as the major problem followed by poor marketing channels, inadequate working capital and lack of suitable premises from where they can do their production effectively.

Raw Materials:

Availability of wood is one among the factors that led to establishment of wood carving business in Wamunyu location in Machakos district. Skills introduced into the location from Tanzania would not have taken off if the type of wood which was being used in Tanzania was not available in Wamunyu Location mainly black and white ebony wood and other local hardwoods. According to the old artisans interviewed, the desirable wood for carving was being obtained within the location until late 1950s when the wood got depleted. The depletion forced many artisans to abandon the business while others moved out of the location in search of wood. During the early 1960's the wood carvers mainly those who had migrated to Nairobi with the help of some curio dealers who felt that decline of the industry was affecting their trade discovered a hardwood locally known as 'Muhugu' (*Brachylaena Hutchinsii*) which could supplement the local species. This type of wood is only available from the government forest reserves. With assistance from curio dealers popularly known as 'middlemen', the wood carvers made arrangements of getting the wood from the forests mainly from Karura and Ngong forests. Black and white ebony and 'Matamayyu' (*Olea Africana*) and other hard woods are also obtained

from other areas within Machakos district mainly from Yatta, Makueni and Kitui district. Due to the dwindling of forests reserves in the country, the government has been encouraging conservation practices which discourages cutting down of trees in the forests. This has had effects on the wood carving industry whenever is found since Muhugu species which is commonly used is only found in the reserves. People licenced to get timber from the forests are only allowed to purchase three trees per month at each forest. In Wamunyu, it is the Co-operative Society and three middlemen who are licenced to purchase logs from Karura and Ngong forests. This is very limiting considering that the location has more than one thousand people engaged in wood carving business: The limitation on purchases at Wamunyu is complicated by transport problems. Since the cooperative does not have its own transporting vehicles, it hires trucks to move the logs from the forest to workshop. The handling costs are added to the total expenditure which is incorporated into the prices of the logs. The same costs of transportation is incurred by the middlemen which in turn affects the prices which they sell the logs to the artisans. Before a tree is cut down, it is difficult to determine its quality. Often a log proves to be rotten and is partially discarded

after it is purchased. All these costs accounted makes the logs expensive to the carvers. The wood is charged according to its quality, width and length. The biggest log of black and white elbony of 2.1 metre length and 30 centre metres width costs above Kshs. 600 while Muliugu wood of 1.8 metres and 45 cm. costs Kshs. 500. The supply of log is often finished by mid-month leaving the carvers with no other source of wood. This is the time the carvers attempt to buy logs from middlemen but not many carvers are able to buy from these suppliers because their prices are higher than those of the cooperative.

This shortage of wood for carving has affected the business in Wamunyu more than the similar businesses located elsewhere like in Nairobi town, and Mombasa. Most carvers from Wamunyu have moved to Nairobi and Mombasa where the materials are slightly cheap - In Nairobi the biggest log costs about 400 shillings (Muhugu). As a result income, which could be used to revitalize the location economically is taken to the towns hence one of the contributory role of the business is not fully realized in Wamunyu location.

The problem of shortage of wood was identified to be among the major reasons of moving the business

from the former or initial operating site. Table 13 shows the responses of the carriers to the places where they established their business first.

TABLE 13: PLACES WHERE THE CARVINGS WERE OPERATED INITIALLY:

Place	Number	%
Carvers home	27	30
Wamunyu market centre	45	50
Nairobi town	6	7
Mombasa town	4	4
Other areas	8	9
Total	90	100

TABLE 14: PLACES WHERE THE CARVING IS OPERATED AT PRESENT

Plate	Number	%
Carvers home	10	9
Wamunyu market centre	59	55
Nairobi	11	10
Mombasa	13	12
Other Wamunyu market	14	13
Other areas	1	0.9
Total	108	100

TABLE 15: REASONS FOR MOVING THE CARVING BUSINESS FROM FORMER/INITIAL OPERATING SITE:

Reasons	Number	Percentage
To be close to market	28	34
To reduce transport cost of wood	20	24
To acquire more skills from other carvers	12	14
Lack of working space in the town	4	5
Accommodation problem in town	3	4
Total	67	100

This reveals that the depletion of wood which was used in carving in Wamunyu has affected the location of the business. The shortage has made many Wamunyu men move to the country's major towns mainly Nairobi and Mombasa. It has also made those who were carving at home move to the towns in the location namely Wamunyu market centre, Yathui trading centre, Kilembwa, Savuku and Miondoni trading centres.

Destruction of natural vegetation in the Wamunyu area apart from having serious consequences

for the carvers' wood supply, has lead to a tree less landscape which has resulted to soil erosion. Soil erosion leads to soil degradation which affects the amount of crops produced. Some of the respondents agreed that the problems experienced in the location of soil erosion and fuelwood shortage might have been caused by the operations of the industry though majority (about 66% of the respondents) indicated charcoal burning, fencing and clearing for farm extension as the major causes of these problems.

Financial constraints

Financial constraints experienced by the craftsmen in Wamunyu are not related to the entry into the business but with the running of the business and maintenance of the artisans themselves. The survey revealed that about 36 percent of the carvers did not require any money to enter into the business. The other 43 percent reported to have initiated their business through their savings from earlier casual employment or through assistance by family members and friends. These people started the business with less than Kshs. 200 which is small amount compared with other informal sector activities such as carpentry and metal work. The only financial problems the carvers are facing is money, for subsistence

living as they continue with the business so that they can be able to sell their products at wholesale and be able to save. Lack of money to sustain themselves and families forces the artisans to sell their products in small amounts at a low price every day which affect the income earned and savings which can be invested in other fields in the area.

They also have problem of regular income to purchase wood in bulk to ensure continuity. Others pointed out the problem of money to transport their products to the big towns for marketing when the demand is low in Wamunyu.

Nature and Distribution of Working Places:

Wood carving business is universal in Wamunyu location and a little of it is done in the neighbouring locations of Mwala, Kinyatta and Muthetheni. The activity was found to be done in clusters in all the centres in the location with Wamunyu market centre having most of the carvers. As it has been mentioned earlier, most carvers have moved from their homes to be carving at the market centres so as to be near buyers of the carvings and reduce the cost of transporting raw material. The problem the carvers are facing in the markets is

lack of proper working spaces. The survey revealed that about 44 percent of the sampled carvers were operating their businesses in temporary sheds, 13 percent in open air mainly under trees, 13 percent also in rented rooms behind commercial shops and only 31 percent operates in permanent structure mainly the co-operative workshop. The problem of permanent shelter was found to be affecting the carvers in small trading centres like Yathui, Miondoni, Kilembwa and Savuku more than those in Wamunyu market centre. In the small trading places, carvers were found to be operating under tree sheds and in temporary workshops and others in rented rooms. Plates below show the nature of workshops the artisans operate in.

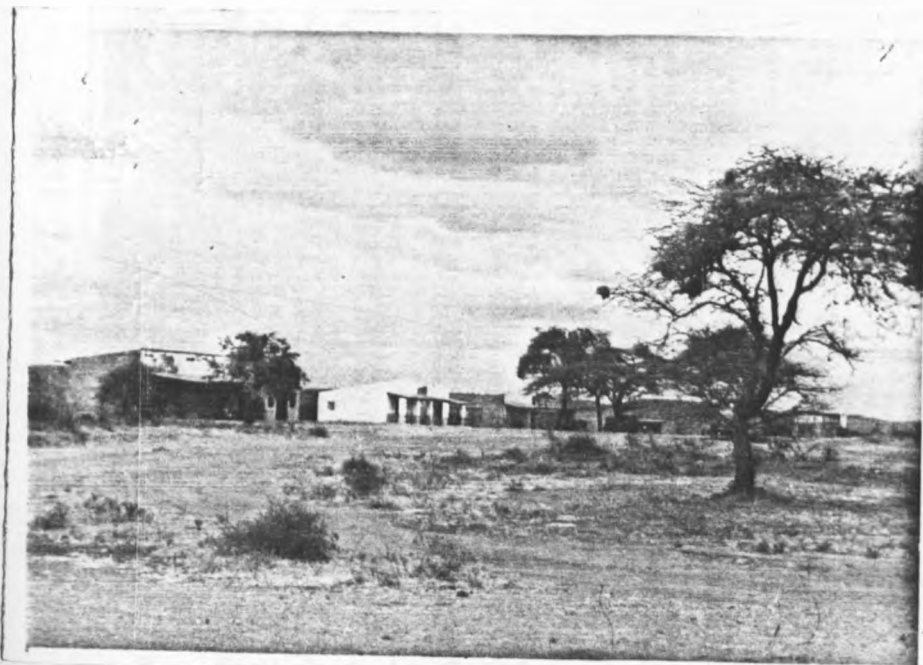


Plate I: Miondoni Trading centre

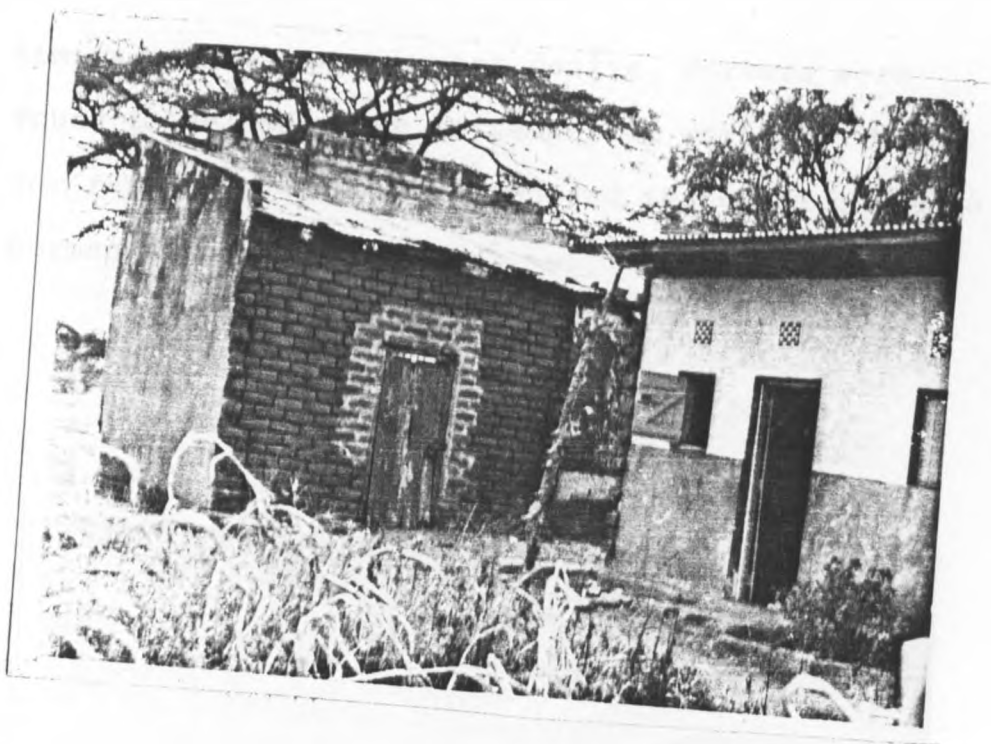


Plate 2 : Rented rooms where carving is done in Miondoni Trading Centre.

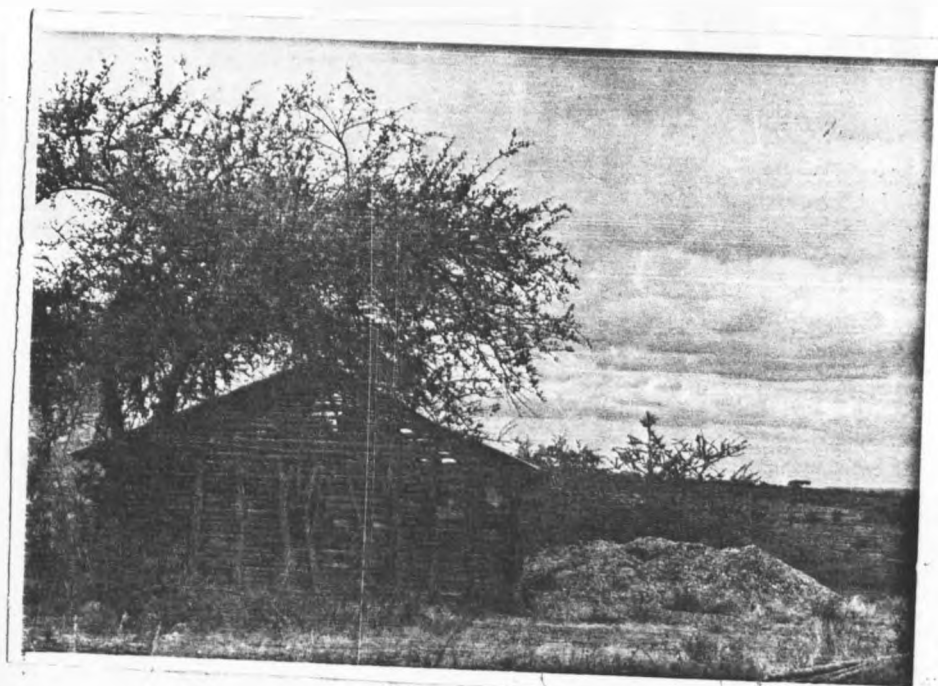


Plate 3: Workshop in Savuku trading Centre.

Similarity on Wamunyu market centre, carvers were found to be operating in temporary workshops built for renting by the middlemen and in the cooperative permanent workshop.



Plate 4: Temporary workshop in Wamunyu market.

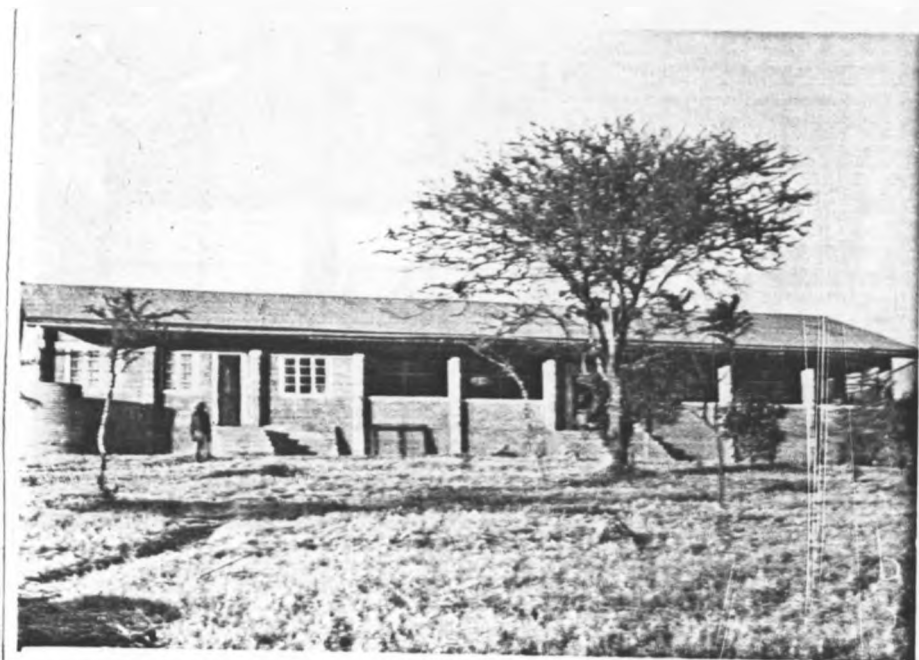


Plate 5: The cooperative workshop.

The problem facing artisans in Wamunyu market centre is overcrowding in the workshops especially in the cooperative workshops. This makes it hard for the producers to work comfortably hence most of them work outside the workshops. The overcrowding affects the amount a carver is able to produce per day as well as the quality of products.



Plate 6: Wood carvers at work in the cooperative workshop.



Plate 7: Shows the same situation of overcrowding in the cooperative workshop.



Plate 8: Some of the artisans work outside the workshops because of overcrowding



Plate 9: This artisan prefer working outside the crowded workshops.

The carvers were also found to have no proper storage facilities. The workshops have no storage rooms except for the raw material used (wood) so carvers look for alternative places to store their products mostly in the commercial shops in the markets. Most of them store their products in cartons and leave them in the workshops. This storage method makes some the products to develop cracks which renders them value less.



Plate 10: Store room for wood.

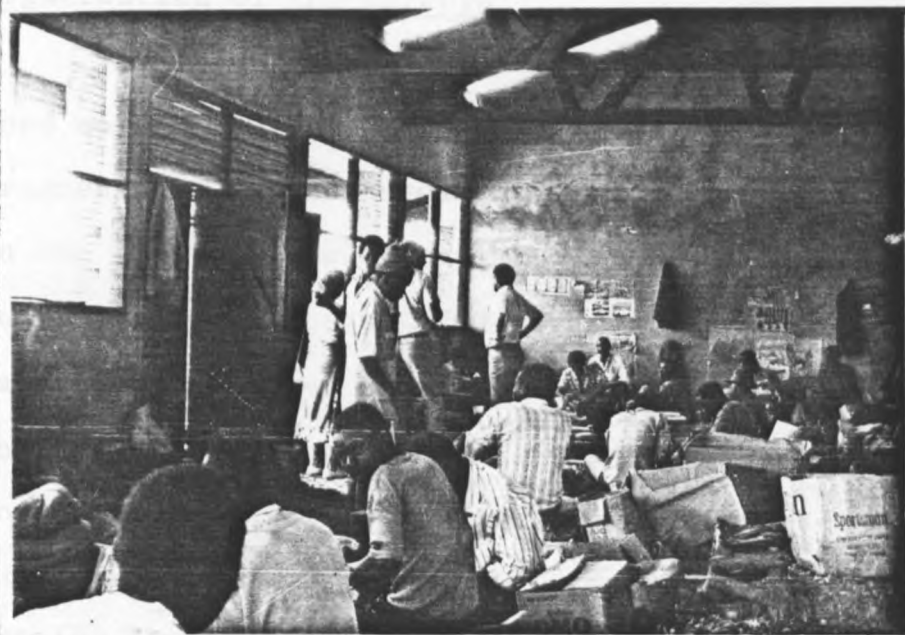


Plate 11: Cartons used to store the products.

The shelter problem as the craftsmen reported gets worse during the wet season. During the wet season, large member of them abandon the business due to lack of proper shelter and storage facilities.

This has implications on the generation of income from the business. At that time, the income generated declines thus affecting the welfare of the carvers and their families and the other businesses which indirectly benefit from the trade.

Organization of the carvers:

The study found out that the operations of the wood carving business in Wamunyu location are highly fragmented. People involved in wood carving enterprise in the location are by estimation not less than 2,000 and of these only about 700 are members of Wamunyu Handicraft society. The rest are members of Mombasa and Nairobi cooperatives while majority are non-members. Non-cooperators produce their items and market them individually. Even cooperators market their items outside the cooperative. This kind of fragmentation each carver producing alone and marketing wherever he finds market has a lot of implication on the income generated by the carvers. Lack of organization of the carvers as a group affects the price of the products. Some carvers sell their products at low prices and this forces the others to sell at the same price. Also when the carvers are not united as a group, assistance and recognition by the government and other donors becomes a problem. Lack of recognition was found to be

one of the obstacles to the identification of wood carving enterprises as viable officially accountable sector of the economy.

Marketing

One of the major problem identified by informal sector researchers is that of effective demand of the products. As Aleke, D. (1986) noted, the

"----- bulk of the incomes in the rural areas is largely dependent on the cash crops and livestock that are produced and sold outside the area plus transfer payments received from other areas mainly in the form of remittances from family members living in towns."

And generally these incomes are often quite little. So the expansion of the rural informal sector is related to the proportion of the pursued activities that do not serve the local area. Wood carving activity of Wamunyu is one of the informal activities that do not serve the local area. The products are consumed outside the location in the towns, by tourists and outside the country. Although the products are destined for external market, the producers identified marketing as the second major problem hampering the progress of their industry and consequently the incomes and other benefits generated by the industry.

Wamunyu Handicraft Cooperative Society:

A strong and efficient trade network for selling products of any industry is a pre-requisite to a realization of more and better production. Wamunyu handicraft society is the main wood carving and basket marketing organization in Wamunyu location. The cooperative was established in 1965 with the aim of pulling back home artisans who had moved out of the location to hawk their goods in the major towns. It was assumed that the formation of a cooperative to market handicraft products would promote a stable source of income which in turn might help in revitalizing the area economically. It was also believed that the existence of the cooperative would bring families in the location back together and make Wamunyu market centre prosper. This was not realized for the cooperative collapsed in 1967 due to lack of support by many artisans. It was revived in 1976. The society has over 700 members. They produce and sell through the cooperative showroom. After marketing the carvings, the society pays the owner of marketed carvings and retain 15 percent commission. The society has attracted the support of Machakos Intergrated Development Programme (M.I.D.P.),

Kenya External Trade Authority and also Nordic Cooperative project through the Ministry of Cooperative Development. The cooperative managed to construct a concrete block with a showroom, stock area and a workshop through the assistance of these bodies. The society has got a Manager and Committee Members who are concerned with exploration of market for the products and acquisition of raw material for the artisans.

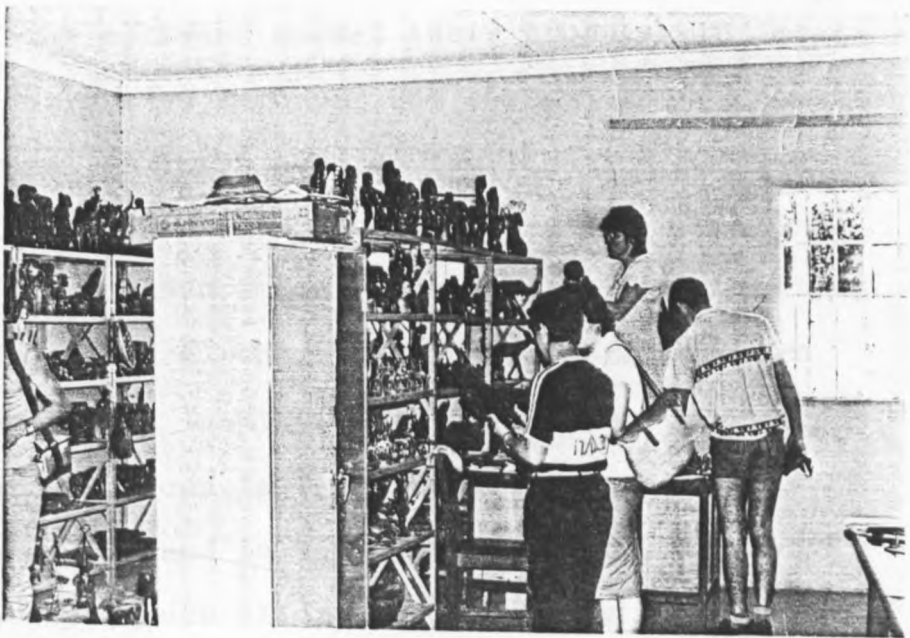


Plate 12: Wamunyu Handicraft Cooperative show room.

Kenya Craft Union

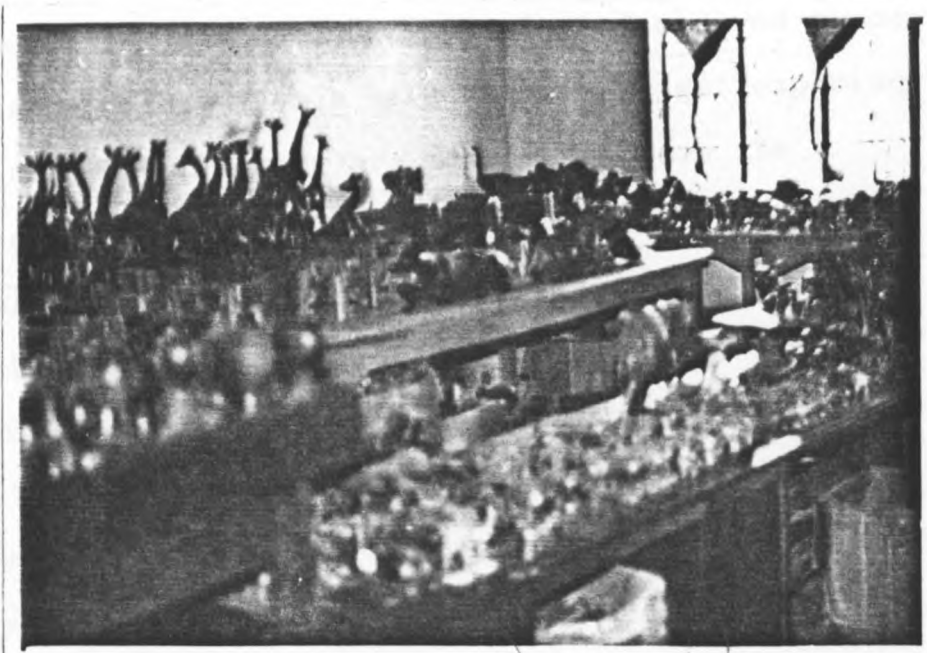
This is the major body coordinating all handicraft cooperative societies in the country. The body was formed in 1981/82 to amalgamate handicraft producers and facilitate marketing of their products within and outside the country.

Problems of Marketing Wood Carvings in Wamunyu Location

The survey found out that most of the artisans do not market their carvings through the existing cooperative society. The analysis result shows that 43% of the artisans market their products to local curio dealers in Wamunyu, 25% through the cooperative; 17% travel to towns outside the location to hawk their goods and 15% sell to local dealers and customers who visit Wamunyu. The reasons given for marketing to other dealers other than the cooperative were related to the inability of the society to dispose most of the goods fast and delays in paying the artisans. Demand in Wamunyu is low and the society does not put much efforts in exploring Market opportunities. Due to low demand of products in Wamunyu, some artisans have moved to Nairobi and Mombasa and set up workshops and tried to establish their own connections with middlemen and clients.



Plate 13 and 14: Middlemen's showroom in Wamunyu Market Centre.



Others are temporarily employed by companies dealing with exportation of carvings to carve for them. This problem has shifted the demand of carvings and other handicraft items to the big towns thus lowering the profits for the rural producers. This has an effect on the contribution of the activities to the rural economy in that most of the money earned from the activity is not spend in the location. Exportation of wood carvings is done by private companies and registered exporters in Mombasa and Nairobi. Wamunyu handicraft cooperative society and even the Kenya Craft Union does not sell as much as these bodies. According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, producers cooperatives are overtaken by middlemen in sale of carvings because of poor management within the cooperatives which result in delay of ordered products abroad. The middlemen have managed to get exporting licences because they are able to explore the market and supply accordingly. This problem has as Elkan (1958) found out led to " -- concentration of the opportunity into few Kambas (mainly few middlemen) and opened the field to other people who had hitherto played only a minor part in the sales of wood carvings --". This means that private traders have taken very large margins of the business which has depressed the incomes of the producers.

Demand of products of this nature is greatly affected by the prices offered and the quality of goods produced. It was found that the quality goods produced has not changed much. The artisans were limited to producing African Wildlife Animals which has been produced for centuries. This is due to lack advice on new designs to upgrade craft skills for better quality products. The cooperative has a quality control committee charged with the responsibility of advising the carvers on the type of products they should produce but it does not work efficiently.

It was further found that carvers establish the prices of their goods depending on the size of the carving and quality of the wood. As a result, prices of similar items are varied making some carvers earn very little benefits from their products.

Sales of carvings and other handicraft products are on the increase and the market for them is forecasted to be on the increase (K.E.T.A. 1986). This supports what Chesaro (1981) found out that handicrafts "-- have many values and are desired and lack of market for them may arise only where marketing has not been done to justify production". So demand of carvings is not the problem but an effective marketing system which will enable the producers

shortcircuit most of the middlemen and sell their products to consumers. This is perhaps the only way rural carvers and other people engaged in the handicraft industry can realise full benefits from their production.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter of the study gives a summary of what the analysis has revealed about the informal woodcarving enterprises in Wamunyu location and makes proposals that would enhance their contributions.

The study set out to examine the nature and extent of off-farm activities within the rural informal sector. The concern was to examine the contributions of the rural informal sector to those engaged in them and the rural areas where they are operated. It was further the aim of the study to highlight on the problems facing this type of activity especially problems which affect their expansion/growth and output in terms of incomes and other development related benefits. The study aimed at examining the organization of the whole industry in order to expose its benefits and those who benefit and suggest measures of improving and organizing the industry. A trace back of the development policies right back to the colonial period shows that the informal sector activities have received little attention and assistance from the government. The colonial government development policies as shown in chapter one interfered greatly with the indigenous

development trends. The government pursued strategies of growth which neglected the rural areas as well as small scale indigenous economic activities in favour of heavy industrial establishments and large agricultural farms - a fact well known. The study has shown how with time government has come to recognize the informal sector enterprises as an integral part of the economy which needs attention as the other sectors. The burden the sector has relieved the formal sector in terms of providing casual or permanent employment to those in the labour market and also generating income to those engaged in the sector as well as the county has led to their full recognition by the government. The informal sector activities have been emerging despite the neglect by the government and the resentment they experienced over the years. The activities are a source of economic growth in the rural areas. They provide additional activity for farmers during the long periods when they are not working on their farms. They can also be focussed on as sources of additional income for people in areas of low agricultural production.

The findings have established that this type of informal sector is an important economic activity contributing significantly to the development of Wamunyu location. A number of factors have been identified

which have contributed to the emergence and development of the activity in the location. These are:

1. Introduction of the carving art which is believed in the location to have been imported by Mutisya Munge following his return from Tanzania after the first world war. Mutisya is reported to have admired the carvings of the Makonde people and on his return to Wamunyu he also started practising carving which eventually spread in the location and the neighbouring areas.
2. Availability of the wood species which was being used by the Makondes people in Tanzania. Black and White ebony and other local wood used for carving were available in the location. This factor as it is reported made many people join the business because the wood could be obtained at no expense.
3. Environmental conditions of the location. The location falls within a low potential zone which is of marginal agricultural potential. Rainfall in the location is erratic and unevenly distributed and soils are not fertile and hence agricultural development is limited. The marginality of the area has made many people realise the potential in

this form of informal activity. The enterprises engages those without productive employment during the dry seasons and generates domestic income to supplement the little they get from agriculture.

4. Limited employment opportunities in the location and in Machakos district in general. As it has been shown in chapter three and four, only a small proportion of the population is engaged in formal employment. Those who do not get enough agricultural production are engaged in small scale off-farm activities mainly wood carving, basket making, bicycle repair, retail shop business, vegetable selling among others.

The analysis have revealed that the activity has a significant economic and social contributions to Wamunyu location. It offers employment to the unemployed in the area. The business absorbs both educated and uneducated meaning that it has enabled those who do not have formal education required in formal employment to acquire jobs. Many people have joined the business because skills are acquired on the job and no much capital is required to enter into the business. The activity keeps people fully occupied during the dry periods of the year.

The survey results have further shown that the activity generates income to the artisans, the government and others indirectly engaged in it. The average income found to be earned by the carvers is about Kshs. 871. Those engaged indirectly in the business mainly the middlemen also earn substantial income. The government earns reasonable foreign exchange from the export of the products.

Income earned from the activity has enabled people in the location to invest in other fields related to development such as education, housing, agriculture and commerce.

The study found out that the industry has potential for generating more income but it is inhibited by the following factors:-

1. Lack of raw materials (wood mainly):

The study revealed that the wood species used in carving have been depleted in the location and neighbouring areas and carvers are importing from outside Machakos District - mainly from Karura and Ngong Forests. Due to depletion of forests in the country, the government has restricted the number of trees to be obtained from the forests. This has affected the industry in several ways:-

- i) The number of trees the artisans are supplied with are limited. This has made the logs of wood too expensive for the artisans to get profits.
- ii) The number of people joining the business is affected by the prices of the wood.
- iii) Depletion of wood in the location has led to many artisans moving out of the location to the urban centres where the prices of wood are lower due to their closeness to the source of material. This has made the location lose part of its capacity to the urban centres.
- iv) Lack of the required wood in the location has led to some private wood dealers establishing themselves to take the chance to exploit producers. Most of them sell the wood at very high prices which in turn depresses the incomes of the producers.

2. Inadequate Capital

Carvers were found to have a problem of money to purchase raw materials and for every day use. Some

of them were found to be discontinuing their production due to lack of wood: This happens mostly when the wood sold by the cooperative gets finished and they have to purchase from the wood dealers whose prices are high. Further, the artisans were found to be selling their products in bits in search of money for sustaining their families and this resulted to many selling their products at very low prices which affects the total income earned and consequently the other multiplier effects.

3. Marketing Channels:

It was found that the Wamunyu Handicraft activities like other handicraft enterprises in the country have no appropriate set up to deal with the marketing of their products. The survey found out that there was no strong and efficient marketing organization to assist wood carvers in Wamunyu in marketing their carvings. The implications of this is penetration of the industry by many people at the periphery who were found to be benefiting more than the producers. Carvers were found to be selling their products in small bits to anybody who is ready to buy them at any price. Reasons given for this were related to the inability of the Handicraft society to sell most of their products and also delays in paying the artisans. This was revealed to be the

reason why many of the craftsmen in the location have not become members of the society. Many have registered as members of Mombasa and Nairobi Handicraft Cooperative Societies for they claimed that these cooperatives were selling their products faster and they are more organized. Demand in Wamunyu both from the cooperative and the individual is low. This has led to exploitation of the carvers by the local middlemen in Wamunyu who sell the products to private exporters.

Costing of products is done by the artisans. This makes them fix varied prices for similar items hence creating competition between themselves which was observed to lead to low incomes for some of the carvers. This problem has fully been exploited by registered exporters and curio dealing companies in the major urban centres particularly in Nairobi and Mombasa. Information from the bodies concerned with promoting and marketing of Handicraft products shows that the weakness of carvers marketing cooperatives have made the private companies have a booming business. It was found that exporters provide casual employment to Kamba artisans to produce carvings whenever they identify a demand abroad. The implications of this is that demands for handicrafts are met before the rural cooperatives realise there was such a market.

This kind of competition between the exposed urban curio dealers and rural people leads to a drop in demand for curios from the rural areas which consequently leads to low incomes for the producers in the rural areas.

4. Operating premises

It was found that production is done in open sheds, in rented rooms, under trees and in a permanent premise which is overcrowded. Masaku County Council and other organizations dealing with small scale enterprises revealed that they had not considered the activity as needing special attention in terms of provision of permanent or organized working premises. This condition leads to discontinuation of production during wet seasons which affects the incomes earned from the activity.

5. Organization of the carvers

The survey revealed that people engaged in this industry are not organized. They are found on concentrated in four centres. Each person does his own production and markets the products wherever he gets high profits. It was found that most of them are not members of Wamunyu Cooperative Society. This fragmentation makes it difficult to organize them for collective action and reduces the strength of the cooperative thus limiting the market of the products.

Recommendations:

The concern of the study is to find workable proposals that if well applied would help solve problems inhibiting the artisans of wood carving industry in Wamunyu from realizing full benefits from their enterprises. An official policy to enhance the growth and development of the informal sector activities in the country is essential. It is as well necessary to have specific programmes for specific activities since some informal activities are unique and general policy on informal sector might not address itself fully to the problems facing such activities. Wood carving industry in the country does not experience exactly the same problems experienced by the common informal sector activities which means that the designed programmes of assisting the informal sector activities might not eliminate the constraints facing this form of industry. The study therefore makes recommendations in the light of the problems found to be facing the industry. Marketing system, availability of raw materials and organization of artisans were singled out as the major constraining factors to the development and growth of wood carving industry in Wamunyu location.

As concerns the marketing system, the study has revealed that the major problem making the people in the industry not realise full benefits from their enterprise is the distribution network of their products. The survey data has shown that the activity contributes significantly to the location but more would be realized if the marketing of the products could be streamlined. Recommendations on this problem revolves around the arrangements of the distribution network so that the artisan make as much profit as possible from their sales. As pointed earlier, the demand of products produced from this rural location of Machakos is high in the external markets but due to the long and complicated process involved in reaching the markets the artisans are forced to rely on local opportunities which do not provide adequate market for their products. The producers cooperative societies given the responsibility of organizing market for the artisans have proved incapable of doing so. Consequently, the external and even local market opportunities have been 'captured' by private traders and exporters thus reducing the benefits the producer gets from the enterprise.

The National Development Plan of 1979-83 targets the rural informal sector enterprises for priority growth and support. Similarly the District

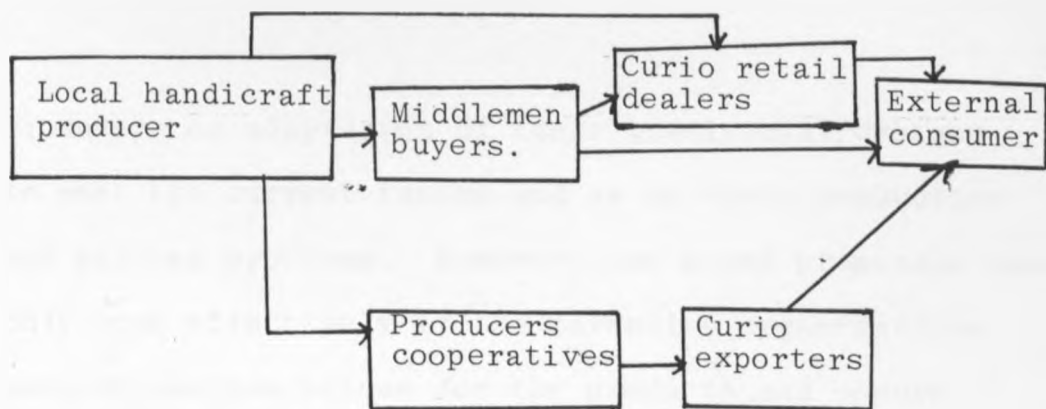
focus development strategy aims at stimulating the rural informal sector with a view of creating employment and increasing growth of economic activities in the rural areas. So the government should intervene to assist the handicraft people to streamline production and marketing in order to realise the benefits inherent in the industry. In the case of Wamunyu carving industry, it was found that although the production is found in the rural areas, marketing is predominantly in the urban centres. Most of the goods from Wamunyu are sold in showrooms and curio boutiques in Nairobi and Mombasa. These companies were also found to be hiring artisans to produce carvings for them for sale. This has led to drop in demand for goods from the rural areas because market opportunities are taken up by the companies. To reverse this trend in favour of the producers, it is recommended that development programmes should aim at organizing these type of activities in appropriate organizations so as to facilitate marketing of their products. The study found out that the existing marketing organizations are not adequately addressing themselves to the problems facing the artisans. It is therefore recommended that the grassroot handicraft cooperative societies be strengthened by staffing them with qualified managerial personnel capable of organizing

the craftsmen and marketing their products.

On a large scale, the study recommends establishment of a central marketing body to amalgamate handicraft producers, facilitate collection and marketing of finished products. The body can be attached to the Government Ministry concerned with the promotion of exports. The study aims at giving proposals which will least disturb the already established system so an alternative proposal is to revitalize the existing Kenya Craft Union which was established to facilitate marketing of handicrafts in the country. The survey revealed that the body does not actively participate in the marketing of handicrafts.

To enable the central marketing body to function effectively, it will be necessary to remove the intermediary channels between the producer and the consumer and make the central body the major marketing organization of handicrafts locally and externally. Currently handicraft marketing arrangement is as shown below:-

CHART I



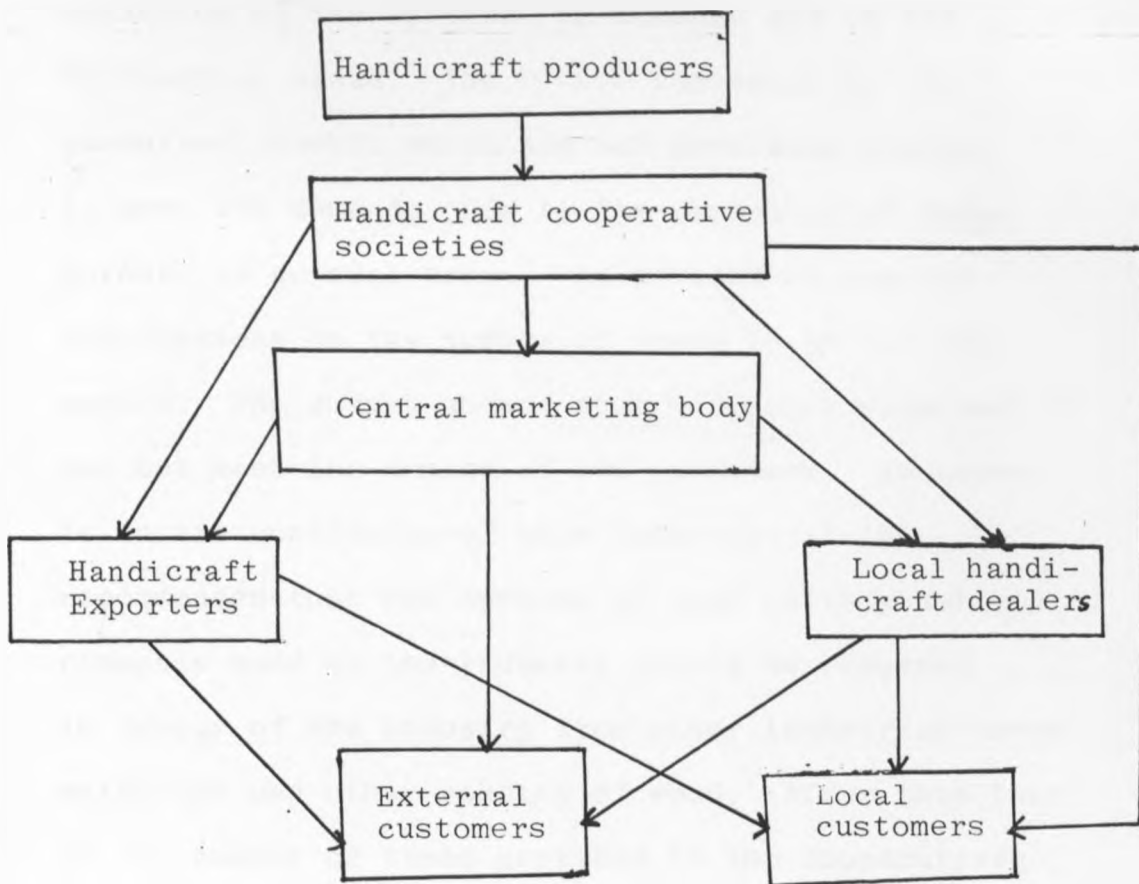
→ Flow of products.

The suggested proposals will change this arrangement and make the central marketing body and the producers cooperative societies the sole purchaser and distributors of the products. The central body would be best located in the major urban centres to take up the existing local market opportunities. The grassroot co-operatives would be the suppliers of the products to the body. This means that those at the periphery wishing to join the trade would have to purchase products at a commission from the central marketing body and the cooperative societies. The central marketing organization would help the artisans to obtain appropriate production techniques which would improve the quality of the goods and the productivity of labour; it would also help to acquire their raw materials, help to find new market outlets, research into new lines of production, advise the

producers on adaptation of their traditional designs to meet the current tastes and as to their production and selling problems. However, the given proposals can only work effectively if the marketing organizations sets attractive prices for the products and ensure that artisans are paid regularly and in time. All these will improve on the incomes earned by the artisans.

As indicated, most of the artisans in Wamunyu have migrated to Nairobi and Mombasa where they are able to earn higher incomes from their sales. The trend as it was observed will continue unless the activity is well organized to allow gainful employment and incomes for those operating from the location. So improvement of marketing channels in the proposed way may reduce rural - urban migration from the location and attract back those who have moved to the urban centres. This might also help in revitalizing the area economically. The chart below shows the proposed handicraft marketing organization.

CHART II



→ Flow of products.

Proposed Handicraft Marketing organization.

The study also revealed that wood carvers in Wamunyu as well as those operating in Nairobi and Mombasa experience low production certain times of the month due to acute shortage of the species of wood used. The shortage is caused by the

depletion of the species in Wamunyu and in the surrounding areas. The source currently is the gazzetted forests which are not providing enough to meet the demand. Due to the depletion of these forests by several users, the government has put restrictions on the number of trees to be cut per period. The survey showed that the trees provided can not meet the demand of the producers. In order to ensure continuity of this industry, it is recommended that the species of wood (mainly Muhugu) commonly used by the industry should be reserved in favour of the industry from other industrial users which can use other species of wood. After this then of the number of trees provided to the cooperatives should be increased to a slightly bigger number than 3 trees per month. It was found that this type of tree can not grow in Machakos district and when planted in favourable areas, it takes many years to mature. It is therefore recommended that the government assist the producers to research on a alternative woods to reduce overdependency on Muhugu. The Ministries and organizations involved with promotion of handicrafts and experts can assist in the research. They should also promote the acceptance of the alternative woods in foreign markets to ensure smooth commercial transition. This proposal

need an urgent attention because as it was reported by Wamunyu Cooperative officials, the wood in use currently can not last for another 10 years. After the new woods are accepted, the government can assist the producers to establish a small forest reserve to ensure long-term supply of material.

It is further recommended that the current prices of the wood used by the industry be kept within purchasing capacity of the artisan to ensure profits. These recommendations are hoped will ensure continuity of the industry.

Further the survey revealed that this small scale industry in Wamunyu is not well organized. The carvers were found to be operating in four small centres in the location. Most of the carvers have not joined the cooperative. In addition to their fragmentation, the activity was found to be operated in temporary premises which do not offer good working conditions. The 4 centres where carving in the location is done are littered with wooden sheds found in every corner of the centres. The reasons for this state of operations of the industry was found to be lack of recognition as activities of economic and social value.

As mentioned earlier, the craft sector and other small scale firms are very important in the economic development of most developing countries. It has been shown that these firms have with years received attention from policy makers but the problem still remains when it comes to specific components of the small scale firms. In Kenya, the the importance of craft sector unlike in most countries like, India, Thailand, Malaysia, and others is not reflected in the development plans. The small amount of money channelled into the small scale industries for development tends to go to other components of the sector. The Institutions charged with the responsibility of assisting the growth and development of small scale firms have not extended their assistance to the craft sector. The major institutions like Kenya Industrial Estates have tended to give assistance to larger size firms as well as those located in urban centres. This has made them by pass many of small scale enterprises such as Handicrafts. One thing is clear that the development of small scale enterprises will not get off the ground until the responsibility of assisting them is attached to specific institution and right policies set to provide the necessary stimulus. On this basis, it is proposed that the institutions dealing with small scale enterprises and

industrial development extend their operations to cater for the Handicraft sector as well. This will help to organize the craftsmen and women into clusters and associations which will make their assistance viable. With the new emphasis on the district as the centre of development planning, all small scale economic activities needs to be given substantial attention in order to enhance development in the districts.

It is further recommended that the Institution given the responsibility of promoting small scale enterprises should get involved in provision of permanent structures for the operation of the activities just as it is done for other types of small scale industries such as wood work industries. The construction of fixed and permanent location of operating premises should be done in the area where the activities are found but clustered in one central area. This would help to cluster the artisans in one area which will make assistance easier and provision of services to the activities. In the case of Wamunyu wood carving industry, a cluster should be created at Wamunyu market centre which currently accommodates most of the artisans. Operational sites should be created in the market for the carvers and

the other informal sector activities in order to give some form of organization to the activities. In this respect, the Government of Kenya has directed that town planners should reserve sites for informal sector activities when planning for the coming up urban centres. It is anticipated that the proposed measures of improving the manufacturing and marketing of handicraft products will lead to full realization of the benefits inherent in the sector.

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