

MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN THE
POLITICAL ECONOMY OF KENYA

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P R E F A C E

This study investigates the socio-economic effects and causes of expanded operations by multinational corporations in the post-independence political economy of Kenya. In particular, the study analyses the relations between multinationals and the Kenyan government, the distributional pattern of costs and benefits of multinationals' activities and the impact of multinationals on the conditions of poverty which a majority of Kenyans experience. In order to analyse these effects satisfactorily, the study also reviews the theoretical arguments in the development literature on the subject of multinational corporations, and describes the structuring of Kenya's contemporary political economy. The goal is to capture some of the dynamics of change in Kenya, and to consider the role of the multinationals within these dynamics.

Detailed empirical information was essential to this investigation. And in the absence of acceptable published material, it was necessary to rely on a large number of personal interviews in Kenya, with executives of multinational subsidiaries, with local entrepreneurs and with government officials. These were supplemented by research in the Companies Registry in Nairobi, and in various collections of corporate reports in England. All of those interviewed were approached on the basis that their answers and statistical

data would not be identified with the enterprise or organization which they represented. Statements and details have been used from particular subsidiaries throughout the study, but the individual subsidiary providing the relevant information, in any case, has not been identified by name.

This study could not have been completed without the remarkable co-operation and assistance of those many Kenyans and non-Kenyans who were interviewed. In view of the criticisms expressed in the study of many of the enterprises and organizations which these persons represented, I should stress my great appreciation for the time, attention and information provided me.

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