

**THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC INFLUENCE OF SMALL
URBAN CENTRES ON THEIR HINTERLANDS : A
CASE STUDY OF KEROKA TOWN, NYAMIRA
DISTRICT.**

BY

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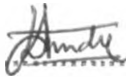
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**A thesis submitted in part fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts
(Planning) in the University of Nairobi.**

SEPTEMBER, 1997.

DECLARATION


This thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.

SIGNED 

Date 24/9/97

THE DECLARATION OF THE SUPERVISOR

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.


.....

DR. S.O AKATCH

Date.....

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Precise acknowledgement of my sources of information is impossible but I duly acknowledge specific information and data from individuals and institutions. I greatly appreciate the time and effort put into producing this work by Keroka town council, district authorities and the librarians in the university who were quite reliable and helpful.

Finally much credit is due to the secretary for skilful tying of the work.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents; Paul and Esther, my family; Margaret and Bryan, and my Loved ones with grateful thanks for their Love, Patience, Support and Encouragement over the two years. I however apologise for the loneliness they suffered while I was away.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis represents an attempt to address the issue as to how small towns can and do play a significant and positive role in promoting rural development and prosperity. A central feature in the study is that the growth of small urban centres is a necessary condition and prerequisite for rural transformation since the small urban town is perceived as a catalyst for rural improvement. It is apparent from the study thesis that governments can do much to stimulate the development of small urban centres which may have positive repercussions for their hinterlands provided that they are willing to permit greater decentralisation and allow devolution of power at the local levels. Further more careful selection of investments in infrastructure may provide conditions to further encourage the attraction of small towns. The influence of governments can however also have negative consequences for urban centres and rural development. The local governments incapacitated by weak resource base may not provide the physical infrastructure needed in order for these towns to deliver. Consequently instead of providing opportunities for investment, employment and social opportunities they turn parasitic; sacking resources from their rural hinterlands without reciprocating in the form of increased linkages.

The small towns thus form collection centres for the wider national capitalist economy where the rural resources are channelled outwards to the detriment of the former. The capital surplus (financial savings) are invested far off in bigger towns that have basic infrastructure (and therefore investments opportunities), whereas the local centres mean't to offer such opportunities either stagnate or even decay off. To some extent

this is true for the study area based on the field findings. Faced with a myriad of constraints; physical, political and economic, Keroka town can't deliver to the satisfaction of the local demand, thus investments are taken to immediate centres like Kisii, Sotik and of late Nyamira denying Keroka the opportunity to develop Irrespective of its locational advantages within the two districts. This observation explains the wide gap between the potential benefits and actual functions of small towns; which was one of the initial reason for developing interest in the research topic.

The role and influence of small towns in stimulating socio-economic activities in their rural setting has however been demonstrated to be positive and constructive throughout the thesis. With minimal investment in basic infrastructure, small towns can greatly enhance the rural development process thereby promoting Rural-Urban balance. The selection and hence the elevation of designated small towns as service centres, should not be a political pawn but a socio-economic criteria should be developed if they have to be functionally beneficial to enhancing rural-urban balance and hence to a nationally integrated economy. The success of national policies towards a sustainable economy will largely depend on how well small towns are equipped to meet socio-economic aspirations of their local population and this calls for political commitment in ensuring efficient and equitable distribution of the available scarce resources.

ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis is organised into five Chapters, viz;

Chapter one; Gives the introduction to the thesis by stating the problem, the objectives, the research assumption, the justification, the scope of the research, study methodology, the study limitations and Definition of important terms in the thesis.

Chapter two; Deals with the literature review on central place theory (growth centre theory) and the conceptual framework within which the topic is set, specifically on spatial urban planning and the government's policy on small and intermediate towns in Kenya.

Chapter three; Focuses on the physical, and socio-economic setting of the study area thus giving the background information on the research.

Chapter four; Concentrates on the spatial analysis of data and their consequent interpretation as a way of presenting the field findings, and finally

Chapter five; Contains the conclusion, and a summary of general recommendations concerning the role of small and intermediate urban centres.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION.

Urbanisation has been an essential part of most nation's development towards a stronger and more stable economy over the last few decades and it has helped underpin improvements in living standards for a considerable proportion of the world's population. The countries in the South that urbanised most rapidly in the last 10 -20 years are generally also those with the rapid economic growth. Most of the world's largest cities are in the world's largest economies which is further evidence of this link between economic wealth and urbanisation (Habitat 1996 cap.2, pp. 84-91). Cities and towns also have important social economic transformation roles to play. They are centres of artistic, scientific and technological innovation of culture and education. But they are also centres of abject poverty as reflected in unemployment, Housing problems, inadequate infrastructure facilities and related problems. By the year 2000 almost 50% of the world population will be in urban areas and a few years later for the first time in history urban dwellers will outnumber those in the traditionally rural areas as the global population doubles from 2.4 billion in 1995 to 5.7 billion in 2025. Whereas this phenomenon of increased urbanisation and industrialisation has reflected the progressive trend of the developing countries economies, in the LDCs it has effected an unbalanced development of different regions within one and the same country. In this way a gap has been created between a small area of concentrated economic activity around the large urban regions and the bulk of the country which

remains in agricultural use or lies as entirely vacant unused land. (Soen 1979, Slater 1988.).

Sub-saharan Africa is one of the poorest and least urbanised regions in the world with only about one third of the population living in urban areas while the remaining majority reside in the rural areas (UNDP 1990). Most striking however, is the extremely high urban population growth rate compared to other continents. The level of urbanisation in Africa increased from 14.8% in 1950 to 28.9% in 1980, compared to the world figures of 26.9% to 41.1% respectively. The number of African urban dwellers rose from 35 million in the same period and was estimated to reach 227 million in 1990, 362 by 2000, and 903 millions by 2025 (Tarver 1994). During the same period, Africa's economic growth has been sluggish and is projected to be lower in the 1990-2000 period.

This clearly shows that the rate of urbanisation in Africa does not correspond to that of economic development, social change and technical advancement. This accelerated rate of urbanisation has generated and intensified a number of urban problems the result of which has been a continuing state of deterioration affecting most of the urban centres. One of the most critical aspects of this process is that the urban population growth rate is far outstripping the growth of employment, housing and provision of adequate transport and communication systems. The fundamental problem is that the urban population is growing very fast while economic growth and the development transformations necessary to support it and enhance the quality of urban life are not occurring as rapidly (Stren and White 1989). The urbanisation process is bringing about economic and political changes that affect the ways in which Africans

organise spatially and subsist economically. Their governments are clearly faced with serious problems in managing their rapidly growing urban centres. African countries are facing three problems simultaneously: Rapid population growth, Declining agricultural productivity and Massive migration to urban areas.

Unfortunately most development policies in African states have some built in problems which are common to other regions of the world. The planning strategies in Africa are urban oriented and attempts to improve the conditions are only geared towards the urban system. This results in an increase in the rural to urban migration since the improvement of infrastructure in the urban system has not been hand in hand with the development of the rural hinterland which could encourage the agricultural development of the rural areas. Rural development projects have failed because they are not linked in any way with the emerging central places in rural areas. Rural and urban problems in Africa should not be viewed in isolation but should be considered in the context of an interrelated spatial system. Small and intermediate sized urban centres in Africa could play a very important role in linking the development of rural and urban systems.

To slow down rural to urban migration three types of policies have been and must be pursued; the first, aimed at transforming the rural economy, the second focused on discouraging migration and the third aimed at slowing the growth of the large urban centres by encouraging the growth of small and intermediate urban centres.

SMALL AND INTERMEDIATE URBAN CENTRES AND THEIR RURAL HINTERLAND IN AFRICA.

One way of alleviating the adverse effects of such urbanisation is the development of an urban decentralisation policy in part based upon the promotion of small and medium-sized towns within the country. Proponents of such a strategy argue that smaller towns would act to promote the integration of rural and urban systems hence strengthening the production and distribution systems as well as enhancing markets for industrial commodities and agricultural produce. The development of Africa's small and intermediate urban centres will be the focus of urbanisation in the 21st century since such urban centres are the spatial centres that link urban and rural development. Small and intermediate urban centres are growing very rapidly in Africa because the agricultural areas to which they are linked are prospering. For this reason more attention should be given to the role of small and intermediate urban centres for agricultural prosperity, marketing, storage, bulking and distribution (Baker 1990, Obudho 1988 and Pedersen 1991).

The literature available indicate that the problem of a dualistic economy in the developing countries can best be tackled by using this approach to bridge the gap between the traditional rural economy and the modern urban economy. This is because they are more suited in form of the services they provide to their rural hinterland and secondly they are the home of most African population classified as "urban". Its application has varied from country to country and with space and time.

1.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Interest in small and medium sized towns is recent but is a growing one as evidenced by research projects sponsored by international agencies and workshops. In the developing countries the interest in small towns has a wider base. It comes as a sequel to the much discredited "growth pole approach" to regional development. The new arguments put forward in favour of small and intermediate towns dilutes the growth pole theory to some extent and almost disregards the principal of hierarchy of settlements and thus tries to be more down to earth and pragmatic. The assumption here is that by orienting investments nearer the traditionally deprived poorer people in the stagnant rural areas, there are better chances that the larger benefits of development would go to them. It is also argued that these towns may cause a decrease of migration to large cities and thus reduce the rate of increase in overcrowding and primacy (BHOOSHAN 1984). This has called into play the need to plan for an integrated economy between the urban centres and rural areas: What is popularly known as the Rural Urban balance. It is in this context that the growth pole strategy has been applied in various forms.

In Kenya the aim of the government is to increase the rate of urbanisation by ensuring that small centres, within the range of 2000 to 20,000 population size are stimulated to grow faster at a rate of over 7.5%, while the larger centres are allowed to grow at 6.5% per annum (Kenya National Development Plan 1989/93). Such centres have been identified as focal to stimulating their rural economy and offering a range of services. To achieve this, the government has used many approaches among them being,

the Special Rural Development Programmes (SRDPs), The rural trade and production centres (RTPCs), and more recently the District Focus For Rural Development; all geared towards enhancing a balanced and sustainable economy. Funds are to be channelled through the District Focus For Rural Development (DFRD) for development of infrastructural facilities such as electricity, water supply and rural network among others, to stimulate growth of Rural Trade and Production Centres (RPTCs). This infrastructure facilities are expected to boost trade and production activities within and around such centres thus raising the standards of living through higher incomes, high productivity and generating more employment opportunities in the rural areas where majority live (Sessional paper No.1 of 1986).

The SRDP 1966 Experimental programme covered six Administrative divisions (8% of the population) with one of its major objective being; to develop regional planning techniques appropriate for the Kenyan context aimed at raising standards of living in the rural areas by creating jobs and increasing incomes. The disadvantage of the programme was its sectoral orientations and therefore not congruent to the regional and national development goals. The programme stimulated the emergence of district development committees (DDC). By 1972, the SRDP approach for rural development and the general development of national economy had little results, largely due to the technicalities involved in its application. To correct this situation the 1970-74 development plan for the first time set down a fully integrated physical planning framework and established the principle that urban development would be channelled into the service centres and towns in accordance with the scheduled network of centres and the long term planned size and function of each of the larger towns.

Over the years from 1974, the programme has undergone transformations as reflected in the Rural Trade and Production Centres (RTPCs) and District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD). The RTPCs as is expounded in the Sessional Paper No. 1, 1986 were meant to serve two purposes: The first of these was to provide adequate services for the rural areas around them and the second; was to stimulate the social-economic development of these areas thereby reducing the rural-urban dichotomy.

The assumption underlying this formulation was that this comprehensive approach to rural development would promote agricultural productivity, raise investments in the public and private sector and put into place a sustainable development process. It was hoped that such centres would offer opportunities for the rural population in form of; markets for the agricultural products and as a linkage point to industrial products (non-agricultural products). To this end, the government has extended urban boundaries, provided physical infrastructure, and elevated the status of certain designated centres appropriately from market centres to rural centres, rural centres to urban centres, urban centres to towns and from towns to municipalities. The thesis is designed to question the use of RTPC approach as strategy to enhancing a balanced Rural-Urban economy in Kenya. In other words does the establishment of small towns with a population size of 2,000 to 20,000 (1989/93, NDP) help to enhance development by way of attracting public and private investment, providing a more efficient pattern of service or do they intercept the would be immigration from the rural areas ?. Simply phrased the question to be addressed is "What is the role of small urban towns and their related physical infrastructure facilities in the general development process of

their hinterland and how can they be designed to be more effective in generating self-integrated rural urban development?. In the light of this, the research concerns itself with how concentrated infrastructure in designated small towns helps to achieve the stated government policy of Rural-urban balance and how such strategies can be strengthened through identification and elimination of constraints hindering the provision of services to the rural population.

1.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The research was based on three general objectives:

1. To examine the socio-economic activities within Keroka town and those of the rural hinterland,
2. To identify the constraints that hamper the delivery of services by Keroka town to its dependant population, and
3. To formulate proposals within which urban infrastructure in small centres should be planned, designed and implemented.

1.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To study types and patterns of agricultural and non farm activities within and outside the town,
2. To identify the influence of transport, water reticulation, electricity and, telecommunication facilities on agricultural activities of the hinterlands
3. To evaluate the limitations that hinder the towns performance in generating economic activities, and
4. To examine the general importance of the town within its location and the country at large.

1.4 THE RESEARCH ASSUMPTION.

The research study was based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between the socio-economic activities of the rural hinterland and the urban infrastructural facilities, and that small urban centres if " well planned " exert strong socio-economic influences on the development of their rural hinterland.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The research study intended to establish positive and negative trickle down effects of small urban centres on the general development process. Once established, such contributions can be used to strategically design urban centres and their physical infrastructure as pivotal points of rural development which is the focus of many planners and policy makers today. Indeed unravelling the underlying links between rural development and urban infrastructure is a step forward in solving rural-urban inequalities in Kenya. The study is in tune with the government policy of creating links between the urban centres and their hinterlands, thus likely to contribute knowledge as to how the provision of infrastructure in the designated small towns contribute/ influences the regnant socio-economic activities of its locality. It is intended to give insight to the planners and policy makers alike on the problems of organising and coordinating the orderly development of rural based urban centres which are designed to set in motion a self propelled rural development process.

The choice of Keroka town was based on the population size. It has a population of between 12,000 to 25000 (Keroka Physical Development Plan

1992). Thus the town qualifies as a small urban centre as stipulated in the National Development plan 1989/93, where small urban towns are defined as those with a population of between 2,000 to 20,000. It was also seen as a suitable town for such study because it lies within a rich hinterland. Further the town lies on the main trunk road which runs through Nakuru to Keroka, through Kisii and to Migori before going to Tanzania through Isebania. The town is also the second largest in both Kisii and Nyamira Districts enjoying a central location of a service centre.

1.6 NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH.

The study was centred on the growth of Small Urban Centres and their infrastructure facilities vis a vis the surrounding rural environment. Keroka town was the centre for the study with particular reference to the services rendered by the town and its eventual role in promoting the quality of life of the rural majority. The study in particular focused on the types and patterns of socio-economic activities within the town and those of the surrounding hinterland as influenced by the town's infrastructure facilities. The study was restricted to the administrative boundaries of the town and the surrounding locations both in Nyamira and Kisii districts.

1.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY.

In order to achieve and realise the set objectives the following approaches for data collection were used;

1.7:1 Secondary data collection. This included literature review on the subject matter in effort to finding out what had been done before about the topic. This approach entailed;

- Journal review
- Theses reviewing
- General information and material collection

1.7:2 Primary data collection: A reconnaissance survey was done by walking around the town to identify the major types of activities within the town and its immediate hinterland. A total of 75 Questionnaires were administered in the field with the intention of avoiding non response cases and minimising response errors therefore increasing the accuracy level of the information collected. Three research assistants of whom were local residents, were involved in this exercise of data collection.

The units of analysis were the Individuals, Households, Firms, Focused groups and Institutions. The Samples were drawn randomly out of the various sub-economic activities in the wards and locations, then proportionate samples were drawn out of the various areas.

1.7.3 SAMPLE SIZES AND SAMPLE FRAME.

In general the following areas were studied through Questionnaire interviews and interview schedules: Businessmen, Market vendors, Keroka town council, Transport dealers, and Farmers in the hinterland.

Business Sample frame was as follows:

Type of Activity	Population size	Sample size
Hotels and food kiosks	20	2
Bars	14	1
Retail and Wholesales	124	12
Petrol station	4	1
Butcheries	13	1
Bobbler(shoe repair)	32	3
Bookshops	10	1
Salonists	18	2
Chemists and Clinics	7	1
Workshops (welders)	13	1
Carpenters	17	2
Motor vehicle repair	4	1
Radio and TV repairs	11	1
Tailors	19	2

Market Vendors	Number	Sample
Fruit and vegetable dealers	115	10
Cereal dealers Beans purveyors	3 variable	1
Mitumba dealers	30 variable	3
Leather dealers	3 variable	1
General Item / Foods hawkers	17	2
General domestic sellers	25variable	2

Transport dealers and the sampling frame

Main routes	Number of operators	Sample Size
Keroka-Mabuko- Magombo (22.5km)	5	2
Keroka-Ibacho-Kiamokama (30km)	3	1
Keroka Masimba Ramasha Nyanguso(50km)	6	2
Keroka Metamaywa Manga (10km)	3	1
Keroka Metamaywa Gesima Kebirigo(49km)	7	2
Keroka Kisii Sotik (over 50km)	Variable	4

Sampling frame for Hinterland (farm)	Sample Sizes
Keroka East (Muntine) Ward,	2
Keroka mjini East (market) Ward,	none
Keroka North (Bonchari) Ward,	3
Nyansira (Nyaribari chache) Ward,	2
Keroka West (Nyanchonori) Ward,	2
Keroka Mjini West (Union) Ward,	1
Keroka South West ward,	2
Keroka South East (Ichuni) Ward	2.

This activities have varying degrees of infrastructure requirements and other factors that provide for their establishment (a complex mix). A sixth sector; Banking, postal services and administrative offices was deemed necessary to find out the types of services offered and the level of their provision within and outside the town.

Observation as a method was also integrated with these other methods of data collection,.

1.8 FORM OF DATA COLLECTED.

Descriptive data (inferential data)

Quantitative statistical tables, maps, charts, sketches and diagrams.

1.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND DOCUMENTATION.

Data analysis was done by coding the raw data based on a coding scheme that was developed.

Quantitative data was computer analyzed using frequencies, and statistical variables through Word Perfect Version 51 and Spss packages.

Qualitative information was analyzed manually by narrative and summary illustrations.

1.10 STUDY LIMITATIONS

The research cannot claim to have comprehensively or exhaustively analysed the Socio-Economic activities of the town given the following short comings;

Firstly, Keroka is a small town with merely any data bank, maps or helpful information, the town is still in the process of reorganisation without proper offices, facilities or even qualified staff with whom focused discussion could be done. Consequently it became impossible to attain information in the wanted form. For instance there was no reliable (probable) information on the exact population of the town, the number of households within the town council, and the current business types within the town. This necessitated journeys to the district headquarters which had aggregated statistics. Where available such information was not retrievable because no one was willing to search the information through the dusty files in the store.

Secondly, inaccessibility to certain areas hampered the collection of information because of the town's physical features characterised by valleys and ridges. Crossing from one area to another required the use of vehicles along the roads and at times long journeys on foot. This consumed valuable time that could be used in gathering more data. Within such a limited financial and time scale, the size of the sample was highly checked rendering the findings herein, town (area) specific rather than being a reflection of characteristics in other smaller towns.

Thirdly, in the field it was realised that most people were suspicious and unwilling to give information especially that related to incomes, family size

investments and number of people employed. For instance a powerful entrepreneur in keroka could not discuss the above information because " such information is supposed to be a secret to the owner ". This discouraged the rigorous endeavour to getting massive and complete information on the town.

1.11 DEFINITION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN THE THESIS

Development as used here will mean economic growth and the social changes caused by or accompanying that economic growth (BENJAMIN ET AL 1988). Underlying this definition is the belief that, development means increasing the capacity of people both Urban and Rural to influence and control their futures.

Rural development on the other hand, implies a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural poor and that development is intended to reduce poverty, increase production and raise productivity of the rural poor. It is concerned with the modernisation and monetisation of the rural society and the transition of rural society from traditional isolation to integration with the national economy. The objectives of rural development therefore extends beyond any particular sector. They encompass improved productivity, increased employment...as well as minimum acceptance levels of food, shelter, education and health (UN REPORT 1979).

Urbanisation is used in a demographic sense as a process of growing population concentration whereby the proportion of the total population

which is classified as urban is increasing. As far as urban growth is concerned there are three components: Natural increase, Net immigration and changes in urban boundaries which result in the incorporation of previously rural places.(LIPTON 1977:225).

Hinterland is used to refer that area immediate to the town setting (in specific outside the urbanised core of the town but generally outside the gazetted urban zone). The region is characterised by inadequate or poor infrastructural facilities and its main economic activity is dependant on agriculture.

Small urban centres for the purpose of this study will include all nucleated settlements regarded as urban by their national governments up to those which are judged within their national context to have developed concentrated activities deemed important. In kenya the population sizes range from 2000 to 20,000 (NDP 1989/93) but the term is ambiguous changing from one country to another.

The term ' **rural non-farm sector** ' is used here to denote all economic activities carried on outside of the major towns or municipalities; except for those activities directly connected with production of crops or livestock. Activities included are raw material extraction, small scale processing and manufacturing, construction, transportation, retail and wholesale, trading and personal and financial services. This activities embrace activities located in rural market centres and in other small towns which are exclusively dependant on rural economies.

2.0 INTRODUCTION.

For many decades urbanisation and industrialisation have been seen as indicators of Economic development of many nations. Urbanisation as a concomitant of development and its consequent contributions in form of/ as centres of innovation, information dissemination, employment and service provision (infrastructure) has remained central for most developing countries. Whereas its true that Urbanisation has been an essential part of most developed countries's development towards a stronger and more stable economy, in most of the developing countries it has a negative impact to the extent that its now counted as one of the top ranking problems in LDC's (TARVER 1994).

According to SOEN (1979), The concept of development, refers to changes induced, framed and generated by deliberate policies and development agents. Societies do not develop in isolation. Development changes are spread among territorial societies and social groups through a variety of channels and contacts. In this way old forms and ways of doing things are replaced by new ones by other processes than those usually referred to as evolutions.

Diffusion of cultural and technological innovations by deliberate social engineering: a prime characteristic of development draws immediate attention to the role of the central and regional authorities, the political system, the development policies and development agents. In short the concept of development explicitly recognises the importance of the external openness of societies to outside influences and their internal openness to policy intervention and direction. The diffusion of successive waves of

CHAPTER TWO.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

PREAMBLE

This chapter attempts to present the literature surveyed and how it applies to the research topic. The aim is to appreciate the available theory on how urban centres in general have played a leading role in enhancing economic development. It is subdivided into two sections;

1) **The theoretical background** which covers the role of urban centres in development. Specific emphasis is laid on central place theory, growth centre theory, the spatial diffusion of innovation in development and theory on the role of small and intermediate towns. The literature attempts to indicate the logic of planning by appreciating inequalities that emerge in a free market system and broad-based national policies as propounded by a number of scholars like Myrdal, Hirschman, Sunkel, Friedmann and others and how different governments have responded in ensuring equal distribution of incomes, employment and economic opportunities in general.

2) **Part two is on the conceptual framework** which endeavours to place the topic within the Kenyan context by analyzing how different urban based development policies have been applied in the country. This includes a brief on Kenya's urban development policies over the various plan periods as strategies towards balanced economic planning. A summary of what has been done on the research topic under study as a conclusion and as a way of appreciating the role of small towns in Kenya is given at the end of the chapter.

innovations in functional (i.e economic, social, cultural and institutional spaces) and geographical space are the mechanism that bring about economic growth and structural changes in the various spaces (KUKLINSKI 1972).

2.1 BACKGROUND TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Early development economists like Walter Christaller (1933) Losch (1941) Friedmann (1966), Hansen (1972), and Perroux among others realised that development was a complex phenomenon that needed proper planning. It was noted that regions are an integral part of the structure of national economy and economic systems cannot be understood nor effective policies formulated nor plans made without understanding the regional structure. Thus accelerated growth of the national economy as a whole requires an attack on the problems of retarded regions.

According to Boudeville (1966), there are three types of regions; namely homogeneous, polarised, and programming or planning regions. The homogeneous region has maximum internal homogeneity in whatever factor is being measured. The polarised region is defined as a collection of geographical spaces in which connections and flows - for example, of goods, services and political allegiance - are predominantly in one direction; i.e. towards a central point, or 'pole', which dominates the region. The boundary of the polarised region is the line beyond which such flows and connections are predominantly in some other direction - towards some other pole. Planning or programming region is that area which is defined by a plan.

Sunkel (1969), Studying Latin American underdevelopment, identified marginality and spatial inequality which he classified into four categories; Inter-regional, urban-rural, inter-urban, and intra-urban inequalities. The literature available indicates that intra-regional (regional) receives more attention than most. The urban -rural inequality also generally capture the greatest analytical attention and forms in some sense the most functional type of spatial inequality in terms of production types of economic activity, division of labour and, infrastructure .

One of the first and still well known models of regional inequality is to be found in Myrdal's work (1957), on economic theory and underdeveloped countries. Here a fundamental contention is that the play of the forces in the market normally tends to increase rather than decrease the inequalities between regions, so that once particular regions have by virtue of an initial advantage moved ahead of others, these same areas will at the expense of the remaining regions of the country benefit from cumulative concentration of new economic activity.

According to Slater (1979), Third world countries have conspicuous structural inequalities especially Inter-Urban inequalities. They experience a dualistic problem where the rural (traditional) economy co-exist hand in hand with the modern (urban) economy. This dualistic situation has given a wrong view of urbanisation.

Obudho (1974) observes that the socio-economic and political life of the economy is dominated by a few urban centres (primate cities) which pose serious urban related problems to policy makers and urban planners. This has called into attention the need to plan for an integrated approach between the urban centres and the rural areas, what is popularly known

as the rural-urban balance. The approach is designed to allow mutual flow of resources between the two systems.

According to Friedmann (1973), this polarisation process has called in to place strategic policies that will address the inequalities at all levels. Thus one of the main objectives of national planning in third world countries has been to achieve a more balanced economic development and to reach an urbanisation pattern that can make maximum contributions to development of the country, in both economic and social sense. However reality shows that there is a gap between the planning goals and the achieved results. An insufficient allocation of resources, and inappropriate approach to developing the less endowed/developed regions appear to have created such a gap (Soen 1979).

From a regional perspective then, efforts must be made to strengthen these focal points in slow growth regions and start a process of self sustained economic growth. By concentrating efforts on selected growth centres, employment opportunities would be created which also mop up surplus labour from the surrounding rural areas. Regional development efforts it was noted would now lead to self sustaining economic activity and it would not as in the past constitute an on going drain on the treasury.

2.2 EXAMPLES OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN SPECIFIC COUNTRIES.

In response to these observations the concept of central place theory and related body of theories were originally developed as a tool to describing and explaining the anatomy of economic development in abstract economic space. With time the scope of the concept itself

broadened and was reoriented to include also normative issues of policy intervention and planning. The theory as applied in the growth pole theory has concentrated in the inter and intra regional development.

In Canada for example the special Area Agreements sponsored a great variety of projects including the construction of highways in the various regions in an attempt to ensuring balanced development.

In USA economic development administration (EDA) was launched as part of the great society campaign, While in Japan, the most recent approach to regional development is called the " Technopolis plan" which involves the corporation of private enterprises the Government and universities to establish High-tech industrial complexes in relatively small towns(or in the retarded regions of the country).

In Kenya the concept gave rise to the Special Rural Development Programmes (SRDPs) in the late 1960's after the Kericho conference of 1966. According to this conference, a comprehensive approach to rural transformation which could include short term measures to promote Agricultural productivity and a functional strengthening of the rural education system and investment in the private sector was needed, with long term effects on agricultural productivity. Then in 1970 with the realisation that the strategy was not giving out the expected results the Government set for the Rural trade and promotion centres (RTPCs). According to the 1970-1974 National Development Plan, " Urban development would be channelled into the service centres and towns in accordance with the scheduled network of centres and the long term planned size and function of each of the larger towns."

Since 1970, therefore the Kenya Government has formally adopted

growth centre policy which is designed to encourage a degree of decentralisation from the primate city and at the same time build up rural service centres on a basis of perceived potential in creating non-agricultural employment.

2.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Development process is marked by two concomitant but opposite spatial tendencies, i.e. concentration and dispersion. Concentration is the result of 'centripetal forces' and dispersion of 'centrifugal forces' (Getis, 1978). Concentration leads to 'point locations' or 'clustering' of human activities. Dispersion brings about an even spread of such activities (Misra et al. 1974). However, in reality, both processes operate simultaneously. Considering these natural processes and tendencies of concentration and dispersion, several scholars have advocated theories and models of spatial organisation and socio-economic development.

To begin with the important features of growth pole theory, Perroux argues in contrast to the traditional notion of equilibrium of development that "...development does not appear everywhere and all at once; it appears in points or development poles with variable intensities; it spreads along diverse channels and has varying terminal effects for the whole of the economy." In other words, development is held as being unbalanced. Perroux considers development essentially polarised, in the sense that forces inherent in the development process act towards the clustering of economic activities and growth, and towards an imbalance in industries and geographical areas (Hermansen, 1972, p.3).

2.3.1 CENTRAL PLACE THEORY

The 'central place' theory, as advocated by Christaller (1933) and Losch (1941), deals with the functional specialisation, number, size and distribution of human settlements. Christaller assumes a homogenous landscape with the distribution of natural resources and population, invariably farmers; and that the consumer preferences and production techniques are alike; that the transportation costs, demand, functions and economies of scale would vary from product to product and hence, the spatial range of goods and services would also vary. Further, Christaller explains that a certain amount of production supports an urban centre and, in return, the urban centre offers some essential services referred to as 'central functions.' These central places are regularly spaced in hexagonal pattern and so also are their hinterlands. There are a hierarchy of central places and the lowest order centre performs certain limited and lower functions to its surrounding area. The next higher order centre performs all functions of lower order and, in addition, some more specialised higher order functions. Thus, the higher order centres offer more goods to their hinterlands and the lower order centres provide only limited goods and services to their hinterlands. The distance between the centres will be greater but less in number in the case of higher order centres and proportionately more in number but less in distance as in the case of lower order centres.

Although both Christaller and Losch agree on many basic points, the approach of the former is purely an explanation of the spatial structure

of service activities, whereas the latter is an explanation of spatial organisation of secondary activities (Hermansen, 1972, p. 35). There is some empirical evidence of geographical regularities suggested by the central place theories of Christaller and Losch. These theories are nevertheless of considerable interest in relation to the notion of localised developments of poles (Hermansen, 1972, p. 37). "These theories were the first global theories of location, attempting a simultaneous explanation of production and consumption in spatial clusters with different locations, size and functional structure".....they have contributed considerably to the understanding of spatial interrelations and to the evolving view of 'cities as systems within systems of cities'" (Berry - quoted by Hermansen, 1972). The study of central place theories which analyze urban hierarchy and growth centres as generators of spread effects is close, because communication of growth involves transmission of stimulating effects through an urban hierarchy.

Central place theory is however static; it aims at explaining the existence of certain patterns of centres, not how this pattern has gradually evolved and how it may undergo in future changes. It does not explain development phenomena. So it is required to include an explanation of the dynamics of growth in spatial dimension, for which one has to look at the development theories and, henceforth, the growth pole (in geographical space) theory seems most promising (Hermansen, 1972). Hermansen (1972) summarises; "In this way, the French development pole theory and the German theory of location appear to supplement each other in a fruitful way."

2.3.2 GROWTH CENTRE (POLE) THEORY

Hirschman (1968), says that we must take it for granted that economic progress does not appear everywhere at the same time and that once it has appeared, powerful forces make for spatial concentration of economic growth around the initial starting points. For an economy to lift itself to higher income levels, it must and will first, develop within itself one or several regional centres of economic strength.

Development occurring in the geographical growth points will set in motion forces which will induce development in the backward/depressed hinterlands. These trickle-down forces work particularly through inter-regional trade and transfer of capital to the backward regions. The effect of trickle down forces is largely dependent on the complementarities between the industries in the growth centre and the hinterlands. However, in case of weak complementarities, the progress of growth centre may have unfavourable polarisation effects on the hinterlands (Hermansen, 1972). "This situation of imbalance will tend to continue up to the point where the lagging region of the south (hinterlands) begins to effect the north's growth, or where the south will seek to redeem the balance by political action or revolution." (Darwent, 1969). Hirschman's arguments are based on his theory of economic development, as an essentially unbalanced process propagated through chains of disequilibria. It can be said that there is similarity in between Hirschman's theory - developed mainly with reference to the less developed Latin American countries and the French theory of economic development, generated by growth poles.

Myrdal (1957) argues that the tendency for the polarisation forces

is stronger than the trickle-down forces, while studying the problem of geographical coincidence and spread of economic development at the same time as Hirschman. He discusses the terms 'spread' and 'backwash effects' which are exactly analogous with Hirschman's - 'trickle-down' and 'polarisation effects' respectively. Myrdal assumes, amongst the possibilities, the spontaneous spread of development in space on his theory of circular and cumulative causation. He argues that movements of labour, capital and goods, are precisely the media through which the cumulative process evolves - upwards in the lucky regions and downwards in the unlucky ones. He also maintains that the higher the level of development and the higher the rate of growth of the economy, the stronger the spread effect as compared to the backwash effect, and the gradual neutralisation of the backwash effects as a country develops is an important factor speeding up development (Hermansen, 1972). As discussed earlier, it can be said that both Hirschman and Myrdal pioneered the identification of the basic reasons why development is apt to be localised in space and then expounds on the nature and mechanisms through which development impulses are diffused from a limited number of urbanised regions to the rest of the country (Darkoh, 1977, p. 14).

John Friedmann (1966), in a study of the Venezuelan regional development policy, propounded his core-periphery model. In developing his model, Friedman stays close to the real problems of regional development in geographical space and shows how deficient are the growth pole and growth centre theories in most respects, by a richer and more satisfying model of spatial incidence of the regional economic development. His model was acclaimed as the first attempt to formulate a systematic and

comprehensive spatial model of the growth centre concept.

Friedmann (1973, p. 51) opines that:

"Development occurring through a discontinuous but cumulative process of innovation, will tend to have its origin in a relatively small number of centres of change located at the points of highest potential interaction within a communication field; innovation will tend to spread downward and outward from these centres to areas where the probability of potential interaction is lower."

According to Friedmann, cities and towns, owing to their valuable urbanisation and localisation economies, tend to be favoured as points of growth. There emerges a hierarchial system of cities and thus also of urban fields, which is held to be evidence of increasing spatial integration, and therefore development. Economic change will tend to be transmitted from higher orders to lower orders in the hierarchy. To encourage overall development, Friedmann argues in favour of a highly developed and interconnected functional hierarchy of cities as a means of integrating the periphery with the core.

2.4 SPATIAL DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION

More often than not, so called centering policies means little more than placing investments in cities on the basis of some vaguely defined criterion of 'growth potential'. The most prominent issue of growth centre analysis is its spatial diffusion of innovations for the development of a

region. " The developmental role of growth centres involves the simultaneous filtering of the innovations that bring growth down the urban hierarchy and the spreading of the benefits accruing from the resulting growth... from centres... to... periphery " (Berry, 1972, p. 108).

There are two processes of diffusion of innovations: the first is the dissemination of innovation which is largely a function of social communication; the second is the adoption of innovation, which is a complex process of learning accepting and decision-making. Friedmann (1978, p. 278) classified on the basis of salient characteristics of the adopting unit into two types of innovations, namely, (a) 'consumer innovations' - products and cultural (related primarily to the demand side of economic transactions), and (b) 'entrepreneurial innovation' technical and organisational (created primarily to the supply side of economic transactions). Moseley (1974, pp. 55-56) also classifies two types of innovations, namely, 'household' and 'entrepreneurial'. The household innovations have immediate effects only on the adopter. Entrepreneurial innovations have direct consequences for people other than the adopter - who may be a person, a firm, or a city. It is the second kind of innovation which is important for transmission of regional development impulses via the urban systems.

The adoption/diffusion of innovations is dependent on several factors such as size, location and the rank of the urban centre in the hierarchy and also the social structure, etc. Hagerstrand suggest that the diffusion of innovations can be organised in a hierarchial way - one field is operating at local level, one at the regional level, and one at the national level. Urban centres receiving largest early innovations will tend to grow faster than those who adopt the same innovations later in time. The larger

the city in the size of its effective population the greater will be the probability of innovation.

It is also argued that, policy of concentration of investments in both providing and maintaining of services and infrastructures at growth centres is more economic than dispersal of the same. Those included in such services and infrastructures are marketing facilities, health, education, co-operatives, credit and banking facilities, transport and communication, water supply, electricity, industrial establishments, etc. In other words, the growth centre functions as a central place for providing such facilities for further development not only of the growth centre itself, but also of the surrounding region. For example, with a better transportation and communication facility development not only of the growth centre itself will take place, but also of the surrounding region since, the diffusion of innovations from the growth centre to its hinterland will be more effective. The presence of secondary activities in the growth centre like heavy manufacturing industry will facilitate the utilisation of agricultural products of the surrounding region, etc. The growth of the growth centre itself will stimulate the growth of its hinterland and again the latter will effect the growth of the former due to polarisation effects. Thus there will be a cumulative process. The agglomeration economies will give rise to the growth of the growth centre, thus increasing the job opportunity at the centre and increase of population. This will increase the demand of all activities and reap the agglomeration economies.

2.5 GROWTH CENTRE THEORY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development tends to be viewed as a facet of urban development in the sense that rural areas are expected to be recipients of positive urban spill-overs. To that end, two concepts have been formulated: 'growth centre theory' and the industrial-urban hypothesis.' Todd (1983, p. 45) suggests;

"Indeed, one of the main claims for relevance of growth centres, is that such induced planning investments serve their rural tributary zones in precisely this manner, that is, they act as the prime agents of initiating positive change (social as well as economic) and through that, the well being of rural residents."

Growth centres have fallen into disrepute as an instrument of spatial policy in developing countries, but as Richardson (1978b, p. 133) suggests;

"growth centres may still be valuable, if harmonised with local economic and social conditions. The growth centres must be integrated with rural development policies by promoting agro-processing industries rather than capital-intensive manufacturing, by functioning as an alternative destination of rural migrants to the primate city, and by strengthening the service hierarchies in rural regions, Growth centre policies will fall unless they are conceived within the framework of a national urban development strategy".

Hence, the growth centre should be treated as an instrument of national spatial policy. In a developing country, spatial policy often demands

Intervention of different levels of national urban hierarchy with the promotion of heterogeneous towns serving national, regional and perhaps even local ends. From the view point of growth centre policies, this can happen only if these policies are framed within the context of a national urban development strategy as a complementary to rural development strategies. However, it would be premature to infer from this experience that growth centres are an inappropriate instrument of spatial policy in developing countries. The challenge is to design and implement growth centre strategies to harmonise with the requirements and potential of developing countries. Growth centre policies in the past have concentrated on regional problems on a general perspective rather than focusing on the unique socio-economic potential and constraint of a region.

2.6 THE ROLE OF SMALL AND INTERMEDIATE TOWNS IN DEVELOPMENT.

There is no consensus among researchers as to the correct definition of small and intermediate urban centres. Instead, different researchers use a variety of universal population size categories (UNCHS,1985; Rondinnelli, 1983) Each country's settlement form a continuum, when ranked by population size. At first glance, the rank by population size might be expected to correspond to role in national development in terms of, contributions to production, trade and service provision. However this is not always the case since population size is unreliable indicator of the scale and nature of an urban centre's economic role. The economic function of any urban centre is often reflected by, social and economic structures in its immediate hinterland, its links with the subnational and

settlements too small to support basic services and facilities'. They concluded that programmes for agricultural development, small scale industrialisation and infrastructure investments in the selected rural towns can strengthen the currently weak middle level of settlements in the spatial systems of developing countries. The authors further suggested;

"an integrated package of services and facilities is needed to increase agricultural activity and improve overall rural living standards"

Within this so called 'transformational' approach a balanced spatial system can be achieved by emphasizing the stimulation of development from below through the extension of basic services and infrastructure to smaller rural settlements. In their expansion of the concept, they correctly emphasized that neither the goals of increased productivity nor increased income distribution can be attained without increasing the interaction among villages, markets, towns, intermediate cities and metropolitan areas in developing nations.

Sharma (1984), on the same topic notes that ;

'Since the poor are predominantly rural, the focus in recent development strategies has been on self reliant integrated rural development with such notions as Agropolitan development" (Friedmann and Douglass, 1978) Selective regional closure (Stohr and Todtling (1979) and planning from below (Stohr 1981). The figure underneath illustrates this operating fields.

national economy, the country's political and administrative structures, and even the urban centre's link with the world market.

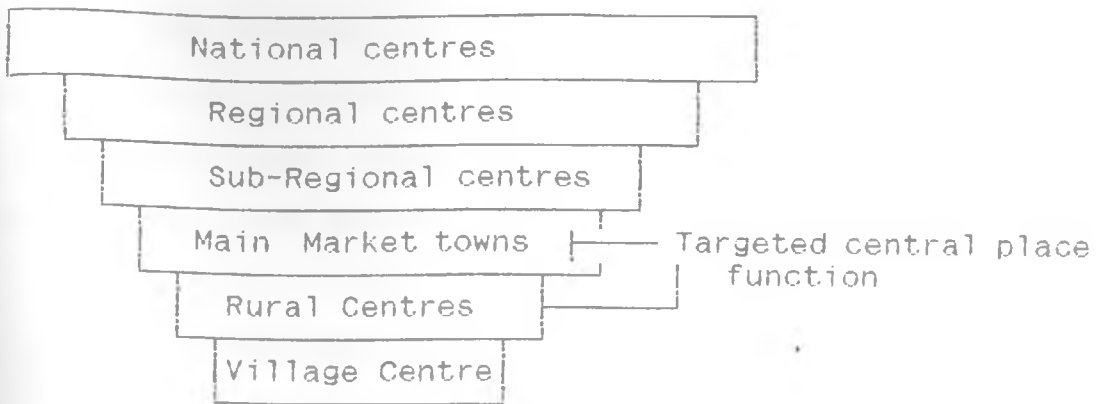
In Kenya, these centres have been designated as 'growth centres' through which innovation and development resources are expected to spread to the rural areas (Kimani and Taylor, 1972). It has frequently been observed that rural-urban migrants are attracted by the prospects of employment, and the growth of these centres appears to be consistent with this feature. Indeed, there are survey evidence that most migrants go first to the town nearest their rural residence and prefer remaining there if they can find adequate employment (Moseley, 1973). Thus they are becoming increasingly important centres of opportunity for rural-urban migrants, and catalytic nodes for more efficiently linking rural areas to the national economy. The small and intermediate urban centres in Kenya can, therefore, be defined as those centres with a population of between 2,000 and 100,000.

2.6.1 THEIR ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

One of the basic problems of planning for economic growth in the developing countries, is the concentration of resources in few large centres resulting in the persistence of a dual economy characterised by polarisation rather than articulation (Bhuttler 1975). Change in such system involves the creation of a locational matrix, through a restructuring of the space economy so as to cause rapid and sustained overall growth. According to Rondinell and Ruddle(1978);

The rural poor in developing countries live in scattered

Fig 1: The central place functions and the operating fields of rural growth centre within the hierarchy of central places.



Source: Sharma, 1984.

Such rural development strategies are expected to serve a broad set of economic and socio-political objectives such as a direct attack on poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor, social control over rural resource allocation and mobilisation of self-help and grassroots participation and selective spatial closure from the non-rural realm.

Jorge (1988), Observed that most of the third world's population live in the rural areas but depends on small and intermediate urban centres for access to goods and services, markets for rural produce and government facilities. Despite a growing number of governments programmes for such centres, very few give much attention to the specific political and constraints of each urban centre neither are there attempts to integrate programmes for small and intermediate urban centres into national development plans. This excludes explicit linkages between programmes for small and intermediate urban centres and agricultural and rural development.

Further still the local authorities have not been strengthened to the capacity of providing basic services both to urban population and the surrounding rural population. More emphasis is often laid on cities or big towns where a small proportion of the third world population live. Indeed far more people live and interact with small and intermediate centres or are homes of the rural inhabitants .

2.6.2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Nonetheless there are those who think differently and they argue implicitly or explicitly that urban development is opposed to rural development. Their arguments depict urban bias as the chief villain in rural development (Lipton 1980). They deny any positive role of the urban centres and advocate a complete de-linking of urban and rural development. The bottom up strategists and the agro-politan strategists of rural development support this view (Friedmann 1979, Stohr and Taylor 1980).

Whatever the inclination one takes the issue still requiring clarification is: Do the small and intermediate urban towns play any major role themselves in the development of a predominantly rural society like that of Kenya ?.

The theoretical literature on the subject tends to convincingly conclude that the implications of the transformational approach in terms of rural growth centres are constructive and positive. At the low level in the settlements hierarchy, the rural market town is the basic economic activity node in which the rural people exchange their agricultural products and services they need accordingly within the hierarchical economic activities

sphere. This means that the rural market town is the settlements point at which the upward flow of agricultural products and craft items are introduced into the high levels of the marketing system (Rondinell 1978).

CONCLUSION

Intra-regional inequalities presents one of the most challenging problems in developing countries. Early attempts to alleviate it saw most countries emphasize industrialisation which concurrently called for rapid urbanisation. This phenomena did not however improve the economic structure of most countries since a dualistic situation was set in motion with the modern urban economy on one side and the traditional rural economy on the other. With time urbanisation problems like Rural-urban migration, housing problems unemployment, congestion and social-political problems associated with increased population, preponderated that means were being sought to slow down rapid urbanisation especially the primate towns (cities). It therefore shows that growth pole (centre) approach to development didn't contribute much towards a balanced economy but rather exacerbated inter-regional inequalities. An alternative has been emphasis on small to medium sized towns whose contributions towards the reinvigoration of the stagnant rural economy are argued to be more rewarding. This will be under focus in the conceptual framework where an attempt is made to analyze the various strategies that Kenya has applied in her endeavour towards a balanced economy.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.7.1 Introduction

Although the majority of Kenya's population still remains rural, urban population has been growing within the range of 6.8 to 8.0 percent per annum. This is twice as fast as the average of all the LDC's. The bar graph below shows estimate urban population in E. Africa between 1950 and 2025, with the observation that by the year 2025 Kenya will be having half (1/2) of its population in the urban areas.

Estimate Urban Pop. in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania 1950-2025

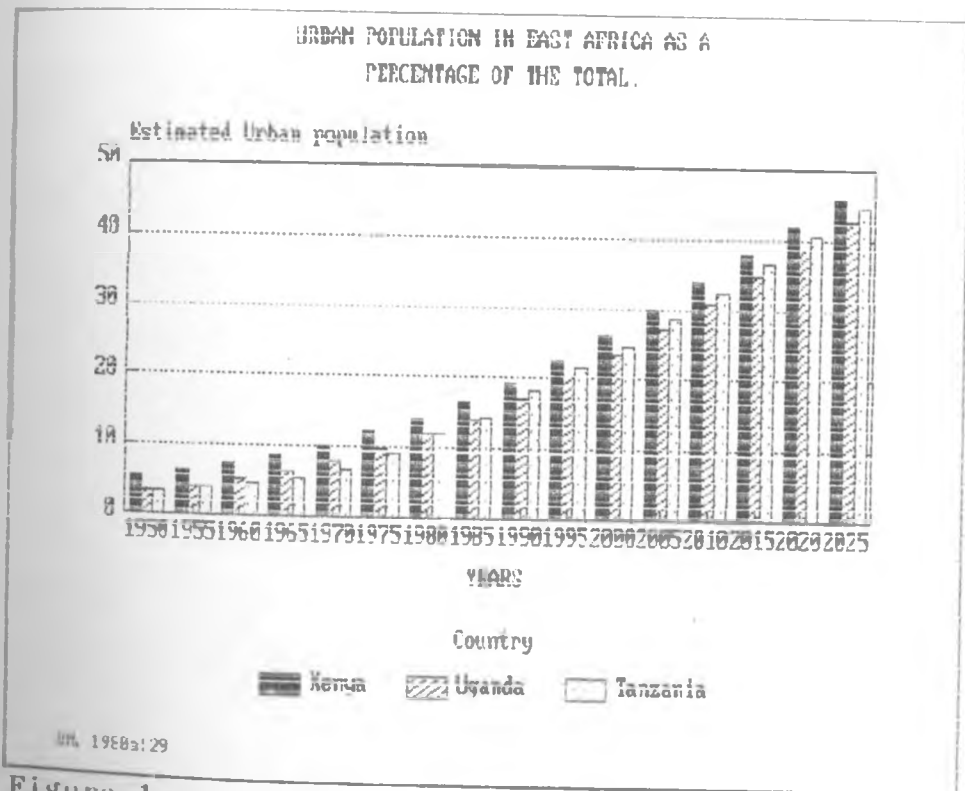


Figure 1

This has serious implications on the country's economy given acute urban problems currently faced in the three major towns. Further this population will need support from the primary sector (Agriculture) for food and raw material supply yet the sector has been declining rapidly with a widening gap between it and the manufacturing economy located in urban centres. The future role of urbanisation in Kenya must be seen against overall population prospects. Assessing the future distribution of the growth of population is the key for the overall rural-urban balance policy. The fastest growing areas in Kenya in the 1980's, were the town councils with an average population of 12,000 but only accounted for 7 percent of the urban population between 1979 and 1989. The smallest towns, with an average population of 6,000 accounted for another 14 percent of the growth of urban population. However, the large town with an average population of 48,000 and above had 82 percent of the urban population in 1989 and experienced a 75 percent increase in population (Sessional Paper No.1 of 1994). Thus by the year 2000, the urban areas of Kenya will have to accommodate between 26 percent and 32 percent of the total population. Most of this will be concentrated in small and intermediate urban centres which today witness higher rates of annual population increase. These centres are more closely linked to the basic aspects of life and work of new migrants, and they play an increasing role in facilitating the adaptation of migrants from rural life (Tribe, 1970).

According to Obudho (1974), In an agricultural country such as Kenya, important development policy issues should be adopted from an essentially urban based concept to rural based strategy. Development planning should

be concentrated in selected central place of the market place subsystem, the traditional marketing outlet. The functions of this central places should be the provision of services for their respective hinterland and as places where government activities can be co-ordinated. The spatial strategy of development in Kenya should be concentrated on the coordination of rural development and agricultural development.

2.7.2 SUMMARY OF URBAN PLANNING POLICIES IN KENYA.

National planning in Kenya as is reflected in all development plans has been concerned with the development which involves the use of Land, study the movement of people and goods, emerging patterns of production and residence, and distribution throughout the country of the physical infrastructure and development. Thus two planning functions can be identified; Firstly, in a national and regional context to plan a national framework or strategy for the location of capital investment. Secondly, in the urban context, to plan both large and small towns in detail so as to produce coordinated economic landuse for developing projects within a satisfactory environment.

According to sessional paper no.1 1986 (Economic Management for Renewed Growth, 1986), the development strategy outlined hinges crucially on avoiding the concentration of economic activities and people in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu and in shifting emphasis towards the vigorous growth of secondary towns and smaller urban centres throughout the country.

The primary aim of this strategy was to promote the development of an urban system that supported the growth of agriculture and the

development of rural areas that generates productive employment opportunities in non farm activities for rural workers close to where they already live.

To meet this aim it was thought necessary by the government to concentrate scarce resources for urban infrastructure in selected small towns, designated Rural Trade and Promotion Centres (RPTC's) designed to provide a range of basic physical infrastructure facilities to support agriculture and other productive employment generating activities.

In summary, since the overwhelming majority of Kenyan citizens live and work in the rural areas, the core of the problem is to bring a rapidly increasing population into a modern productive economy. This is not only a question of production but of raising the income, the status, the self respect and the satisfactions of the whole community. Unless and until this can be achieved the advance of the urban and industrial sector will be severely checked.

2.8 THE ROLE OF SMALL AND INTERMEDIATE URBAN CENTRES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA.

They are an integral part of the concept of physical development planning as outlined in the National Development Plan 1970-74. There are four main types of designated growth centres, Urban centres, Rural centres, Market centres and Local centres in descending order of importance and size as shown below,

TABLE 1: Urban hierarchies in Kenya (1992).

CATEGORY	COUNCIL TYPE	EXAMPLE	NO. IN 1992
National	City/municip	Nairobi and Mombasa	3
Regional	Municipal	Nakuru/ Eldoret	20
Rural	Town	Keroka	23
Market	Urban	Keumbu	27
Local	Under C.C.	Chemasiri	-

Source: World Bank 1992.

The current urban policy of the Kenyan government is to bridge the rural-urban gap which can hopefully spread modernisation to the rural areas. Since all the urban centres in Kenya were established and sited to meet the needs of the colonial power, they were imposed from above and from outside, and were not a natural growth as a result of internal socio-economic development. While there is support of the policy of development from below either from the small or intermediate urban centres, what is needed in Kenya is a rural-urban policy which is centralised upward from the rapidly emerging intermediate centres rather than a centralising down process from the two major urban centres. The small and intermediate urban centres potentially fulfil an important role in integrating urban and rural functions into national spatial systems. This is especially true of the small urban centres as they can provide important linkage effects down the spatial hierarchy to farms and villages as well as upward to major urban centres. Farm - to - market roads generally pass through these small urban

centres, which in turn serve as staging areas for agricultural marketing, retail trade, migration, centres of manufacturing, government, administration, planning and service delivery.

In the Kenyan context, small Urban centres are medium sized towns designated to serve as the main commercial centres for the large part of the district. Largely they are upgraded on the basis of the population estimate that they serve or ought to serve between 2,000-20,000. Administrative, social and commercial services are provided by such centres. They are geared towards improving the quantity and quality of services and amenities in the rural areas in form of Public water supply, electricity, and all weather roads. They are suitable for the development and growth of rural cottage industries in the name of ' jua kali ' activities. They have concentrated health facilities, chief's camps, Law courts, police station, private and public secondary schools, periodic and daily markets, postal and banking services.

The most obvious symbol of their importance is their rapid rates of growth, paralleled by the corresponding increases in formal and informal employment. This is particularly true in terms of encouraging investments in the urban informal and rural informal sectors of the economy. The existence and increased role of small and intermediate urban centres, has initiated growth impulses which will, to a greater extent, reshape Kenya's space economy (Kiamba,1963). The era of very few large centres has meant that the spread mechanism of development impulse is very slow in effecting structural changes far away from the core areas.

The Kenya government has made attempts to stimulate urban and industrial development in small and intermediate urban centres under the

growth centre policy (Kenya 1979a). Certain settlements have been designated growth centres and through the concentration of public investment in the form of infrastructure and services, and even in public sector enterprises, its hoped that these settlements will achieve some level of self-sustaining development. These policy has arisen out of the desire to lessen sub-national imbalance in per capita income or per capita production and to steer productive investment away from the large urban centres. But, so far little success has been achieved despite the increasing number of small and intermediate urban centres. This is because, over the last decade, kenyan growth centre policies have tended to concentrate on stimulating industrial development in the designated settlements through diversifications. Consequently, there has been, relative lack of attention to agricultural and rural issues and therefore, the growth centres have often provided insignificant stimuli to surrounding areas than expected. The establishment of large- scale industries in some of the centres has led to dramatic increases in their population mainly due to in- migration. The result of this is that these centres cannot provide sufficient infrastructure and services to this population and have become victims of the problems faced by larger urban centres. Examples of this effect can be seen in sugar plantation areas in western kenya where the establishment of industries has created urban centres which today have sprawling slums and squatter settlements. In most cases, the establishment of these rural industries has not been accompanied by the provision of infrastructure such as housing to cope with the rapid increasing population in the new urban settlements.

2.9 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Urban centres serve two important functions in Kenya , Firstly to provide adequate services for the rural areas around them and secondly, to stimulate the economic and social development of these areas thereby reducing the rural- urban gap (dichotomy). In any given space, people, resources and economic activities are distributed and can only be interconnected through a settlement system. This settlement system increases the access to many facilities and services and its through this settlement that both agricultural and non-agricultural activities can have access to national and sub-national transportation and communication systems. Its also through the different levels of local government in small and intermediate urban centres that local needs and resources can be assessed and many government policies most effectively implemented.

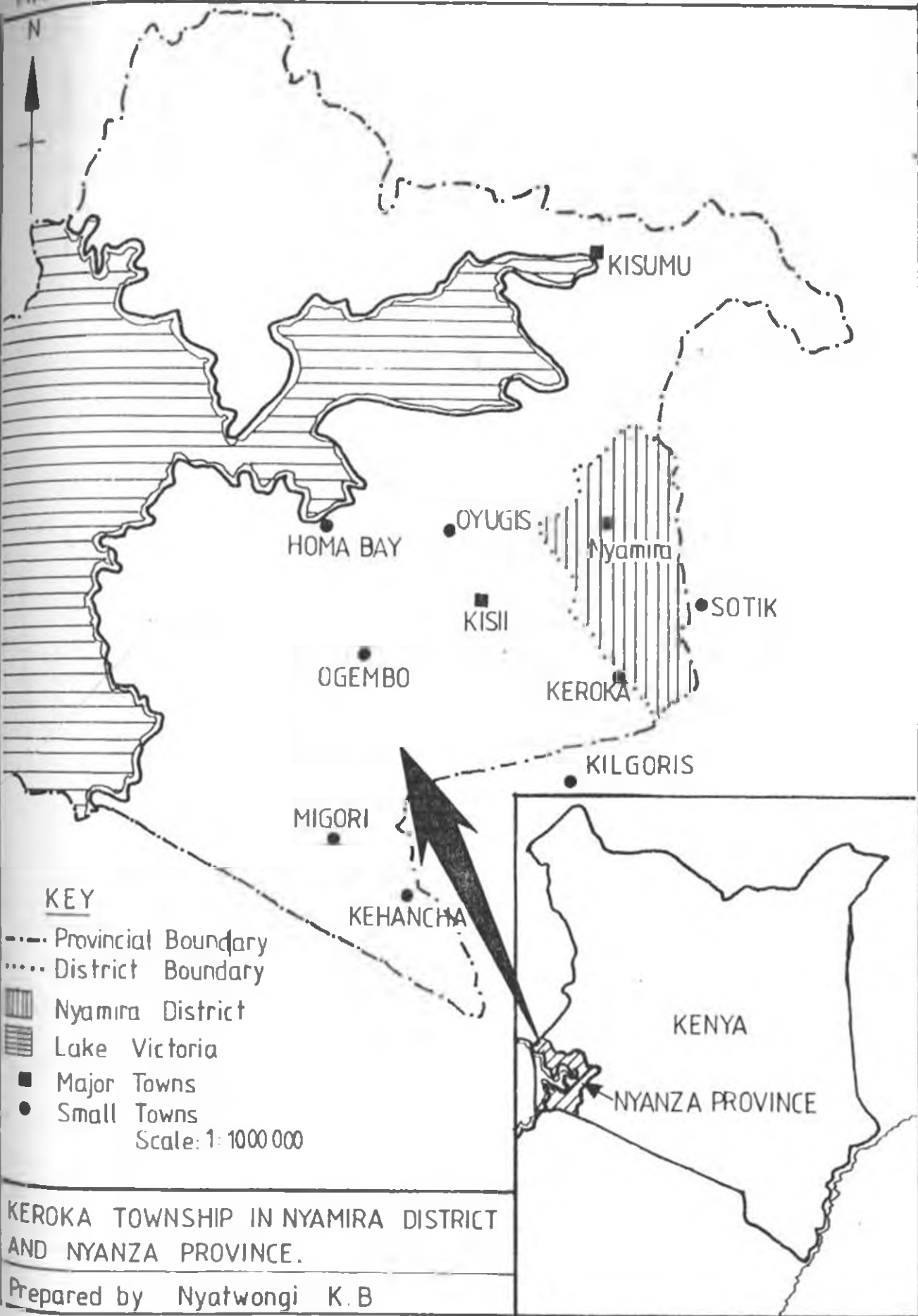
Past and contemporary planning policies and practice have been identified as being parallel to overall National planning for economic development in Kenya. Consequently polarisation and growing inter-regional inequality have continued unabated; much to the detriment of the rural majority. Given that Kenya's economy heavily depends on Agriculture, its instructive that the scarce resources are allocated to stimulate Agricultural production and this is possible through strengthened linkages between small towns and their rural hinterlands. Small towns will be the integration point where the modern manufacturing economy (mainly industrial) sector can mutually interact with the traditional subsistence (mainly agricultural and primary production) economy. Urban planning as a physical entity without due regard of the local population needs cannot propel development but rather

exacerbates the Rural-Urban dichotomy. Kenya's urban planning policies seem to have followed this trend with the policies not reflecting the real world requirements of the rural economic structure. The preconditions for successful urban planning and its consequent contributions in development depend on the alleviation of the key problems and issues that militate against sustainable urban planning and management, such as poor governance, ineffective urban planning framework and policies, rapid rural-urban migration and isolated sectoral approaches towards development.

The available literature indicate that not much seems to have been done to assess the real role which this small urban centres are and should play in the rural development process in terms of providing the necessary infrastructure that will go along way in promoting the productive capacity of the agricultural sector that seems to be the engine for development. The bulk of this literature analyses urbanisation and Rural development at national or Regional levels; thereby dwell on the concepts of growth centres at a general level. Apart from the research done by Kimani and Taylor (1972), " Growth centres and rural development in Kenya in Muranga district ", other studies carried have tended to dwell on the problems encountered by these centres, the criteria for RPTCs selection, their potential and indeed are quite specific to a given locality. In conclusion to answering their research problem; "what is the role of growth centres in rural development ?" Kimani and Taylor opined for concentrated development in some selected centres which would be the foci of development. They felt that these centres were closer to the masses and more suited to the rural economy, and that if well equipped with

infrastructure facilities could facilitate development in their hinterland. Their study however does not show in any way how their findings could be applied elsewhere in Kenya; Particularly in Kisii and Nyamira districts, Such a study has not been attempted by anyone as to assess the role of important centres like Kisii, Nyamira and Keroka play in their rural setting. Also their study seems to have stretched the population ceiling expected to be served by these centres (30,000 -80,000), meaning diversion of attention from small towns with less population sizes. The above works reveal that efforts have been on the regional and national level with no real touch of the existent potentials and constraints in the proposed centres of growth. This has meant that emphasis has not been laid in centres that have a lower population to serve but rather to the bigger urban centres. Further still although the Kenya government has laid emphasis on the provision of services to the rural trade and promotion centres there has never been an attempt to assess the role played by this centres. This thesis is an attempt to find out the role such small centres play in the socio-economic development of their rural hinterlands. Keroka town in Nyamira district, Nyanza province has been taken as a case study with the assumption that the findings maybe a reflection of the other small towns in kenya with minimal variance due to its Central location and socio-economic functions it dispenses within the district.

N



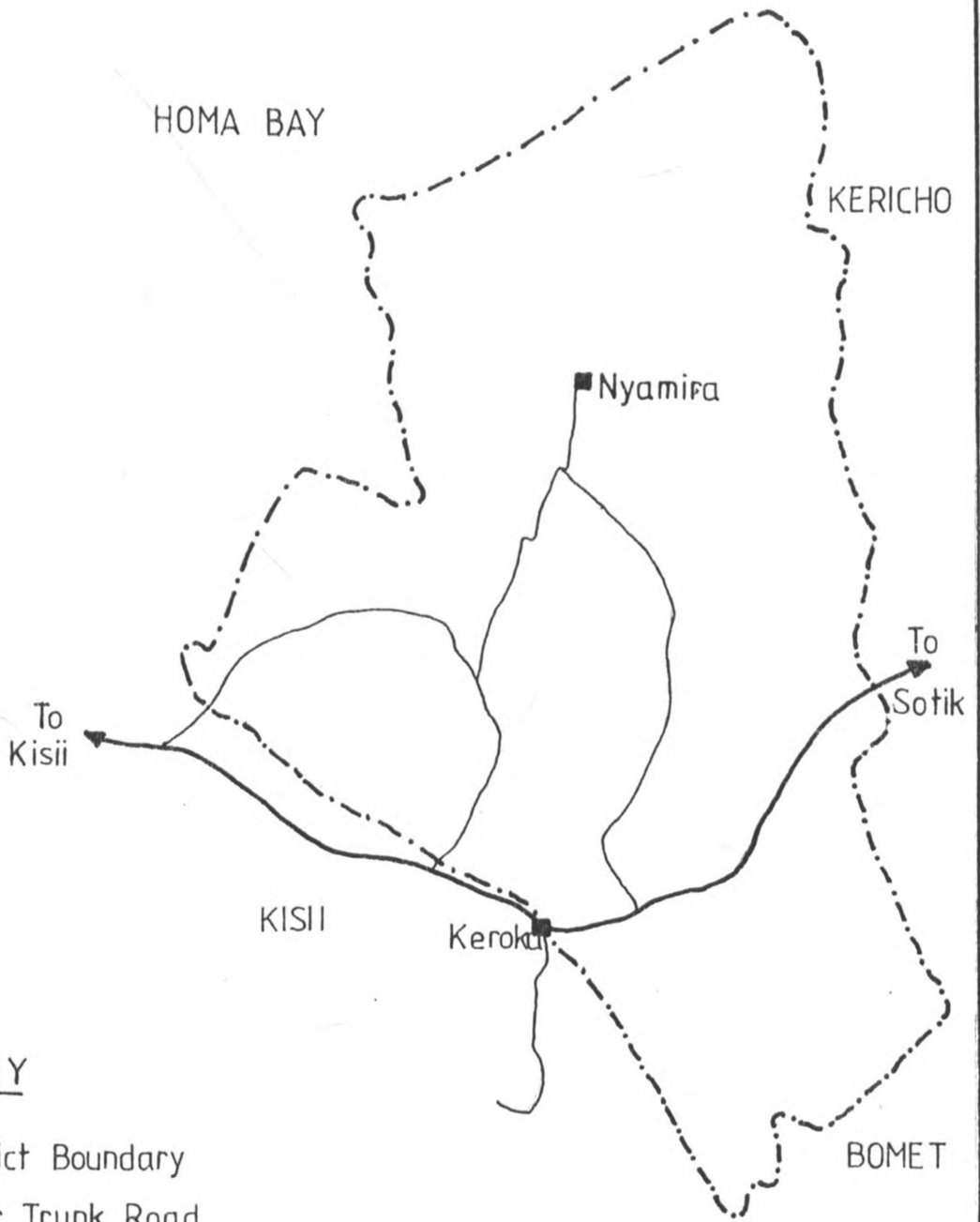
KEY

- - - Provincial Boundary
- District Boundary
- [Vertical Hatching] Nyamira District
- [Horizontal Hatching] Lake Victoria
- Major Towns
- Small Towns

Scale: 1: 1000 000

KEROKA TOWNSHIP IN NYAMIRA DISTRICT AND NYANZA PROVINCE.

Prepared by Nyatwongi K.B



KEY

- . - . - District Boundary
- Major Trunk Road
- Minor Trunk Road

1:250 000 Scale

LOCATION OF KEROKA TOWN IN NYAMIRA DISTRICT

Prepared by: Nyatwongi K.B.

3.1

PHYSICAL BACKGROUND

Keroka stands about 2,130 metres above sea level and has a cool climate with mean temperatures of 10 to 14 degrees centigrade. Annual rainfall averages 1500 millimetres which is spread throughout the year. Rainfall peaks are in August to December (short rains) and February to May (long rains). While rainfall and soils are advantageous for agriculture, these conditions when combined with a steep terrain are difficult for urban development. The earthen road network in the town, most notably, has become severely eroded due to high rainfalls and lack of stormwater drains. The main tarmac road that runs through Keroka is also affected when soils which are carried into the town centre by the rain deposit in the drains. A proposal to rehabilitate the other important roads of the town centre with either tarmac or murrum in conjunction with stormwater drains is thus an apt one. Keroka is blessed with abundant water sources, namely four year-round rivers: Riabore and Montine in Kitutu Masaba division, Riagekonge and Igwera in Nyaribari Masaba division. These rivers join to form the Chirichiro River which is the source of the Keroka Water supply.

3.2 THE TOWN'S HISTORY

Keroka town started in 1930 at Mulimani as an open air market with maize as the main trading commodity. At this time, the market was called "Nyabiemba" a name which was derived from the large quantity of maize cobs left after the maize had been eaten. Trade at "Nyabiemba" was conducted by three main tribes; the Abagusii, Kipsigis and the Kikuyu. After a few years, the open air market moved from Nyabiemba to the site of the current town centre. In 1931, an Asian named Daremehi built the first shop at Keroka trading centre opposite the present police station. Currently that shop is Plot No.1 on the Keroka Development Plan. At the same time, the name of the trading centre changed from "Nyabiemba" to Keroka because the new site was surrounded by "Emeroka" shrubs.

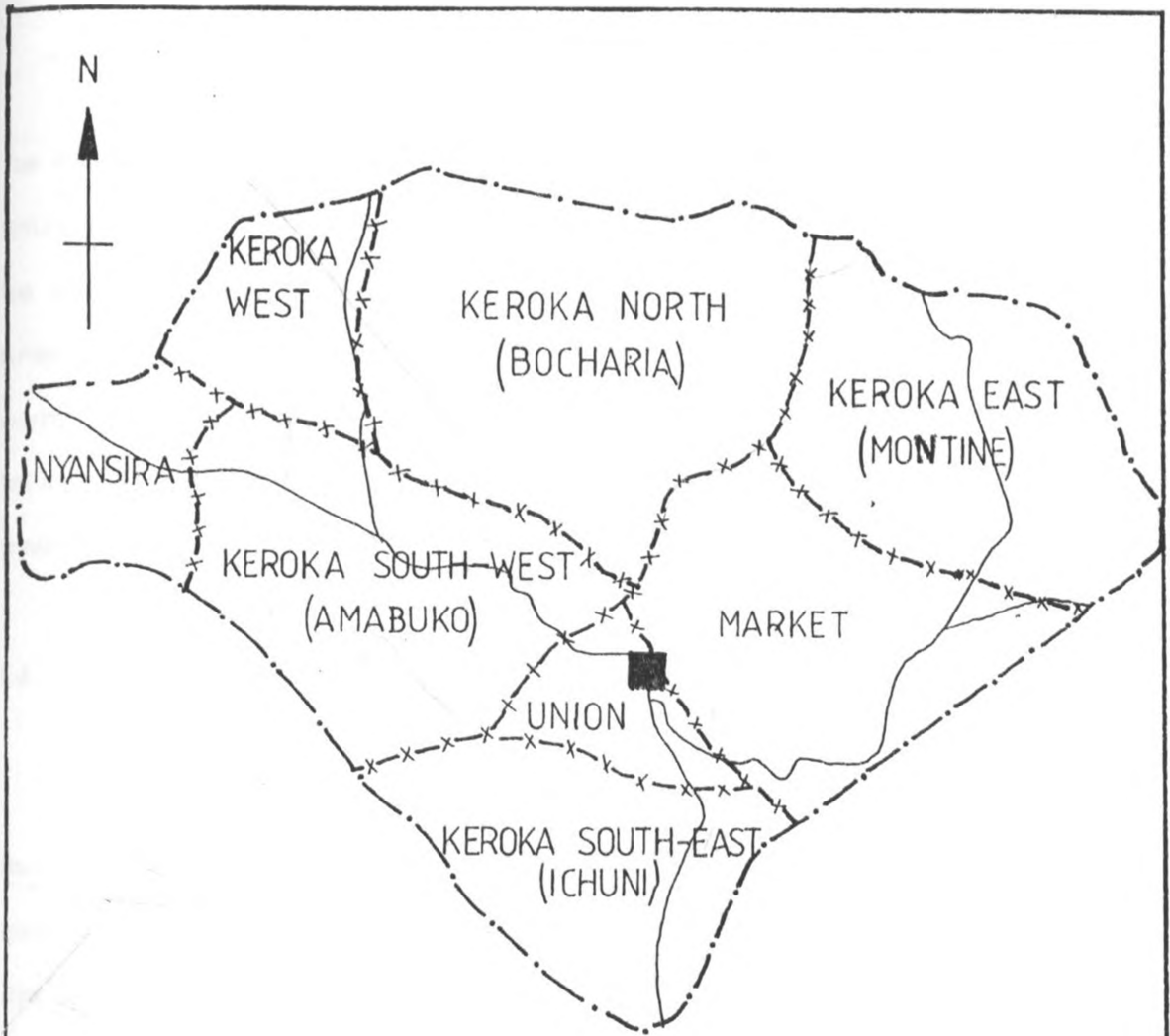
As keroka has grown economically, it has also grown in political status. Originally, a rural trading centre under the jurisdiction of the Gusii County Council, the council was elevated to urban council status vide the Kenya Gazette Supplement Number 65 of the 25th September, 1979. As an urban council, Keroka originally had six electoral wards; these wards were increased to eight in the 1988 general election. In April, 1990, Keroka was further elevated to town council status by the Minister for local Government through Kenya Gazette Supplement Number 162

3.3

KEROKA TOWN COUNCIL.

The town council has ten councillors, eight of whom are elected and two of whom are nominated. One nominated councillor is a local business man within the town and the other is an exo-official member; the district officer(DO) of Masaba division, Kisii district. The elected councillors represent the following wards,

Keroka East (Montine) Ward,
Keroka mjini East (market) Ward,
Keroka North (Bonchari) Ward,
Nyansira (Nyaribari chache) Ward,
Keroka West (Nyanthonori) Ward,
Keroka Mjini West (Union) Ward,
Keroka South West ward, and
Keroka South East (Ichuni) Ward.
This wards are shown on map 4.



KEY

- · — · — · Town Boundary
- x — x — Ward Boundary
- Roads
- Ward Name
- Town Centre

KEROKA TOWN COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE WARDS

Prepared by : Nyatwongi K.B

The council operates on a committees system. The full council elects its chairman for two years term of office, the full council, vice chairman and the chairman of the subcommittees are elected annually. The council has three committees overseeing the policy making and administration of the town, Finance staff and general purpose committee, Town planning works, Market and housing committee and Health education and social service committees.

3.4 THE POPULATION OF THE TOWN

Obtaining an accurate estimate of the population of Keroka town for the purposes of these study has not been possible. The population estimates which have been made for the town vary widely. The 1989 census which has been discredited by the President and never fully published except for a small excerpt in the 1991 Economic Survey estimates the township population to be 2,300 persons. This is a relatively small increase from the 978 persons enumerated in the 1979 census. Two donor-sponsored studies, however, suggest populations far above this figure. The financial Base and Management study completed for the Ministry of Local Government (MIG), and German Technical Agency (GTZ) on small towns Development Project estimates the town's population at 12,000 persons for the 7.8 km urbanized core and 29,000 for the extended boundary. A Matrix Development Consultants Study for the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Market Towns Development Project Cites these same figures and comments that the 1989 census appears to be a serious under count for the town.

Because the census has not been fully published, important details necessary for assessing and resolving the conflicting figures such as whether to the enumeration areas delineated for the two national censuses were altered to correspond with the change in the town council's gazetted boundaries cannot be obtained. The local authority feels strongly that the higher population figure of 29,000 is closer to the actual population.

The national intercensal urban growth rate was estimated at 4.8% and is probably a reasonable growth figure for the urbanized core of the township. Kisii district in which part of Keroka town falls, experienced an overall growth rate in the intercensal period of 2.76%. Natural growth, notably, plays a larger role in Keroka's growth than in-immigration since the birth rate for Kisii and Nyamira district is one of the highest in the country. An attempt to project the town's likely population in twelve years (i.e from the 1989 census period to 2000) using the available growth rates for the town had two possible figures;

If $P = p_0 (1 + r/100)^n$, using the National population growth rate of 4.8% the current population of 25,000 comes to 43,880 people by the year 2000. But using the 2.7% population growth for the districts results to 34,670. This in turn will require that the current infrastructure services are adjusted to cope with an increased population. Field study indicated that the majority of those in the town have come from within Nyamira and Kisii districts (80%), while the remaining minority have come from the surrounding districts. In general terms, Keroka's population like most small Kenyan towns has been growing within the past 10 years due to a combination of in-migration and natural growth. Occupational movements are

common with people moving into and out of the town searching for employment and business opportunities. It is expected that both population growth and urbanization will continue according to this pattern and this assumption has been used in determining the development needs and infrastructure development projects contained in this thesis.

3.5

ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS

3.5.1 COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES: Keroka is primarily a commercial centre with few industrial or administrative functions. Most commercial activities in the town surround agriculture and the marketing of agricultural goods. As noted in the introduction, Keroka is situated in a high potential agricultural area where a great variety of crops including tea, bananas, maize, pyrethrum, cabbages, beans, passion fruit and pineapples are planted. Keroka is also centrally located for farmers in both Kisii and Nyamira districts and provides an advantageous location for marketing the agricultural produce which is then exported in large quantities to other towns such as Homa Bay, Kericho, Nakuru, Nairobi and Mombasa. Since the Keroka-Homa-Bay and Keroka-Kericho-Nairobi roads are tarmacked, perishable goods are easily and quickly transported to their destinations.

Apart from agriculturally-related commerce, the town supports other significant commercial activities. The town serves as a financial centre for area farmers and is home to a Kenya commercial bank, a Barclays Bank and a Post Office Savings bank. There are numerous small retail shops which offer a variety of goods, most notably those produced by East African Industries and a number of restaurants, bars and lodgings. Recently a bit of specialization has emerged in local businesses as illustrated by photo

shops, music shops and photocopying services. A large modern petrol station with conference facilities has been built by a local entrepreneur. Table 1 (below) which lists the number of trade licenses in the town shows that business has grown steadily from 130 in 1988 to 155 in 1989 and 171 in 1990.

The town also has a fair amount of informal sector activity in commerce including vegetable hawkers, used clothing sellers and tailors. While there are not exact figures to quote on the number of hawkers, this sector appears to have been growing in recent years. A rough headcount carried out by the local authority estimated the number of vegetable hawkers at 115 in 1991/92, an increase of 67 from 1989/90. More than thirty used (second hand) clothing sellers whose activities are more common in the market can be sighted all over the town.(for details, see Table 2).

TABLE 1: Business Licenses Issued in Keroka Town: 1988 to 1990

TYPE OF LICENSE	NUMBER 1988	NUMBER 1989	NUMBER 1990	%
Wholesale	8	10	11	6
Hotels	12	14	11	6
Garages	3	2	4	2.4
Retail	98	112	124	73
Boarding and Lodging	8	16	20	12
Manufacturing	1	1	1	0.6
TOTAL	130	155	171	100

Source: District Trade Development Office, Kisii

The table indicates that retailing is more widespread as a formal activity while manufacturing is minimal thereby showing the value of Keroka as a service centre offering a range of intermediary goods and services as will be shown in chapter four, under business activities in the town.

3.5.2 INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES:

There is no large scale manufacturing activity in Keroka as already indicated in the table above. The town however does have two important agricultural processing /distribution centres for tea and pyrethrum. It also has a fair amount of informal sector manufacturing activity (or jua kali activity) and some natural resources industries such as quarrying. These activities are described below:

3.5.3 AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION:

The most notable large scale enterprise within the town boundaries is the Nyankoba Tea Factory which processes the majani (tea leaves) grown locally. The first factory established in Kisii district, Nyankoba was built in 1965 by the M/S James Finlay Group of companies and officially commissioned by the late Minister for Agriculture, the Honourable Bruce Mackenzie. Since 1978, the factory has been under the management of the Kenya Tea development Authority, the parastatal responsible for marketing Kenya's tea crop. Initially, the factory had a daily green leaf capacity of

30,000 to 35,000 kilograms, this has expanded, however, to 60,000 per day. In 1989/90, the total green leaf production was 9.9 million kilograms. The factory employs approximately 235 staff which makes it the largest formal sector employer in the township.

In addition to the tea factory, Keroka is also an important centre for pyrethrum production. The birth place of the pyrethrum farmers cooperative society in Kisii District in the late 1950s, Keroka still retains the original pyrethrum store and is the headquarters of the Pyrethrum Farmers Union for farmers in Kisii and Nyamira Districts. Pyrethrum growers from the area bring their produce to the Keroka Farmers Cooperative Union to be weighed, bagged and stored before shipment to the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya processing centre in Nakuru. The cooperative society also distributes payment from the Pyrethrum Board once it is received.

3.5.4 JUA KALI MANUFACTURING;

As in other Kenyan towns, there is a significant amount of small scale or jua kali manufacturing in Keroka Town. This activity has been growing in recent years, in part due to a national emphasis on its expansion. Jua Kali entrepreneurs in the town practice a variety of trades including motor vehicle repair, welding and carpentry. Table 2 below gives a rough estimate of the number of individuals working in the informal sector according to their trade.

TABLE 2: Informal Sector Activity in Keroka Town

SECTOR	NUMBER 1989/90	NUMBER 1990/91	NUMBER 1991/92
Motor vehicle Repair	11	14	19
Motor Electrical Wiring	3	3	7
Blacksmith	10	11	13
Panel Beating & Spraying	16	16	20
Shoe Shine	4	5	5
Welding	10	15	17
Fruit & Vegetable Hawkers	48	80	115
Mitumba/Second Hand Clothing Hawkers	0	0	30
Carpentry	6	9	11
TOTAL	108	153	237

Source: Town Council Records; Headcount

From it, the value of the town as an outlet for agricultural produce can clearly be singled out evidenced by over 48% of the activities being Fruit and Vegetable hawking and most probably other agriculture based products like cereal and beans collection. When this is compared with the formal activities already shown above, a complementary relationship with retailing (mainly providing manufactured items) and this activity providing mainly agricultural produce can be identified.

The table below compares the informal activities in selected major urban centres in the district with the observation that the town under study has the second largest number of informal activities after Nyamira town which is the district headquarters.

TABLE 3. Informal Activities in Major Centres in Nyamira.

Activity / Centre	Nyamira Town	Keroka Town	Kebirigo centre
Carpentry	12	9	4
Tailoring	15	19	7
Hawkers	50	30	20
Shoe repair	17	14	2
Food kiosks	6	4	5
Jua Kali	12	10	4
Garages	8	5	4
Brickmaking	20	-	-
R/T.V Repair	5	3	1
Saloons	6	5	2
Total	151	112	48

Source: District statistics office, 1993.

It is also clear that Hawking activities in all the three urban centres is predominately high in comparison to other activities thereby calling for proper planning in order to accommodate it, rather than criminalising it as is the case in Nairobi city and other bigger towns in Kenya.

Jua Kali manufacturers ply their trade all over the town just like other business activities, depending upon where their markets are located. Some of the manufacturers do utilize the Kenya Industrial Estates sheds which have been developed by KIE. These sheds, however, have not been particularly successful due to poor location and lack of constant water supply. This facility has a total of six sheds which house a furniture shop,

a laundry/dry cleaning facility (which is closed due to lack of water), and a printing press for stationary. Three sheds are still empty: one which is designed for a bakery but is not operational due to lack of water, and two yet unspecified sheds.

Prospective users of the facility complain that they are too far away from the town centre where most activities take place and customers are found. As the town expands, the facility may become more viable. In the shorter term, however, the council anticipates offering *jua kali* sites near the new open air market site once it is developed.

3.5.4 NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED INDUSTRIES:

During 1996 period, approximately 1,400 people were employed in Rural self employment activities which included fish farming, Brickmaking and Quarrying, out of 196,000 labour force of the District.

The town has several small businesses which are based upon the natural resources found in the area: Murram quarries, timber works and brick making. There are four murram quarries within the township boundaries, they are located in the market centres of Riatandi, Nyakeromo, Riotiso and Nyansira. Brick-making is carried out mainly on the eastern side of the town and benefits from the clay soils of the area. Small scale timber works (manually operated saw mills and pit sawers) obtain their wood from forests in the area. These three activities provide construction materials for the town therefore offering a ready market for them.

3.6 ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS:

Keroka is a very significant administrative centre. The town council is the largest administrative body in the town employing 56 persons. Keroka has a large Police station in the town with approximately 33 employees and has its own law courts for hearing cases for Kitutu Masaba division and Nyaribari Masaba division. On addition to a post office, the town also has a small government-run health centre which provides medical services to the township area. A resource centre/library established by the British Council is also located within the area and provides residents with access to reading materials. As noted previously, the town also hosts the administrative offices of two local cooperatives, the Masaba Cooperative Union and the Keroka Farmers Cooperative Society.

3.7 LAND TENURE AND LAND AVAILABILITY IN KEROKA TOWN:

3.7.1 Land Management and Physical Conditions:

The future physical growth of Keroka town is constrained by the characteristics of the township land:

(1) the predominance of freehold tenure and the unavailability of public land for public purposes, and

(2) the difficult topographical conditions of Keroka's terrain.

There are two types of land ownership in Keroka town: Freehold land and government (council) land. Freehold land is privately owned property and

is mainly in Agricultural use; government land is property owned by the central government which is allocated on a long term leasehold basis to individuals. Most of the land in Keroka is freehold and is not available for public use. The small amount of government land which was set aside when the township was established has been almost completely allocated and only a few pieces of marshy land which are difficult for many uses remain.

Table 4 on the next page details the availability of land for various types of land uses according to the recently prepared Keroka Physical Development Plan.

Land availability is a pressing problem for the council, particularly because the legal control the local authority has over development on freehold land is limited. Many of the land uses planned in the Keroka Development Plan and listed in Table 3 above are planned upon private land. Within the land use categories of industrial, public purposes and recreational, 13.21 hectares of the planned use (or 100%) of the planned public purposes uses are designated for private land. To overcome this land constraint and ensure the rational physical development of the township, the council has plans to acquire private land near the town centre. Obtaining land, however, is an expensive project for the town council due to the scarcity of land in the township.

LAND USE CATEGORY	UTILIZED HECTARAGE	PROPOSED HECTARAGE
Residential	63.5	63.5
Industrial	0	13.21
Educational	4.05	0
Recreational	0	10.23
Public Purpose	13.20	7.12
Commercial	14.70	1.07
Public Utilities	1.05	Not in Plan Area
Transportation	0	1.04
Deferred	0	0
Agriculture	0	0
TOTAL	96.50	96.17

Source: Keroka Physical Development Plan

3.8 ROLE OF THE TOWN IN DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT:

There are three local authorities in the district namely Nyamira, Keroka town councils and Nyamira county councils. They are shown below with their respective number of wards;

Table 5: Local Authorities in Nyamira District.

Name	Number of Wards
Nyamira	7
Keroka	10
Nyamira county council	19
Total	34.

Source: District council's office, Nyamira 1993.

Keroka town council is more established in terms of personnel and service operations thus playing an important socio-political role. The town serves both Kisii and Nyamira districts as an economic centre due to its role as a banking, commercial and transportation centre and as an administrative centre evidenced by the post office, telephone facilities, law courts, a Kenya police station and offices of the two cooperative unions. No study has been done, however, to determine the actual area of influence of the town in relation to its hinterland and competing economic centres such as Kisii and Kericho although this study attempted to establish the hinterlands as extending to Kilgoris in Narok district, Kisii, Migori, and Bometi among others. (See map on Keroka and its rural hinterland).

The town has another important role accorded to it by the government's District Focus for Rural Development Strategy. According to this policy, Development Planning initiatives are supposed to be formulated on the local level, passed up to the District Development Committee and

then once approved forwarded to the national government for funding or other action. Keroka Town Council through its town clerk sits on two District Executive Committees and thus plays a role in determining the development activities within Nyamira and Kisii Districts.

3.9 CONCLUSION

From the above discussions it can be concluded that historical physical and socio-economic factors have influenced the spatial development of the town. The analytical parts of the study revealed the potentials of the town as a Commercial, Agricultural market centre, and as a business node in general within its area of location. However, as shall be seen later in the study findings, there are a number of constraints that have hampered the delivery of such functions. The town's potentials can be realised with the provision of basic physical infrastructure as the starting point.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES GENERATED IN AND AROUND KEROKA

INTRODUCTION

Before going into the detailed analysis of the collected data its instructive to state in brief the objectives and assumptions underlying its interpretation. The research had intentions of finding the influence of keroka town's physical infrastructure in terms of types and patterns of socio-economic activities, with the assumption that there was a positive relationship/correlation between infrastructure and the type of economic activity engaged in. Further it was assumed that Keroka's potential had not been exploited to capacity due to the underlying bottlenecks that will be under review in this chapter. These will be the point of reference in attempting an interpretation of the available data, the aim being to synchronize what had been anticipated with the actual field findings and therefore answering the research question postulated at the beginning: What socio-economic influence do small urban centres have on their rural hinterlands ?.

4.1 COMMERCE, TRADE AND MANUFACTURING.

4.1.0 Influence on Business Activities

Here a total of 30 questionnaire were administered, 10 for shops, 3 for tailors, 2 for carpenters, bookshops, petrol station, butcheries, shoe repairers(Bobbler), Salon(kinyozi), Chemist and Clinics, Workshops and 'Jua kali' motor vehicle repair.

In each case the business was distinguished according to type, and the year of opening, estimate numbers of customers handled daily, main categories of goods sold, the number of people working in the business both casual and wage earners (Permanent), whether the owner had another source of income and if so where it was derived from. The number of days spent in the business was determined, the success, failure and how the business could be improved. Also important was to inquire into the reasons for choosing to establish/conduct the business in Keroka and not elsewhere and where else they conducted the same.

4.1.1 As a shopping centre

Taking Business as a point of reference it came out clear that there are approximately 534 business operators (with store fronts)in the township. The structure and composition of their merchandise can be summed as 72% non-agricultural,17% Agricultural and 11% sell both agricultural and non agricultural goods. These can further be categorised as;

1. Agricultural products which are of two types, household durables like utensils and non durable household items like; Sugar, paraffin, cooking fat, salt and beverages.
2. Non agricultural products that included capital goods (input like farm implements, fertiliser, seeds, insecticide and herbicides), clothes, footwear,

fuel kerosene and furniture.

3. Service providing that included Clinics, educational equipment (bookshops) and repair functions like repair of the local agricultural machinery.

The implication is that keroka's shops essentially seem to be meeting the basic needs of the people and has not gone into the level of supplying a high volume of luxury goods like electronics (televisions and radios). For planning purposes such a centre ought to be earmarked for small scale industrial plants that will produce such goods with ease. Asked to state the number of customers handled, 43% handled between 70 and 150 while 100 was the mode especially during the market days (Sundays and Thursdays). This shows the intensity and importance of the town as a shopping cum marketing centre.

4.1.2 As an investment opportunity.

Statistical analysis of the origins of the investors show that the adjacent districts have the majority. Asked to state their sources of supply there were a range of responses as shown below

Kisumu 11%

Kisii 16%

Nairobi 22%

Hinterland 11% and Wholesale had 27%.

Only 11% indicated to have had their supplies from other sources which included Nakuru, Kericho, and Sotik. The responses indicate the relationship between Keroka and other towns in the region. Surprisingly Nakuru seems to be having a relatively weak position as compared to

Kisumu and Nairobi. Within this sector 55% operated for 26 days implying that business is their main occupation. To support this on the basis of their occupation, 61% responded for business, 17% were salaried while 22% had other occupation like farming.

On investments 83% preferred banking their savings while, 17% did not save at all. This to some extent explains the potential of the hinterland for capital accumulation if the commercial sector were improved through improved infrastructure. The town therefore avails opportunities to saving or tapping the excess incomes from the agricultural and commercial sector. Concerning their views on how business could be improved 50% opined for improved infrastructure, 16% for credit facilities, 22% for establishing industries while 11% sought for reduced council levy.

4.1.3 As source of Income

On their other sources of incomes for business operators; farming had 28%, salary 28% and business (i.e no other than business) had 44% implying that most people depend entirely on business as their source of income. The respondent's gender outcomes had 88% male while females accounted for only 12%. Educational levels indicated 50% for secondary, 22% primary, 11% for none and 11% for post secondary.

4.1.4 Problems Identified.

Problems for this sector were as follows, insecurity 6%, high council levy 22%, infrastructure 17%, limited market 28% and other 27%. Consequently one can infer that low incomes for the local people; which explains the

limited market, and high council levy have led to reduced economic activities accounting for almost 50%, while lack of infrastructure services has hindered their efficient operation.

4.1.5 The impact of Keroka's location on business Activities

One of the basic elements of rural economic development in Kenya is to improve the quality of rural life by way of providing basic facilities such as health facilities, sanitation, water, power and education. Keroka town offers a range of such services to its inhabitants and those immediate to it. Asked as to what services the rural hinterland population receive, majority answered that they get marketing opportunities 37%

Shopping functions 24%

Social-economic benefits 23%

Residential 5% and infrastructure functions 11%.

The benefits can be summed as follows;

TABLE 6: Socio-Economic Benefits.

BUSINESS TYPE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Earn living	18	45.0
Created wealth	10	25.0
Social welfare	4	12.0
Selfemployment	7	18.0
Total	39	100

Source: Field survey 1996.

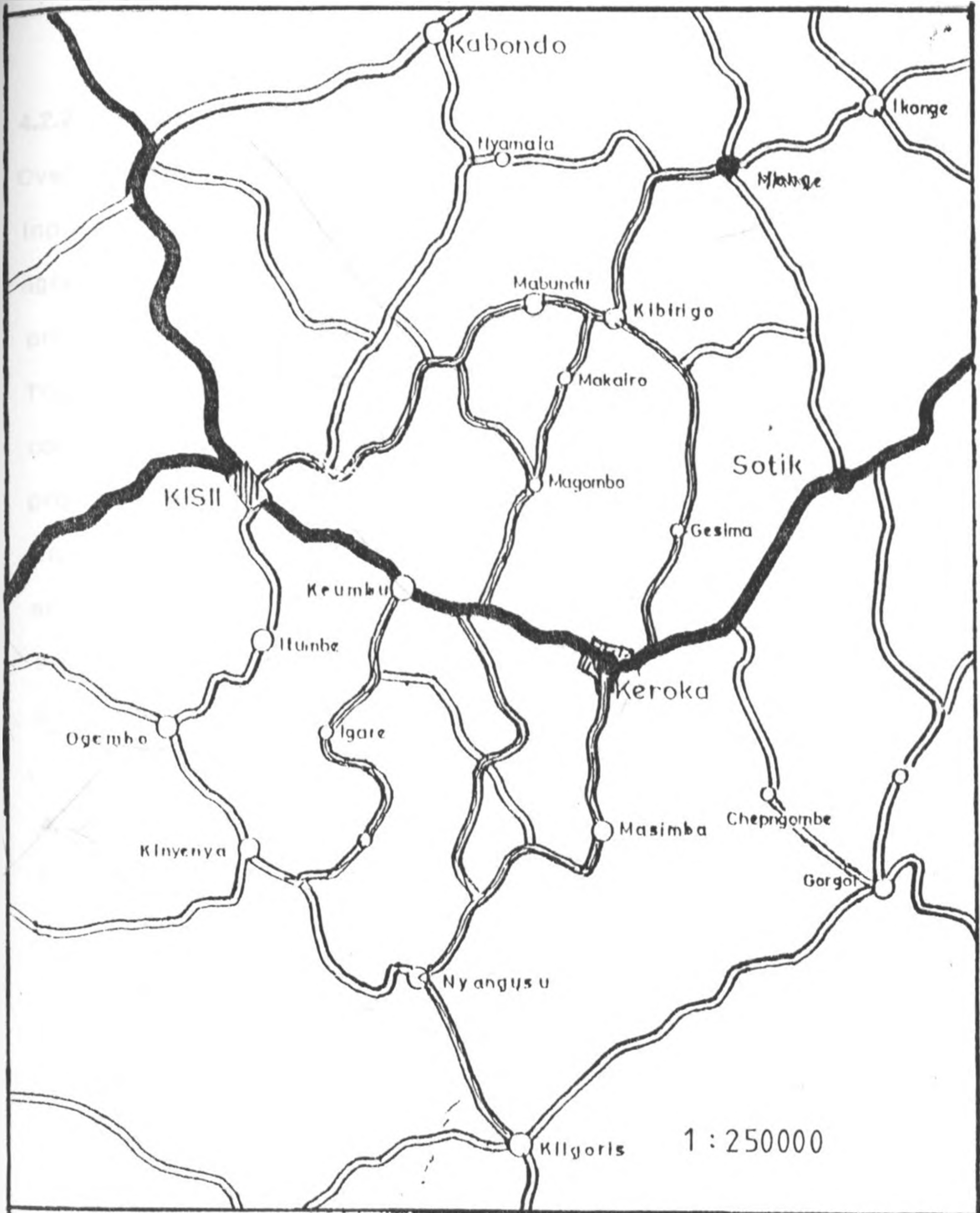
It therefore follows that majority of people can access their products and as well buy their basic needs in this service centre while others have had a source of income to supplement their limited farm incomes and availed an opportunity to invest in business for the immediate population and far off business dealers.

4.2 THE INFLUENCE OF ROAD NETWORK ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE HINTERLAND

4.2.1 The importance of roads on activities.

Roads bring about increased mobility due to perceived shortened distance especially when they are efficient in delivering people and goods at the convenient time. Also given that the spread/distribution of innovation to the rural hinterland is related to accessibility factor, roads play a very important role in development. Roads also promote business in form of commerce and trade, they facilitate the movement of produce from farms to the market centres and transporting farm inputs to their required destinations. Transport is also an agent of change through movements, ideas and innovations diffuse from an area to another.

Keroka town is served with various categories of roads ranging from Bitumen (Tarmac) road, Gravel, and other minor access roads. Seven main routes identified from the field study. The major types of roads are of gravel (murrum) apart from the main Kisii-Kericho trunk road that runs through the town cutting it into two; East and West. (Please see map 5).



KEY

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Main Road |  Main Towns |
|  Access Road |  Major Towns |
|  Main Feeder Roads |  Rural Centers |

ROAD NETWORK BETWEEN KEROKA AND ITS HINTERLAND
 Prepared by Nyatwongi K.B.

4.2.2 Supply of Inputs

Over 90% receive their inputs from Keroka, may it be domestic or farm inputs. It can be inferred that they supply both non- agriculture and agriculture products to these rural population and in turn the agricultural products can be brought to the market.

Transport also stimulates growth of physical structures, population concentration, cultivation of hinterland and growth of market centres to provide household needs and services needed in the agricultural sector. Easier accessibility to premises located along improved roads for customers and traders for transporting merchandise is contributing towards raised socio-economic activities and thus increased incomes leading to a linear development of structures along the major roads.

4.2.3 Increased mobility

Findings from the field indicated that people as far as 30, 26, 20, 18, 15, 11 kms visited keroka with an average frequency of twice a week and 26 days for the businessmen. This enables a faster rate of modernisation given that time and other resources like money which are limiting factors are addressed. Consequently with better transportation linkages people are interacting on a wider scale and hence exchange views and Ideas which can contribute positively towards their daily activities, be they agricultural, commercial, cultural or even political.

4.2.4 Opportunity to Invest in Transportation Sector.

From the questionnaires administered, 87% of the vehicles operating to and from the town were Matatu (para-transit); with 43% making 4 trips per day while 31% make between 5 to 6 trips. The average number of passengers varied from 16 to 20 with a mode of 17 people. If this mode of 17 people is multiplied by an average of 24 vehicles, which were operating in the major routes, then approximately 408 people for one trip visit the town and 1,672 daily. This will imply that over 5,000 people are served by the town in one week which explains the need for increasing the current infrastructure facilities for its efficient operation. The route origin and destination was as follows,

	Route origin	route destiny
Keroka	31%	49%
Outside town	69%	51%

Thus Keroka as a transportation node where travellers take their means of transport is clearly shown. Asked to state their areas of investment 63% identified Banks, 25% Plots and 12% Farming. This further supports the already mentioned that the town acts as centre for tapping the excess capital from the surrounding rural hinterland.

4.2.5 Benefits from this Activity.

Business benefits for this sector revealed 44% as earning living, 31% self employed, and 26% for other social economic benefits. Their other sources of incomes were 68% from farming 25% from salary, and 7% had no other

sources which implies that much of the incomes for this sector does not meet their needs and therefore has to be supplemented.

4.2.6 Problems Identified.

On the problems identified poor roads accounted for 44% higher maintenance costs 40% while other problems like high spare part costs had 16%. Clearly then the most critical problem is to improve the roads which concurs with the given proposals in the other sectors like in business. From this analysis the influence of roads can be summed as; Influencing the physical structures i.e location of business premises, therefore explaining the linear development of the town along the main road and towards the Ichuni ward (this areas are accessible). This linear development can also be explained by the Influence of electricity on the establishment of business. Other influences that can be identified are investment on Petrol stations, efficiency and accessibility in interacting with the hinterland.

4.3 ROLE OF WATER IN GENERATING SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Water is essential for domestic use, Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial use and it does affect the economic, environmental and ecological conditions of an area. Its quantity and quality affects a range of practicable human activities thus influencing the types and patterns of investment especially those with a high affinity for water like hotels, butcheries laundries and clinics among others.

4.3.1 Influence on Farming Activities

Direct economic benefits realised in the town under study include raising or improving farmer's productions of crops poultry and animal products (like milk). Many people within and around the town keep daily cattle using the available water sources both the rivers, rain and piped water. Minimal supplies from the available town council reticulation system, (ministry of water) is not readily sufficient for such use, thus water is fetched from the rivers (of which consumes time).

4.3.2 Influence on other activities.

The study indicated that Hotels, Bars, Restaurants, Lodges, Butcheries, clinics and petrol stations complained to the effect that the water supplies doesn't met their required needs. These water scarcity in the town has compelled the extra use of money to avert it as the businessmen pay for the delivery of the same. Because of this constraint there are a number of non operational laundries neither are there proper eating places like big hotels which have a high affinity for water.

4.4 POWER SUPPLIES AND ITS RELATED ACTIVITIES.

4.4.1 Sources of Energy in the town.

Power, specifically electricity plays an important function in generating socio-economic activities. Major sources of fuel used in the urban centre included oil (kerosene), natural gas, charcoal, fuelwood, solar power and electricity. There is a close tie between the use of electricity and the consumption of kerosene for lighting (50%) within the town centre, and a lopsided response for the case of charcoal and fuelwood as sources of power for cooking compared to use of kerosene. Although its the emphasis of the government to provide electricity to such centres it was realised that its availability does not warrant usage. Its perceived /held to be expensive to install transformers that will distribute electricity-only the urbanised core of the town is well served by electricity.

4.4.2 Its Impact on Activities.

The areas receiving electricity include the entire small section of the town(CBD), Ichuni ward, Nyankoba tea factory and some section towards the kenya industrial estate. This to some extent can explain the linear form of the town's development. The absence has severely checked the establishment of socio-economic activities such as welding (blacksmith) businesses, Jua kali activities and other small scale industrial plants like Bakeries, Posho mills, laundries and photocopiers. Lack of street lights renders revenue collection difficult given that most buses operate between 7pm and 7am when the council has already stopped collection. It has also limited the business hours in the town due to general insecurity in the absence of lights. Consequently potential investors are opting for other centres like Sotik and Nyamira.

4.5 INFLUENCE ON JOB OPPORTUNITIES

4.5.1 Agriculture as a source of employment.

Agriculture has only limited potential to absorb more labour; indeed the adoption of modern technologies tends to reduce labour inputs in agriculture. For this reason there is always an overflow of labour in the agricultural sector who may find refuge in the urban informal sector (non farm activities).

Agriculture is the main stay of the people around Keroka town where Maize, Beans, Bananas, Finger millet, Potatoes and Horticulture form the main food crops while Pyrethrum, Coffee and Tea are the main cash crops.

During the 1995/6 period , more than 165,000 people were working in the small farm holdings and 500 in large farms, out of 196,000 labour force of the district. This indicates the role Agriculture is playing in the district's development especially in accommodating the unemployed labour force.

4.5.2 Value of the Urban Informal Sector

The urban informal sector engages a substantial proportions of urban workers. Consequently one is dealing with not a few but rather multitudes of people working as self employed, unpaid family workers or in enterprises that are necessarily small. The sector produces a variety of goods and services of which a greater part of it enters directly into the consumption basket of individuals and households. The informal sector activities have played an important role in providing employment opportunities. Most of the activities serve as a direct link to the producer community. These activities include 'jua kall', roadside and market centre hawkers of staple foods and vegetables, carpentry shoe repairing and brick-making among others of which were identified in the study area. According to the District Development Plan 1994-96, about 96,000 people were on wage employment either in the public or private sectors. Those in urban self employment were 7,800 which indicates that the urban informal sector provides tremendous opportunities for employment much as does the formal sector. The strategy here should aim at increasing this opportunities given that formal employment in Kenya is shrinking against the population pressure while farms are equally becoming smaller thereby releasing excess labour into the job market

4.5.3 Labour in the Study Area.

Labour surplus in the study area varies regularly with local rhythms of planting and harvesting which are governed in turn by local rainfall patterns. Concerning farm sizes, it is evident that the labour surplus comes mainly from small farms; the land sizes in the study area are of an average size of 1.8 hectares. With regard to types of labour it is important to note that the surplus mainly involves young men. Women and children are less mobile since in many cases they continue to farm the family shamba, while few older men seem willing to migrate. For example the area under study by virtue of its location in a rich rural hinterland, indicated that the majority in the informal sector were men and women between the ages of 20- 35 years as shown in the table below;

TABLE 7: Gender Distribution in Various Activities

Activity/ Sex	Farming	Business	Market vendors	Total
Male	10	16	7	33
Female	14	9	11	34
Freq	24	25	18	67
Per/centage	36	37	27	100

Source: Field survey 1996.

4.5.2 Economic Activities in the Town.

The centre has a number of economic activities which generate employment opportunities to a number of people. Such activities include collection, transportation, distribution of commodities like milk, vegetables, fruits, small scale milling, sorting, meat supply, wholesaling, retailing of farm inputs, producing and distribution of simple consumer items as processed food, clothing, footwear and metal products as jikos and pans.

TABLE 8: Age of Participants in Various Types of Activities.

Age	Frequency	Percentage	AGE	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	8	13	20-30	19	29
26 -30	11	17			
31-35	12	18	31-40	25	40
36-40	13	22			
41-45	9	14	41-50	20	31
46-50	11	17			
Total	64	100			100

Source: Field survey 1996.

The male population in Business is nearly double their female counterparts. This is because they are more mobile than the females who prefer staying in their rural homes. However the population of females in the informal activities like market vending, and Tailoring is slightly high compared to those of males.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, OCCUPATION AND INCOMES.

4.6.1 Findings on Occupation and Incomes.

Farming still forms the bulk of incomes while an equal percentage doesn't have any income. This is a clear indication of low incomes which explains ineffective demand. The table below shows the sources of incomes and the occupation areas of the study area. Occupation outcomes indicate that a larger population are still in business and farming.

TABLE 9: Occupation and Sources of Incomes in the Study Area.

SOURCE OF INCOMES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)	OCCUPATION AREAS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
FARMING	18	32	FARMING	16	31
SALARY	10	17	EMPLOYED	7	11
NONE	18	32	NONE	11	20
BUSINESS	11	19	BUSINESS	18	35
OTHER			OTHER	1	3
TOTAL	57	100	TOTAL	54	100

Source: Field survey 1996.

For Keroka's population of 12000 assuming that Kenya's population structure where half of it are children applies, then 6000 people will be adults who require both informal and formal employment. But since 32% of this have no access to employment or have no source of income then about

3960 people are left to support the rest of the population. This leaves one person supporting approximately 4 people from a mere unreliable incomes. This withstanding then it will require that other sources of incomes are available to spread more evenly these dependency if disposable incomes have to be increased.

4.7 KEROKA AS A CENTRE FOR INVESTMENTS.

The presence of Keroka has offered an opportunity for investing disposable incomes from agriculture and non (off-farm) activities like salaries and businesses. The study indicated that investments are made in the following areas;

TABLE 10: Areas of Investments.

WHERE INVESTED	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
BANK	16	33
PLOTS	7	10
FARMING	5	5
BUSINESS	8	12
NONE	18	38
TOTAL	54	100

Source:Field survey 1996.

This investment forms the pool from where credit in form of loans can be advanced to the local residents for furthering development elsewhere

4.8 AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

4.8.1 The Link between Urban Centres and Agriculture.

In analyzing the influence of Keroka on agriculture, it is important to understand the nature of urban-rural linkages of small and intermediate urban centres considering inter alia the demand by the rural population for non food goods, the inputs and the demand for food by the urban dwellers. In fact increasing the demand for food has direct impact on agricultural production which in turn creates an effective demand for non food products. Increases in rural incomes brought about by improved accessibility to markets and rising agricultural productivity lead to higher levels of activity in small and intermediate urban centres. Low income households have a tendency to consume products and services produced locally rather than from distant urban centres. This is true for the study area which indicated that the sources of supplies for business, Farmers, and Vendors come from Keroka, Kisii, Kisumu and Nakuru which are nearby towns.

4.8.2 Support on Agricultural Production.

The growth of small and intermediate urban centres and the linkages between them and rural areas will support improvements in agricultural productivity and help to improve micro-economic performance. Therefore increased rural consumption due to increased income will tend to diversify the economic activities of nearby urban centres and create sub-national off-farm employment opportunities. Such a trend is a positive endeavour

towards solving the unemployment problem and consequently there are chances of proportionately managing rural-urban migration into the larger towns due to this interception from their areas of origin.

4.8.3 Agricultural data Outcomes.

From the table (shown below) it becomes clear that most people are not keeping dairy cattle which require more land than other activities and instead poultry keeping seems to be more suitable due to space requirements and the duration it takes farmers to get returns. It is also clear that most people plant a variety of crops for selling purposes.

TABLE 11: Agricultural Activities Engaged in the Study Area.

ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	REASON	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
DAIRYCOW KEEPING	4	5.7	FOR SALE	12	31
POULTRY	6	11.4	AS FOOD	7	15.6
MIXED/ BOTH	14	34.2	WEALTH	4	6.3
VEGETABLES	9	20	BOTH	17	46.8
VARIETY OF CROPS	12	28.5			
TOTAL	45	100	TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 1996.

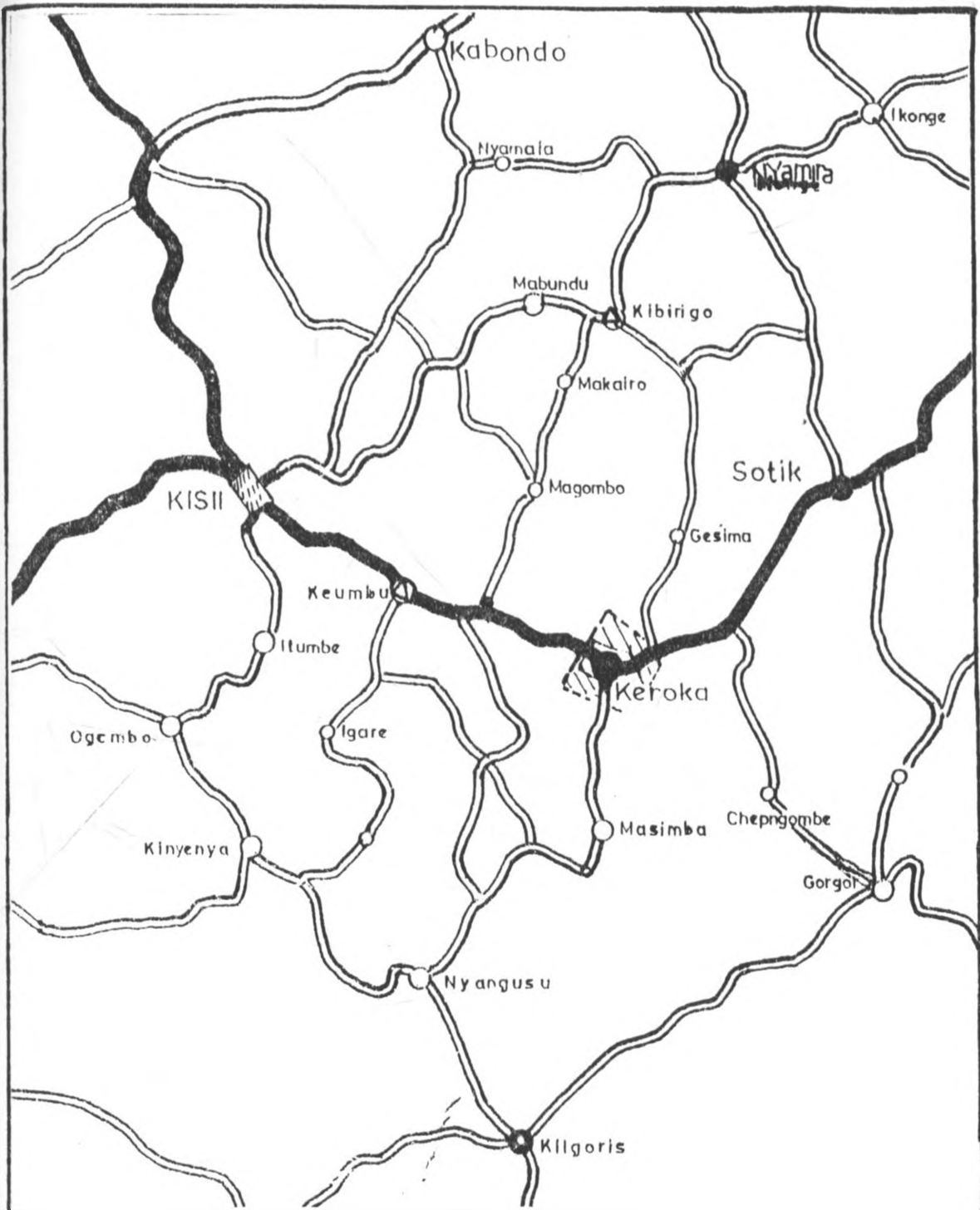
An observation in the field also indicated that the farms close to the town are intensively cultivated compared to those in the hinterland most probably due to their accessibility to the ready market in the town. Veterinary services that reduce farmers losses from diseases and skill inadequacy has to some extent raised the production capacity for those close to the town because they can easily access the services unlike those in the interior who are disadvantaged due to inaccessibility. Fifty (50) percent of those interviewed pointed out that they were not receiving any veterinary services.

4.8.4 Barriers to Improving Agricultural Production.








Barriers to the realisation of effective rural-urban linkages in Kenya and of which were also reflected in the study area include: over-valued exchange rates and low administered food prices; reliance on external funding, lack of access to credit, lack of transportation networks between and within urban centres, lack of market information, weak technological support, general lack of infrastructure and insufficient local institutional strength and ability to generate local revenues. It therefore calls for positive intervention by the national governments to correct and remove the underlying barriers before real returns can be realised.

4.9 THE TOWN'S HINTERLAND.

The Town's influence is extensively felt in both Kisii and Nyamira districts, covering five divisions in Nyamira and 4 divisions in Kisii; especially on economic activities. Keroka's hinterland can be classified into three broad categories. (see map on Keroka and its hinterland)



KEY

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Major Town |  Study Area |
|  Small Town |  Main Trunk Road |
|  Market Centre |  Feeder Roads |
|  Rural Centre | |

KEROKA AND ITS IMMEDIATE HINTERLAND

Prepared by : Nyatwongi K.B

The first of these is an inner core around the town comprising the urbanised (7.5km²) part of the town centre. The socio-cultural characteristics of this core include the multiple (Heterogeneous) tribes like Kisii, Luos, Kikuyu, Kipsigis, Luhya and other minor tribes. The housing structures here are permanent, rented, owner occupied or a mixture of these covering about 7.5 km² of the town. Farming here is intensive with the cultivation of vegetables of types, Napier grass and diary (Zero grazing) as common activities. The area enjoys the town's infrastructure like water, electricity, health and telephone services, and has a systematic and regular contact with the town.

Secondly is the immediate outer circle covering the area adjacent to the town centre mainly occupied by a homogenous population. The housing structures are essentially semi- permanent to grass thatched temporary structures and farming is more extensive where maize, beans, pyrethrum, tea and others are common. Their contact with the town is irregular but systematic and its the most extensive part of the town.

Finally is the peripheral- cum- alien outer circle embracing those area far off from town centre. This area covers the least population with the lowest demand for the town's services since its functionally related to the town for high order services and marketing purposes. Areas inclusive in the zone include the immediate market centres like Kebirigo, Magombo, Mososbeti and those outside the district like Transmara district, Bomet and Homabay where the town draws business dealers, employment seekers, market vendors and administration cum transport services.

4.10 THE ROLE OF THE TOWN IN REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SETTING

4.10.1 Stagnancy of Smaller Rural Centres.

Although it has persuasively (favourably) been argued that Keroka plays a pivotal role in enhancing the socio-economic development of its hinterland, sight cannot be lost in the negative consequence that is experienced within the region. Within Nyamira district it was noted that the town was inhibiting the growth of other smaller urban centres that are linked to it through a transportation network. Some of the periodic centres like Magombo, Mosobeti, Kebirigo and Masimba among others are experiencing stagnancy due to the town's influence exerted on them. This is because; trade, commerce and other small scale activities have shifted to Keroka which has a few established basic infrastructure facilities like transport, electricity, water and security.

4.10.2 As Collection Centre for the Capitalist Economy.

A part from playing significant distributional role, the town also acts as a transportation link through which resources are sucked from the hinterland into the outside national capitalist economy leaving the locals disadvantaged. For instance maize, beans and Bananas which are the main products of the area under study are first transported to the town due to the "attractive" prices offered by the business dealers. Once in Keroka some middle women from Nairobi buy the produce at cheap prices (below the market prices) before packing the same to Nairobi where they fetch

exorbitant profits. It therefore occurs that small urban centres are feeding the larger urban centres at the expense of the former. A more healthy relationship would be to establish relevant industries that can locally process these products, and avail employment opportunities for the local population.

4.10.3 CONCLUSION

Based on these findings there is enough evidence to legitimately conclude that Keroka like many other small town has acted as a central place providing goods and services to the rural hinterlands and to provide rural people with the possibility of disposing of an agricultural surplus. The town has provided the focal point of interaction for a rural population of a wide complexity. As a result it has become a melting pot for ethnically, culturally and economically diverse sectors of a purely agrarian population. The town benefits from the inflow of cash provided by the rural people and has responded by expanding its functional capacity to absorb the cash through the establishment of commercial and cooperative banks. The town acts also as the final link in the political and administrative and bureaucratic process from the decision making centre. These centres provide an important range of economic and social services including grain milling facilities, personal services such as entertainment and accommodation and a little of legal services (advocate services, the Kenya police and Keroka courts). They are communication centres and provide buses, telephones, postal services and are locations for government health hospitals, Clinics, and schools. These institutions have been of

benefit both to urban and rural people thereby improving the quality of their lives which is a positive move towards balanced development. However full potential of the town in delivering as early intended has heavily been held back due to the underlying constraints that will be under review in the next chapter on summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.0 Introduction

The interdependence of urban and rural populations in Kenya is striking. A positive relationship between improved infrastructure and rising agricultural productivity exists implying that investment in physical and social infrastructure on the basis of their own growth potential should be encouraged for small and intermediate urban centres. Public expenditure should be geared to small and intermediate urban centres where rapid growth is occurring or is likely to occur soon.

Small towns play crucial roles in agricultural production, Food distribution and Marketing. In theory as already indicated, they provide outlets for agricultural goods and products of cottage industries from surrounding rural areas; Provide investments and employment opportunities for both town and rural residents in a wide range of agricultural supply centres, repair services and information needed for veterinarians. Many small towns can also offer an impressive array of economic, personal, commercial and public and social services needed by rural households (Rondinell 1980).

5.1.1 Small Centres and National policies.

Many Small and intermediate urban centres will play an important part in helping governments achieve national economic and social goals. The achievements of goals such as increasing food production for exports or

diversifying the manufacturing sector will demand important supporting roles for many small and intermediate urban centres. This supportive investment will include strategic infrastructure and services located in strategic urban centres. The roles of these towns as sources of revenue for development came out clearly given that in all sectors that were focused for study there was increasing interest for investing the surplus incomes (savings) from Agriculture and other economic activities either as assets or in banks. What is needed is to increase economic alternatives or opportunities for potential investors so that this disposable incomes can have multiplier effect for the rural economy. This can be done within favourable institutional support and proper infrastructure facilities in small urban towns which are closer to the rural majority.

5.1.2 Easing Unemployment Problems.

Small towns like Keroka play a vital role in easing the problem of unemployment in the rural areas. This is because they provide employment to the local unskilled or semi skilled labour who could be attracted elsewhere especially to major towns. Unlike the bigger urban towns that require specialised housing, formal employment and related infrastructure demands, the proximity of these centres to the rural areas has ensured a constant contact of these people with their rural homes and as a result modernisation in form of ideas and material provision has tended to spread widely from the centre into the rural interior. In this way the surrounding areas of the town have benefited compared to those outside the town's influence.

In order to reorganise and re-orient the economic (Spatial) structure of

Kenya a planning scheme which is based on intermediate and small urban centres has been proposed. Planning at the grassroots level would help in bringing jobs to the rural areas where the majority of the population reside, help re-orient the urban centres from parasitic to generative roles, and help in reducing the gap between urban centres and rural areas. This planning strategy should deliberately emphasize the emergent roles, and transformation of the numerous small and intermediate urban centres which are the growth poles of their respective local areas. Taking advantage of, and building upon, this existing structure of grassroots-level centres would help to induce development in the rural areas, re-orient urban centres toward their hinterlands, increase local participation, ease the pains of transition, and reduce the gap between the rural hinterland and the export enclaves. The approach contains elements of both bottom-up and top-down attributes, but it suggests a direct attack on rural poverty rather than a trickle down approach which may not help alleviate existing disparity.

The policies for balancing development in Kenya's spatial system must have the following objectives: national integration, participation of the total population in the development process, equitable distribution of the benefits of development, transformation of the traditional social structure, and the improvement of the quality of the human environment for future generations of Kenyans. These objectives can best be achieved within the concept of planning from below, with emphasis on selected small and intermediate urban centres on the basis of demonstrated demand and potential.

5.1.3 Small Towns and the Rural-Urban Migration

Rural poverty and economic stagnation is the principal "push" factor in rural-urban migration. The inability of rural areas to economically support an ever increasing population, assures a continuous flow of migrants from the villages to the urban centres, whose absorptive capacity is already considerably strained. This trend will continue unless policies are adopted to improve rural incomes and make life in rural settlements qualitatively more attractive by way of increased socio-economic opportunities immediate to their rural towns and improved agricultural production. This will intercept the would be migrants to big towns who eventually end up being unemployed. These towns also offer a suitable atmosphere for informal activities which have otherwise been criminalised in larger towns. For them to mutually function the policy options will entail establishment of Agro-industries, planning of rural growth service centres, expansion of essential services; like education, improved rural health centres, higher agricultural prices, feeder roads to improve accessibility to markets and overall selective bias for potential service centres in Districts, Constituencies and Divisions.

Since development cannot take place without linkages and continuous interaction between physical, institutional, economic and social structures, human settlements in Kenya should be understood as systems organised for productive activities rather than physical policy documents. Although a great deal of literature and field findings suggests that small towns can/ do perform beneficial functions for rural residents there are strong indications that a few urban centres actually promote growth,

transformation and integration in rural areas. This wide gap between potential and actual performance is another reason for increased interest in small towns in third world countries. This is true given the range of institutional and economic constraints that belie small urban towns as evidenced in the study area. As such the expected reciprocating interactions are far from being realised and will remain so for long unless realistic diagnosis of socio-economic potentials and constraints of designated service towns are objectively addressed.

5.2 CONSTRAINTS INHIBITING THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES IN THE STUDY AREA.

The study revealed that small urban centres Keroka inclusive are faced with a myriad of problems making them incapable of stimulating the rural economy. These includes inadequate infrastructural facilities and services, land scarcity, skilled personnel and political interference. These problems lead to environmental pollution, overcrowding, insecurity, housing problems, financial inadequacy and generally little progress in project implementation. Keroka town is no exception to this situation because a number of such problems were identified.

Land in the town is not readily available for public development, Private land accounts for 80% of the total land area, most of it already built up and what is left must be acquired at market prices before further development can be initiated. The process of acquisition is tedious, expensive and next to impossible given the population density of the adjacent regions to the urbanised core. The competition for land is stiff

and that the rate of growth is lineal along the major access roads especially where electricity has been installed. In addition there is general lack of enforcement machinery and stringent control measures to ensure standard houses and building regulations. The road reserves that ought to be available for access have been closed or blocked by structures. These problems are further complicated by the physical nature of the land given that the entire town is located in a narrow ridge which allows limited development on available land. In other sides, the land steeply slopes downward into valleys that make urban development difficult.

The problem of **inadequate skilled personnel** and financial resources are national wide problems. Plans are prepared at the district headquarters and only passed down to the local authority for implementation this has got technical problems involved. Local Authorities depend on central government for supplementary financial resources of which are not reliable because of the bureaucratic processes involved in processing the allocated funds (if any), thus projects are delayed or at worst can stall if financial resources are not availed in time. Keroka for instance does not have a physical planner stationed within the town to appropriately guide development. Consequently development has been haphazard with rapid construction of substandard houses all over the town.

Lack of basic infrastructure in the town is a major inhibitor in the realisation of urban- rural linkages. From the sample subunits it clearly came out that security lights, water inadequacy, unreliable power supply, poor road network, lack of sewerage system and high council levy have severely marred the endeavour towards socio-economic development of the area. Thus some people have opted for other towns like Nyamira where

such facilities are somehow established. This may explain the fall of business especially in hotels.

From the above discussions, it can be concluded that historical, physical, and socio-economic factors have influenced the spatial development of the town. The analytical facts of the study have revealed a number of development problems that face the study area namely:- Inadequate infrastructure facilities and services, land tenure, environmental pollution, Urban sprawl of sub-standard housing in the outskirts and lack of resources specifically skilled manpower. This has severely checked the town's capacity to deliver services efficiently to its intended hinterland population.

5.3 CONCLUSION

As long as the Rural environment remains unattractive for harnessing Social Economic opportunities; with Poor or lacking basic Infrastructure, Low Agricultural incomes, Decreasing land sizes, and Rapidly increasing population, the Rural-Urban migration trends will preponderate with widening Intra-urban, Rural-urban, and inter-regional inequalities.

From the conceptual point of view, strengthening of small and intermediate urban centres' functions would allow the country to focus on indigenous development which implies more attention to measures that stimulate small-scale industry and the informal sector. As small and medium sized towns often serve as service centres for the surrounding rural hinterland, their role also facilitates the development of urban-rural linkages through the

development of Agro-based industries and the expansion of agricultural production. At the same time those smaller urban centres provide social infrastructure such as health and education, water supply and sewerage and industrial infrastructure which forms social overhead capital for industrial take off (ROSTOW,1960). They also have a potential of sparking off cumulative socio-economic activities in the area at which they have been installed.

The thesis has favourably argued that promotion of small and medium sized towns stimulates Agricultural development as well as urban industry and commerce leading to a more balanced distribution of income and a more equitable balance between urban and rural economies. This inclination is hinged on four main propositions;

1. The development of small and medium sized towns would provide opportunities which would be attractive to migrants from rural areas who would otherwise move to primate cities (towns), thereby exacerbating the problems which already exist within these large centres.
2. The development of small-and medium sized towns would help to promote local resource-based, Small scale enterprise, including those in the informal sector, thereby providing major employment opportunities in areas outside the nation's largest cities.
3. The development of such towns would help in the transformation of agriculture by providing input and product markets.

4. The development of small-and medium sized towns would promote national spatial integration which would result in a more efficient utilisation on national resources.

Small town-approach to development allows the hierarchy of urban centres to perform that which each can do best. The bigger urban towns -Cities and Municipals, may provide higher order services mainly industrial production (manufacturing) for export while the small and medium sized towns should focus on the production of intermediate goods and services mainly for local consumption. The impact of this is; Its labour appropriateness, raw material and consumption responsive, and it is reciprocative to the rural economy. Small towns are also home for informal, small scale off-farm activities of which do not deprive agriculture of its labour and consumers like the larger urban towns. This is the missing link in endeavours towards rural urban balance.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction:

Small towns like Keroka are easy to manage while providing infrastructure services unlike the bigger ones which have degenerated into a haven of chaos. However it must be pointed out that these are only potential outcomes which depend on an enabling environment like; appropriate national urban policies, Qualified urban planners and managers, and a package of physical infrastructure facilities. This chapter contains recommendations based on the field findings and general literature review the emphasis being placed on the central government to review the current approaches to urban planning and implementation. There is an urgent call for incorporating the needs of the informal sector, Agriculture and the private sector in the overall planning process through appropriate and innovative management policies; if there is to be balanced economic development for the rural and urban systems that seem currently dichotomous to each other.

Recommendation 1: Selective Discrimination on Choice of Towns.

Since not all small urban centres have the same potential for strategic economic growth, the government will have to discriminate in selecting the centres that will have to be supported. At any one time, only a few small urban centres will be able to assume a strategic role in national development and only those with the most promising prospects should be designated. Many government programmes which have sought to

decentralise industry to small and intermediate urban centres have not proved effective either in providing a stimulus to the development of such settlement, or in meeting social goals related to income and job generation. This can partially be explained by the fact that some industries have been located in urban centres which are ill suited to their efficient operation and, therefore, frequently perform well below capacity as they do not suit local social and economic needs. Industries that make maximum use of the local resources should be given priority in making such policy decisions and this can be more rewarding if the appropriate districts are charged with such responsibilities. Most important however is that, there is need to first improve the infrastructure and the facilities for industry in these urban centres based on a careful assessment of each centre's potential.

The first step should therefore aim at strengthening the role of small and intermediate centres so as to facilitate the flow of production inputs and extend the range of services available to the development area.

Recommendation 2: Integration of Small Towns to Overall Rural Development.

The development of small and intermediate urban centres cannot be considered in isolation from those of the rural economy which the District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) seeks to promote. These urban centres should be considered as only part of an array of settlements ranging from small clusters of farm households through to larger urban centres or cities. When such settlements are considered collectively, their contribution to national or local production, trade or service provision is considerable. Thus all government plans and programmes for small and intermediate centres must recognise that each settlement will have its own range of

skills, resources, links with the surrounding areas and links with the national and sub-national economy. Small and intermediate urban centres are at the core of the long term relationship between urbanisation and agricultural development and will play a key role in Kenya's urbanisation process.

Recommendation 3: Need to stimulate Agricultural production.

Rural poverty and economic stagnation is the principal Push factor in Rural Urban migration. The inability of the rural areas to economically support an ever increasing population, assures a continuous flow of migrants from the villages to the urban centres, whose absorptive capacity is already considerably strained. This trend will continue unless policies are adopted to improve rural incomes and to make life in rural settlements qualitatively more attractive. The policy options will entail establishment of agro-based industries, proper planning of rural growth service centres (dictated by the local condition), expansion of essential services like education, improved rural health centres, higher prices for agricultural produce, feeder roads to improve access to markets and overall selective bias for potential service centres in districts, constituencies and divisions.

Recommendation 4: Need to Recognise the Unique Potential of each Small Town.

One of the most important principles on which any national programmes for small and intermediate urban centres must be based on is that; each urban centre has its own unique mix of potentials and constraints. This is the case for even two urban centres with comparable population sizes

within the same region given that the reasons for their growth are diverse. For this reason the government should be region specific and avoid generalisations. For instance the provision of infrastructure facilities should be on the basis of the potential of that region (urban centre) to payback and maintain itself once installed. To assume that each urban centre needs an industry or a power grid, or even a water reticulation system is inaccurate. Also important is the provision of the facilities in "a package" since the provision of an infrastructure like a road without related supporting infrastructure like electricity could render the former a waste. This appears to be the case for the town under study (Keroka) because the presence of electricity in the town is not supported by a road network system in its interior hinterlands. Neither is their provision of a water reticulation system to support its settlement population and their related socio-economic activities.

Recommendation 5: Decentralisation in Development Planning.

The fact that possibilities and constraints on development are so specific to each urban centre (and region) implies the need for a considerable degree of local input in designing any nationwide or region wide programmes for small and intermediate urban centres. Without this, these programmes are unlikely to meet local needs, make best use of local resources and overcome local constraints on social and economic development. This in turn implies a considerable degree of decentralization in development planning and implementation. Thus if realistic assessments of development possibilities are so unique to each centre, local government (mostly located in the small and intermediate centres), should be the most

effective level of government to articulate local needs from their area of jurisdiction and influence the allocation of resources at higher levels. This in turn requires strong and competent manpower of which the central government can provide directly or indirectly. This study like other studies indicate that local government's in such small urban centres lack, power, resource and trained Personnel. As world Bank report concludes " Such levels of government tend to be fragmented often either largely invisible or largely ceremonial " (World Bank staff' working papers, No.581. Washington DC. 1984, PP 3-4).

Recommendation 6: Need to Strengthen Local Governments.

Stronger and more effective local government seems essential to a national programme for small and intermediate urban centres and it brings with it many developmental advantages. Competent and representative local governments can mobilise local resources more effectively than high levels of government, but they are more likely to do so if they receive fair share of this than simply acting as tax collectors for higher levels of government. Building a stronger and more effective local government demands the reversals of many policies. The tendency of the national governments to impose severe limits on local authorities' revenue-raising powers and to take for itself the more lucrative and easily collected taxes ought to be reversed; it also demands a clear definition of the constitutional and legal status of local governments (which is often not clear or even provided for), an establishment of clear lines of authority and responsibility. Thus one of the central justifications for a national programme on small and intermediate urban centres ought to ensure that

local levels of government can respond to local needs of its population and find out how local resources can be mobilised for national development. Long term programmes by national government is required to help build the appropriate level of institutional capacity, resource base and skilled personnel at local level. Clearly, this must be backed by better censuses and surveys to provide the information base for local government so that local development plans are more geared to local needs, resources and potentials than the "standard package" for all urban centres so often proposed and implemented by national governments.

Recommendation 7: Provision of Basic Infrastructure by the Central Government

The national government Policies ought to focus on the provision of public works with long term payback, but which are unattractive for private investors. Physical infrastructure; Power, Transport and Telecommunication services form the basic medium link between urban and rural environments and can greatly enhance economic activities in small urban towns like Keroka where the realisation and exploitation of economic potential (resources) is constraint. Again in order to create non-farm income-earning opportunities and to enhance Agricultural production, the improvement of infrastructure networks of rural service centres at suitable locations is recommended. For instance activities such as rural feeder roads construction, bus-park surfacing or maintenance, reforestation and watersheds management, installation of water pipes, construction of drainage system can provide seasonal employment and much needed income supplements to many lower-income households. Grants should be assessed

along the lines of population size, potentials, constraints and the need for general welfare for the local population.

Recommendation 8: Local governments to pool resources for common needs

Pools of skilled personnel and specialised equipment could be made available to a group of local government or local associations, which could lower considerably the costs for each local government of purchasing and maintaining equipment and paying professional salaries which they can't individually utilise for the whole year. Groups of local governments could also share accountants, engineers and road construction equipment. Keroka for instance may pool resources with Nyamira and Kisii town councils and have a common physical planner to help integrate spatial potentials and constraints of these urban centres in the district.

In conclusion the key recommendations for national government include the need not to generalise about the kinds of activities which should be developed or promoted in small and intermediate centres and secondly, to develop the capacity of local governments located in small centres to make their own choices as to what should be developed based on local needs potentials and capacities.

Many small and intermediate urban centres will play an important part in helping governments achieve national economic and social goals. The achievement of goals such as increasing food production for domestic consumption, increasing agricultural exports or diversifying the manufacturing sector will include supporting infrastructure and services located in strategic urban centres.

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BUSINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which goods do you sell? 1. Agricultural 2. Non Agricultural
3. Both
2. Which is your source of supplies ? 1. 2. 3.
3. Do you offer credit for customers? 1. Yes. 2. No
4. What is the estimate number of customers you handle daily?.....
5. How many people do you employ? a) casual b) Permanent
6. For how many days in a month do you operate?
7. Do you invest? 1. Yes 2. No
8. If yes Where and how much?
9. Why did you decide to invest in Keroka?
1. 3.
2. 4.
10. Do you face any problems ? Which ones
1. 4.
2. 5.
3. 6.
11. Where do you Reside? 1. Within the town
2. Outside the town (specify)
12. Why do you reside in (15) above? 1.
2.
3.
13. What services do you think could improve your business if provided ? 1. 4.
2. 5.
3. 6.
14. What is your other source of income? 1. 2.
15. How as the business benefited you ? 1. 2.

16. Personal details of the interviewee

Sex	Age	Occup'	O/Ship	Year/E	H/Area	P/resd	Educ

PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS QUESTIONNIRE.

- 1.Type of vehicle a) Matatu b) Bus c) private van
- 2.Ownership 1.Single 2.Joint ownership
- 3.Where is your home area by 1.constituency 2.District
- 4.When did you start the business?.....
- 5.Which routes do you operate in? 1.Origin 2.destiny
- 6.Which centres do stop in?
- 7.Why do you prefer this route?.....
 - 1. 2.
 - 3. 4.
- 8.How many people are employed?.....
- 9.Which services do you offer? 1. 2.
 - 3. 4.
- 10.How many trips do you make in a day?
- 11.How many passengers do you carry per a trip?...
- 13.Do you invest? 1.No 2.Yes
- 14.If yes where and how much?
 -
- 15.How could your business be improved?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- 16.How has the business benefited you?
 - 1. 2.
 - 3. 4.
- 17.Do you face any problems? which ones?
 - 1. 2. 3.
- 19.Which is your other sources of Income?

General comments and Observations

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MARKET VENDORS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. By what means did you come to Keroka? 1.By foot 2.matatu
4. private van 5.by bus 6.By bicycle 7.Other(specify)
2. Why did you opt for this means
1. 2. 3. 4.
3. How far is it from here in kms?.....
4. Have you come to 1.Sell 2. Buy 3.Other reasons(specify)
- 5 .If its to sell or buy, which items ? 1. 2.
3. 4. 5.
6. Where else do you buy / go to sell these items?
1.
2.
3.
7. Why did you choose to come to Keroka and not elsewhere?
1. 2. 3.
8. How often do you visit Keroka?
9. What problems do you face in Buying/selling these Items?
1. 2. 3.
4. 5. 6.
10. What services could make this town better according to you?
11. How has the location of this town benefited you?

Personal details of the interviewee

Sex	Age	Occupation	Home/Area	Place of residence	Year of Est	Educ/background	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	7.	8.	

General comments and observations

.....

Thank You For your cooperation.

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Attain information from the following areas,

1. Health centre : services offered, Limitations, problems and their solutions.
2. Education Office: services offered, Limitations, problems and their solutions.
3. Banks: services offered, Limitations, problems and their solutions.....
4. Post Office: services offered, Limitations, problems and their solutions.....

Thank You for your cooperation.

FARM (HINTERLAND) QUESTIONNAIRE

The Information given will be treated confidentially.

1. What is the total land acreage under cultivation
2. Which Livestock Animals do you keep and Which Crops do you grow?
 1. Animals....
 2. Crops...
3. Why do you keep these Animals and grow these crops?

1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4. How do you make use of the Harvest?
 1. Sell
 2. Consume
 3. Both
5. In case you sale, where do you sale the produce?
6. Where do you buy your farm inputs and why?
 1. Place
 2. Reason
7. Which services do you get from Keroka?
8. How has the location of Keroka promoted or hindered your farming?
 1. Promoted.....
 2. Hindered.....
9. What problems have you faced in your farming?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
10. Which is your other source of income?

Personal details of the respondent.

SEX	AGE	M/STATUS	OCCUPATION	DIST/IN KMS	HOME AREA	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.

Thanks for your cooperation.

TABLE 2 PERCENTAGE URBAN AND RURAL GROWTH RATES BY COUNTRY, 1991

	URBAN GROWTH	RURAL GROWTH
ALGERIA	4.31	1.03
ANGOLA	5.41	1.68
BENIN	4.81	2.07
BOTSWANA	8.28	1.27
BURKINA FASO	5.91	2.57
BURUNDI	5.82	2.84
CAMEROON	5.65	1.68
CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC	4.56	1.30
CHAD	5.54	1.14
CONGO	4.69	2.29
COTE D'IVOIRE	5.34	2.75
EGYPT	3.69	0.71
ETHIOPIA	5.50	2.57
GABON	5.11	1.63
GHANA	4.41	2.53
GUINEA	5.74	2.02
KENYA	6.94	2.64
LESOTHO	6.33	1.95
LIBERIA	5.55	1.10
LIBYA	4.67	0.90
MADAGASCAR	5.84	2.35
MALAWI	6.34	3.23
MALI	4.88	2.75
MAURITANIA	5.66	0.02
MAURITIUS	1.12	1.05
MOROCCO	3.88	0.99
MOZAMBIQUE	7.64	0.54
NAMIBIA	5.21	2.23
NIGER	6.64	2.36
NIGERIA	5.47	1.94
RWANDA	7.48	3.08
SENEGAL	4.16	1.89
SIERRA LEONE	5.01	1.43
SOMALIA	4.44	1.08
SOUTH AFRICA	3.25	0.50
SUDAN	4.58	2.39
TOGO	5.93	2.12
TUNISIA	2.76	1.24
UGANDA	6.30	3.43
UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA	7.96	1.34
ZAIRE	4.82	2.13
ZAMBIA	5.59	1.85
ZIMBABWE	5.40	2.16

Source: UNCHS - Habitat, 1991: 9