
First International Conference on Urban Growth and Spatial
Planning of Nairobi, Kenya.
December 13 - 17, 1988, Nairobi, Kenya.

HEALTH CARE PROVISION

By

Mr. G.K. Ikiara
Department of Economics
University of Nairobi

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HEALTH CARE PROVISION IN RAPIDLY GROWING URBAN
CENTRES: THE CASE OF NAIROBI.

By: GERRISHON K. IKIARA
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

PAPER PREPARED FOR THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON URBAN AND SPATIAL PLANNING OF NAIROBI, DEC. 13-17,
1988, NAIROBI, KENYA.

ABSTRACT

One of the major challenges facing policy makers in developing countries is meeting the rapidly rising demand for social services such as education, health, housing, transport etc. This challenge is more pronounced in the urban centres which have been experiencing phenomenal expansion in the last two decades.

This paper discusses provision of health services in Nairobi, highlighting the existing weaknesses and strengths and the role of planning in the attempt to cope with the current and future challenges. The paper looks at the socio-economic characteristics of health users in Nairobi, the structure of the city's health facilities, various types of health providers, distribution of the facilities and their health financing mechanism, management of health resources, and the nature of existing planning and coordination of health services and health providers.

The paper makes an attempt to identify planning strategies and policy measures that can be pursued to ensure adequate provision of high quality health care in future. Cost-sharing which has been recently seen as a possible way of alleviating existing bottlenecks in the provision of health is discussed and its appropriateness assessed. Possibilities of reorganising and strengthening local authorities to make them capable of contributing more effectively in the delivery of health services in their areas of jurisdiction are also discussed.