

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON HOUSING



NAIROBI 1989

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BRIEF NOTES ON KARIOBANGI

FADD - NAIROBI 25/01/89

L.U. SHIHEMBETSA

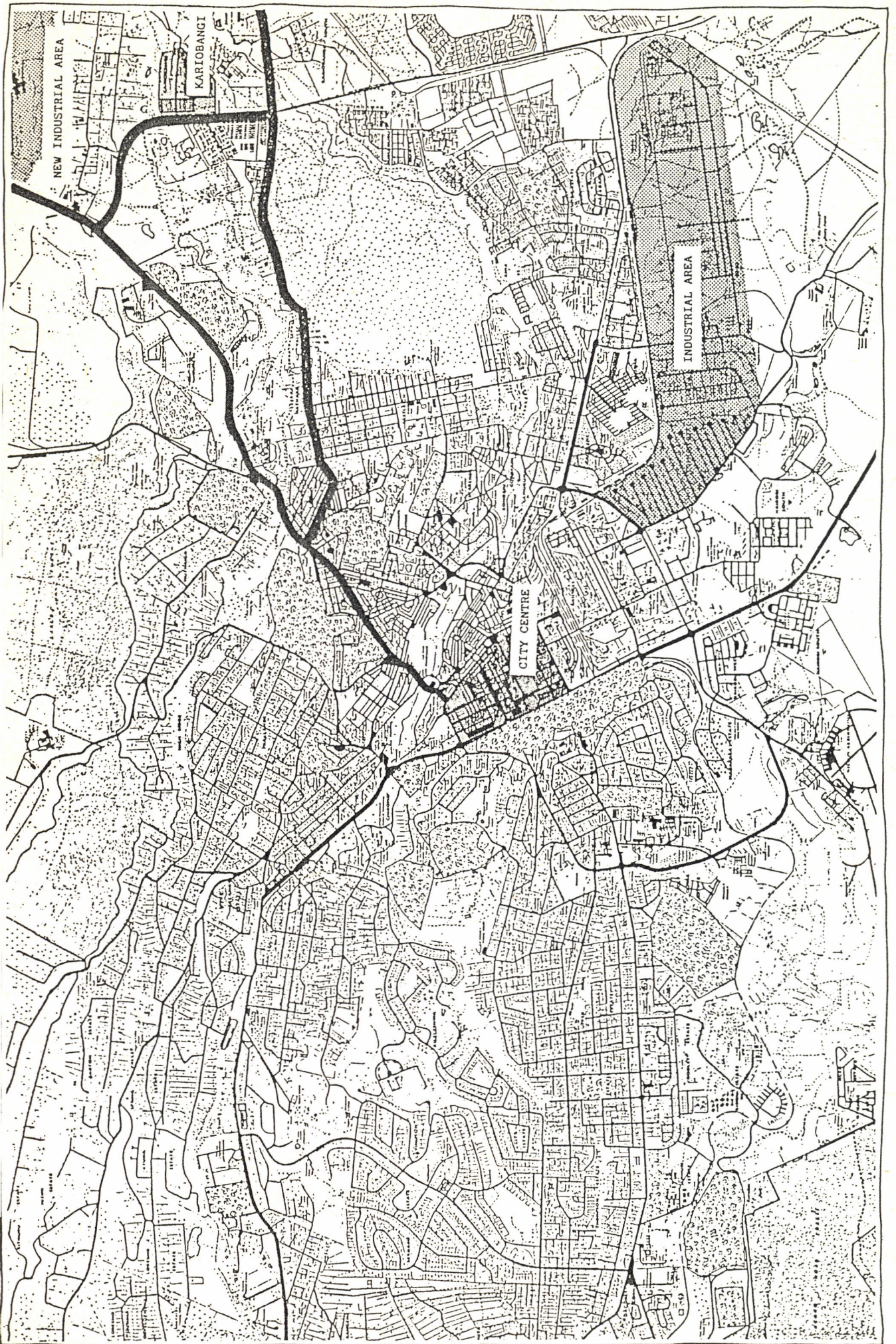
Architect/Planner (Research Fellow)

University of Nairobi - HRDU - FADD

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NORTH KARIOBANGI SITE AND SERVICE HOUSING SCHEME:

1. Background

Kariobangi is situated to the North-est of Nairobi city at a distance of about 10 km from the City centre and industrial area. It is located within the low-income residential area. Kariobangi was the first site and service scheme in Kenya which was a resettlement scheme for the squatters who were living at Pumwani/Gikomba which is too near the City centre. The land was formally public land and was leased to the Nairobi City Council (now Nairobi City Commission) on a 99 year lease to develop a low-cost housing project based on the site and service schemes concept. This concept is at present very common in Kenya. The Council provided plots, the infrastructure, services and community facilities.

2. Socio-Economic Factors

In 1964, the Nairobi City Council (NCC) and the Kenya Government initiated a housing redevelopment programme to aid squatters living just a few hundred yards from the modern central areas of Nairobi. This rehousing schemes involved pulling down the squatters' illegal shacks and thus improving what was felt to be an unhealthy, dangerous and unsightly birght on the capital of newly independent Kenya. Every household was to be given a plot of land, fully prepared with essential services and water to build a new home. There were two reasons why there was a resettlement scheme:-

i) safety and security

It was felt by the authorities that with overcrowding of squatters near the City, there could be problems of thuggery

within the City. It could not be possible to control this because the squatters houses could be used as hideouts.

ii] Health Problems and Epidemics

With overcrowding, there is every possibility that the health standards could fall too low. As a result there is every possibility of epidemics to breakout considering that these people lack many essential public services and utilities like water, sewage and drainage among other things.

3. Choice of Kariobangi

- i] By 1964 Kariobangi already had water mains and sewers serving the small then county council estate built there. Therefore it was easy to extend this water mains and sewers to this scheme.
- ii] Kariobangi being 10km away from the City centre the value of land by that time was still low and thus cheap.
- iii] There was an industrial growth planned for this area which need labour hence the need to establish a low-income housing scheme in this area. At the moment the light industrial area is being developed gradually.

4. Plot Allotment

Priority for being offered a plot depended not only on residence at Pumwani/Gikomba, but also on:

- i] Willingness and ability to move immediately into Kariobangi
- ii] The number of dependants of a squatter - the more the dependants the higher the chances of one being allocated a plot
- iii] Willingness of the squatter to vacate his existing dwelling and not rent it to others for extra income.

5. Planning and Implementation

There were 723 plots of 12mx13.5m to house about 12,000 people.



The estimated density was about 700 people/hectare. Later on, more plots were added to a total of about 1,020 plots. The addition of plots increased the population up to over 17,000 which gave a density of about 900 people/hectare.

The allottees were allowed to build an initial temporary structure in wattle and a debe. They were then given 10 years to improve their houses using more durable materials. This process has been going on for the past 22 years. There were 6 standard house type plans of 4 to 6 rooms which the allottees were allowed to choose from.

There were however, problems that were encountered during the implementation stage like:-

- i] Allottees were reluctant to move to Kariobangi hence they were forced by the City Council to move.
  - ii] Transfer of ownership after allocation was difficult to control.
  - iii] Squatting greatly increased along with the development of Kariobangi, even near the estate itself.
- . Kariobangi ultimately became a crowded, lower-middle-income African owned urban housing estate, physically different from but socially similar to others owned by the City Council
- . Not all the squatters wanted plots at Kariobangi site. They wanted to stay where they were-near the City, trade, and work near their already constructed houses [i.g. Pumwani, Majengo, Gikombà]. They did not want to go to distant, unknown, out-of-the-way perhaps dangerous new homes, where they would have to start construction all over again on a more expensive scale. The City Council then decided to use force to move these squatters.