

HOUSING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

LOCAL AUTHORITY VIEW

by

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'Housing for the Lower-Income Groups' on 9th May, 1977.

INTRODUCTION:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Before I go on to tell you what we do in Kericho to house the lower income groups, I would like to acquaint you with a few facts about Kericho.

Kericho Town is the administrative headquarters of Kericho District in the Rift Valley. The town is situated midway between Nakuru and Kisumu, and is on highway BI, which branches off from the Nakuru-Eldoret highway at Mau Summit. From Mau Summit to Kericho is some 55 Kilometres. The nearest railway station is Kipkelion (Lubwa), which is some 35 Kilometres north of Kericho.

Kericho town is one of the oldest towns in Kenya and its history goes back beyond 1924. Prior to 1973, an Urban Council administered the local services of the town, under the overall control of the County Council of Kipsigis. During that time, the population of the town was 10,144, while its area of jurisdiction was only 10.2 square Kilometres. In June, 1973, the town was elevated to town council status and its boundaries extended to include a number of rural sub-locations and tea estates. It now has an area of 64 square Kilometres and a population of 28,800.

Kericho has an expected population growth rate of 4 - 5%, which means that in the year 2000 the population will be approximately 76,300. Kericho is in a high rainfall area. It has an average annual rainfall of 2700 mm. The climate is cool and healthy.

Although the town itself has no industries, its economy is heavily supported by the tea industry.

The town is adequately equipped with schools, colleges, hotels, roads etc. The famous Kericho Tea Hotel is situated in the township.

Kericho Town Council provides the local government services in the town. The Council operates on a budget of £114,000 and employs a total staff of 120. Its senior officers include a town clerk, town treasurer, town engineer and a volunteer town architect.

Public Housing

The conditions for each urban centre vary when you consider what kind of housing to provide how many and where. Some of the factors would be population growth employment opportunities infrastructure climate, social provisions etc.

Housing the lower income groups, especially those whose incomes are below KShs.500/- per month is not a simple matter. The best I can do at this seminar is to tell you what my council has done what it is doing and what it proposes to do in future to house the low income groups generally. It will then be for the participants to draw their conclusions from the information given.

With loan funds provided by the former Central Housing Board and its successor the National Housing Corporation, my council has provided different types of public housing as enumerated below -

<u>Year</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Phase Number</u> <u>of rooms</u> <u>per unit</u>		<u>Rent per</u> <u>unit per</u> <u>month</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>No. of</u> <u>units</u>
1956	Tenant Purchase	1	5	Shs.104/- (Instalment)	32
1959	Rental	1	1	50/-	96
1960	"	11(a)	1	30/-	37
		(b)	2	60/-	18
		(c)	2	95/-	14
1961	"	III(a)	3	150/-	4
		(b)	2	135/-	88
1968	"	IV	2	135/-	10
1968	"	V	3	240/-	10
1970	"	VI	2	135/-	27
1974	"	VII(a)	3	270/-	4
		(b)	2	165/-	11
1975	Site & Service	I	3	80/-	<u>101</u>
	Scheme			(instalment)	<u><u>372</u></u>

We are in the process of implementing the following low cost housing schemes:-

1. Site & Service Scheme Phase II with 255 serviced plots,
2. USAID Tenant Purchase Scheme with 46 one and two roomed houses.

Our experience, as far as the old housing schemes are concerned, is that they were badly planned with the result that Council's tenants are now pressing the Council to improve them. Rental Houses in Phase I & II were not provided with kitchens, while water and toilet facilities were designed for use communally. Poaching of communal water by non-tenants is placing a heavy financial burden on the Council. We have tried to borrow money for renovation of the houses but so far we have not succeeded.

Our tenant purchase housing scheme phase I has been successful to an extent, although we have had a lot of administrative problems with loan defaulters. Many tenants ignore their loan repayment obligation, with the result that it becomes necessary to seek redress in the courts. Many tenants have migrated and have sublet their houses to people who are not willing to maintain the houses properly.

Our site and service scheme phase I was designed and supervised by the National Housing Corporation on behalf of the Council.

Of 101 serviced plots made available to the allottees at this scheme, a little less than 50 plots have either been completed or are under construction. As this was our first site and service scheme ever, we made a number of mistakes and learned a lot from it. We had the following comments to make on this scheme:-

- (a) Supervision: We felt that the supervision on the side of the National Housing Corporation was not sufficient. A Clerk of Works visited the site once a week and Officials of the National Housing Corporation periodically. A great part of the work was therefore left unnoticed. We recommend that the National Housing Corporation should involve local authorities in the daily supervision where technical staff is employed.
- (b) Plot sizes: We felt that the plot sizes and rooms were too small. The type plan provided should have been one that could easily be extended later to accommodate a large family.