



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
HOUSING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

HOUSING FOR LOW-INCOME WORKERS :

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU) has prepared a "Position paper on Housing for Low-Income Workers in Kenya". This paper outlines some of the problems facing low-income workers and asks two basic questions:

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- a. What type of shelter could be put within the financial reach of the low-income workers?
and
- b. Why is this type of housing not built?

These questions are straightforward and simple and characterize the problem in a few words. It is clear, however, that providing the answers to the questions is rather more complex. In this paper an effort will be made to provide some answers to the basic questions posed.

2. TYPE OF SHELTER WITHIN THE REACH OF LOW-INCOME WORKERS

2.1. Preamble

In order to arrive at a satisfactory answer to the first question it must first be considered what is understood by a low-income worker, and how the Government's policy aims to provide this worker with housing. Then the available, and planned for, types of housing are considered in relation to what the worker can afford. For standards of construction and services the present legislation is analysed and used to arrive at an example illustrating what type of shelter can be put within the financial reach of the low-income workers.

2.2. The target group and the aim of the Government's housing policy

definitions

First we must define what is understood by a "low-income worker". In the COTU position paper reference is made to the people employed in the "modern sector" of the Kenya economy. Of this group one half earn less than KShs.400 per month, and two thirds earn less than KShs.600 per month (figures for 1975). For this paper we shall define