ORIGINS OF SQUATTING AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION
IN NAIROBI

by
Samuel Mugwika Kobiah

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of City Planning
at the
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Signature of Author....................................................
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 23, 1978

Certified by..........................................................
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by..........................................................
Chairman, Department Committee

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Abstract

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Squatting poses one of the most nagging problems to the cities of underdeveloped countries. Whereas numerous theories and methods of resolving the problem have been used, it is evident that the problem still persists. This study is an attempt to understand the squatting problem and how it is being resolved in Kenya.

It is the contention of the study that squatting cannot be understood as merely a "natural" and incidental byproduct of urbanization and "modernization". Nor can it be seen as simply a logical outcome of rural-urban migration. To understand squatting in Kenya, this thesis traces squatting to its roots.

In our view, squatting in Kenya rose directly out of the process of laying down the material foundation of capitalism in Kenya. During the primitive accumulation of capital, the state power was used to alienate massive tracts of land from African control. In order to ensure the needed cheap labor for development of capitalist agriculture, the process of proletarianization of the African peasantry took place. Squatting became the form of labor seen as best fulfilling the needs of agricultural development in the European settlement areas.

With development of the city (especially Nairobi, the primate city of Kenya) as another enclave in the country, there arose the need to meet the industrial, commercial and menial demands for cheap labor. This precipitated the influx of Africans into the burgeoning urban centers. Like in other capitalist situations, there was no adequate provision of necessary services for the labor force and the alternative was to squat.

Having established the socio-economic structures which breed social ailments like squatting, the problem continued to reproduce. The present Kenyan government inherited and continues to nurture the same structures and so, inevitably, continues to be nagged by the same, if more complex, problem of squatting.

In spite of the governmental action in the form of persuasion, regulatory measures, and demolition of squatter settlements, the problem has
not only been preserved, but has grown in proportion. Community Organiza-
tion (CO) as a way of attempting to ease the social and economic prob-
lems of the squatters has been used by the squatters themselves and by
voluntary organizations like the National Christian Council of Kenya.
Though it has had some measure of success, CO, too, will be shown to be
ineffective in addressing the real causes of squatting.

Thesis Supervisor: Lisa R. Peattie

Title: Professor of Urban Studies and Planning
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There is no adequate way of summarizing the support I got from my dear wife Njira. Her love, encouragement and understanding sustained my spirit to work. This thesis is dedicated to her.

With all the assistance I got, any shortcomings of this study are solely my responsibility.

Samuel M. Kobiah
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Introduction

Kenya is developing in a classic capitalist pattern, a pattern characterized by unequal development, in which a surplus is extracted from the workers at the bottom and funnelled up to those at the top, in part even to metropolitan centers elsewhere. The national planning strategy gives spatial expression to this kind of development. The economic pattern in the White Highlands was a rural version of the pattern in which Africans, having been colonized and deprived of ownership of the means of production (land), become cheap workers for the white settler. In Nairobi, the same pattern is repeated in the role of the "informal sector" and squatters in the urban economy. This is the situation which community organizing should have some relevance to.

Scope of the Study

The overall goal of this study is to understand the squatting problem in Kenya and how it has, and is being, resolved. To achieve that goal it will be necessary to do the following:

(1) To analyze the role of the squatters in the socio-historical process that led to the current urban socio-economic structures in Kenya. In particular, we shall trace the different stages of development of capitalist agricultural economy, paying close attention to the production relationships between the workers (squatters and wage-laborers) and the owners (white settlers) of the means of production (land).

(2) To analyze the various methods that have been and are used in dealing with the social and economic problems posed by the squatting phenomenon. A primary concern will be to look at the role of the state in this socio-historical process. We intend to show that all through
there has been the use of the power of the state to foster development of capitalism. This was the case during the stage of primitive accumulation of capital and it continues to be the case today. If nothing else, the state guarantees the conditions and the social relations of capitalism and protects the ever more unequal distribution of property which this system brings about. By so doing, the state uses its power to enrich the capitalist class, and create favorable conditions under which certain groups and individuals enrich themselves.

(3) Since the methods used by the state through its agencies, like the local governments, do not serve the interests of the squatters, it is our purpose to analyze a different method used in trying to improve the social and economic conditions of the squatters. This method is community organization. We are cognizant of the fact that even the most "effective" type of community organization in Nairobi is at best reformist. In that case, the only reason for looking at community organization is because it is, at the moment, the method that seems to have some positive impact on the living conditions of the squatters.

In an attempt to achieve those purposes, it is the intention of this study to explain the root causes of squatting (and also migration) in Kenya.

Squatting and its Implication for Planning

The physical form of the city is, to a large extent, a time-linked crystallization of the total social order of the city; it represents the interactions and interests of different social classes. Looking at the physical city plans, on a planner's drawing board, the physical city
looks intelligible and even admirable. However, the real city will look unintelligible and undesirable without understanding the class formation process and the struggles, on the part of the urban poor especially, to survive the pressures of urbanization and its concomitant socio-economic problems. "Generally, and certainly in capitalist societies if not more widely, proletarian process and action are either disregarded altogether, thought of with respect to specific characteristics, such as squatter settlements, as aberrations, or thought of only piecemeal, as with respect to favelas but not other types of housing." There are a number of other scholars who agree with Anthony Leeds on this point. They show that planners and the governments treat squatters as marginal with respect to the rest of the metropolitan system.

"In consequence," Anthony Leeds observes, "planners, who virtually without exception are recruited from the elites, see the physical city in only a partial way. As elite personnel, they see the city as elite process. They see the future city for which planning is to be done in terms of the extrapolated future of the upper class or, more likely, those of the subsequents more closely linked with the professions and with governments. Since most of them see the city only partially, they necessarily plan partially." If there is partial planning, and we do agree with Leeds that there is, then it means that planning is ostensibly in favor of the interests of some social classes in the city and against others. But the social order of the city is such that even those that are not planned for -- squatters in this respect -- are social realities in the city. Such a situation will inherently involve interaction be-

*References can be found at the end of each chapter.
between the planned for and the parts not planned for. Inevitably, the situation will lead to direct conflictual contradiction between the two parts, and consequently, to social struggles.

In concrete terms, what we refer to as social struggles are characterized by authorities' demolition of squatter settlements, on the one hand, and the squatters' resistance, on the other. Such incidences are a common occurrence in the majority of cities of developing countries.

In general, then, any urban planning which does not take account of the entire social order of the city is bound to fail. Regardless of what scholars believe to be the sources (migration, natural growth, or overmechanization) of urbanization or hyper-urbanization, the phenomenon of squatters and slum dwellers presents planners, and the systems they plan for, with a great challenge.

The failure of such plans will be of even greater magnitude if the plans, made as we have observed by only members of one class -- the elite, will continue to disregard the interests and opinions, not to talk of participation, of other social classes like squatters and slum dwellers. A plan foresees only a range of possibilities in the future development and then only for a limited span of time. Once a plan is implemented, it literally concretizes the ideological position of the planners at the time of planning. In this respect, planning could be viewed as a social process. Since the entire habitat of a city are necessarily involved in the social process, it is advocated by some scholars that all members of various urban communities should participate in the urban planning process.
In my view, the fundamental problem with advocacy of the integration or participation of the members of a politically and ideologically dominated class into the planning process is that the "integrated planning syndrome" is done within the existing structures. At any rate, the poor will be in a disadvantaged position "when it comes to dealing with those who speak the language of maps, diagrams, and statistical tables." It is, therefore, most unlikely that social and economic conditions will ever change simply because of integrating the poor class into the city planning process. Even when integrated, they will certainly be manipulated by those with higher conceptions in the game of planning because, to quote Professor Lisa Peattie, "the power to conceptualize is the power to manipulate." 

Theoretical Positions and Their Policy Implications on Squatting

There are at least three theoretical positions with regard to squatting:

(1) Squatters as a pathological agglomeration.

This view sees squatter settlement as the hideout of unemployed loafers, orphans, abandoned wives, thieves, drunks and prostitutes. Squatters are seen as rebels who have run away from the rural life. Hence, they are "marginal elements" in the city. Such views favor the policy of squatter eradication and repatriation of the squatters back to the rural areas.

(2) The second view is a direct opposite of the first one. It portrays Squatters as communities striving for elevation.

This view describes the squatter settlement as "a community inhabi-
ted by dynamic, honest, capable people who could develop their neighborhoods on their own initiative if given the chance. Among the proponents of this view are John Seely, Marc Fried, and the International Labor Office. Such favor the policy of legalizing squatting and improving their conditions of work. ILO made such recommendations to the Kenyan government.10

(3) **Squatting as inevitable blight.**

This views squatting as unfortunate yet an inevitable consequence of rapid urbanization. Squatters are regarded as economically underproductive, politically naive and socially a rather unnecessary burden. "The proponents of this attitude," argues Perlman, "take the paternalistic view that squatters are like children." Many of the church groups and philanthropic organizations who work with squatters belong to this school of thought. Hence, they tend to favor the policy of giving charitable services (providing food, old clothes and organizing some health services) and that of improving squatter shelters. But they do not favor structural changes.

Most of the community organization done in the squatter settlements is done by groups with either the second or the third view. The current work in squatter areas in Nairobi is supported by organizations whose viewpoint is a mixture of the second and the third theories.

My theoretical approach is different from those outlined above. In stating my position, I shall also state the main propositions of this study.

(1) In Kenya, squatting has been and remains a necessary product
of the structural social formation and social order which characterizes the formation and initial stage of the underdeveloped capitalist economy. Such an economy has its distinctive form of social classes, each of which has a specific role in the society. In the case of the urban squatters, their labor is regarded as not economically "required" by the economic system and, consequently, they become a "marginalized sector" with respect to the dominant modes of production.

(2) Squatters are not politically and economically marginal, but are instead a repressed, oppressed and exploited class of people.

Why Increased Concern Over Community Organization

During the post-Second World War period, there has been increased concern over self-determination and self-governing of the colonized and the oppressed. Whereas this applies mainly to the countries in the Third World, there is its counterpart in the industrialized world. In the United States of America, especially, there have been "demands by groups that have traditionally had little power -- most visibly, affluent students and low-income blacks [and women] -- for enhanced roles in shaping of policies that vitally affect their lives...."12 Similar demands are made by people in the cities of developing countries, as well. Not a long time ago, such demands were hailed and condemned as unprecedented; but now, they are accorded international attention and can no longer be ignored.

One of the international organizations that strongly advocates for community participation in urban affairs is the United Nations Organization. The UNO concerns were articulated at the Habitat Conference at
Vancouver in June, 1976. Among other priority areas in human settlements, the "Vancouver Symposium" emphasized the following:

"• Citizens must be permitted to participate [their emphasis] in decisions that mould their communities before directions are fixed and policies set;

• All international agencies, public and private, active in the area of human settlements, must as a first priority work with local citizen bodies, academic institutions and research groups [their emphasis] in order to ensure that the wealth and variety of values, cultures and traditions in human society are preserved in the world's settlements."\(^{13}\)

The above expressed concerns did not end at the conference discussion level. They were incorporated in the UNO "General Principles" and in the "Guidelines for Action" which were adopted in Vancouver, June, 1976. As a general principle, the conference stated that "all persons have the right and the duty to participate, individually and collectively in the elaboration and implementation of policies and programmes of their human settlements."\(^ {14}\) Two of the twenty-four Guidelines for Action were:

(i) "Adequate shelter and services are a basic human right which places an obligation on governments to ensure their attainment by all people, beginning with direct assistance to the least advantaged through guided programmes of self-help and community action. Governments should endeavour to remove all impediments hindering attainments of these goals...."

(ii) "Basic dignity is the right of all people, individually and collectively, to participate directly in shaping the policies and programmes affecting their lives. The process of choosing and carrying out a given course of action for human settlement improvement should be designed expressly to fulfill that right."\(^ {15}\)

Another international organization that has equally advocated for and supported community organization at the grassroots level is the
World Council of Churches (WCC).* We are concerned with the WCC's position on grassroots participation, because it supports financially and technically many community organization groups in cities of developing countries. A good part of community development work in squatter settlements of Nairobi get financial aid from the WCC. On top of its list of priority areas in its work, the Urban and Industrial Mission of the WCC states, "give highest priority to work supporting the involvement of churches with people in their efforts to organize themselves to gain power necessary to influence the conditions under which they live and work."16

The above concerns can be translated into workable programs in at least one of the following ways: (1) initiative from the top; (2) initiative from the bottom to exert pressure for social change.

(1) **Initiative from the top:** governments can, in their own interest, have public policies that will allow the poor and oppressed to actively and meaningfully participate in the decision-making process. That means developing of mechanisms through which the people can participate at various stages of city and regional planning. But it is highly unlikely that the majority of governments in both developed and developing countries will, of their own accord, grant such "privileges" to the poor people.

Empirical studies show that in Kenya, if anything, the African elite government has grown more hostile towards the poor. This hostility

*Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the World Council of Churches is a council of all the major protestant denominations as well as protestant-based organizations in the world.
is characterized by the constant demolition of the squatter houses in Nairobi. Referred to as "clean-up campaigns", demolitions are usually conducted with neither prior notice to the owners of the houses nor allowance of time to pick up their properties. According to Frederick Temple, "the following excerpt is typical of newspaper accounts of demolition exercises:

'Smoke billowed along Nairobi River yesterday as city askaris [police] swooped on shanty dwellers at about 9 A.M. and set alight their flimsy 'homes'. Families using the shanties, however, were later found to be busy putting the remains together while constructions of new 'huts' went on.'" 17
[quoted from Daily Nation, Nairobi, November 24, 1971]

As incidences of demolition have increased over the years, so has the ruthlessness with which the authorities have carried on the operations. Evidence of this is found in the following report from the Standard newspaper:

"A pregnant woman gave birth in the cold in Nairobi and spent the whole night with her newborn baby outside their demolished house, it was learned yesterday....The woman said she was in labour when the askaris [police] demolished the houses....A man who was asleep when the askaris swooped claimed he was dragged behind a lorry for about 10 yards." 18

According to the newspaper, the above was the fourth time the shanty town has been demolished.

Usually, when a particular concerted "clean-up campaign" is conducted by the City Council, it is subjected to considerable public criticism. However, Temple points out that it was revealed the decision to launch some of the campaigns are sanctioned by the President of the Nation and his Cabinet. 19

The above attitude towards the poor has an inverse relationship
between the people and the government. In his empirical study of grassroots politics in Nairobi, Marc Ross shows that "increasingly people are more uncertain of the leaders they once supported unhesitantly. The gap between leaders and followers increases as political officials are charged with having forgotten about the people who first elected them."\(^{20}\)

The behavior of the authorities towards the masses, and the socio-political status quo in general, symbolizes an increase in social distance between the people, particularly the very poor people, and the government.\(^{21}\) The Ross study also shows that over time the people have taken an essentially deterministic view of their social and political environment and believe that there is relatively little that the single individual can do to produce changes. This kind of attitude reveals the feelings of the people's sense of political powerlessness. In Nairobi, "feelings of powerlessness are most commonly found among individuals occupying positions of relative deprivation in the social structure. Thus, individuals with the smallest available resources for altering the social situation are those who most commonly believe that there is little that individuals can do to effect change."\(^{22}\)

From the above evidence we conclude that the government in Nairobi does not provide a platform through which the masses can participate in decisions that mould their lives and their communities. Social changes will hardly be initiated from the top.

(2) The second alternative is community organization, or attempts to initiate social change from the bottom. In this study, we assume that community organization is a good indicator in trying to better the
living conditions of the squatters. However, we are aware of the fact that whereas in many occasions community organizations have been portrayed as very radical movements, they have not managed to bring about much social change. The experiences of community organizations in the United States is a case in point. The orthodox community organizations have been co-opted by the establishment and no longer serve the interests of the people. The community organizations of the 1960s have had their effect on urban policies in America. Dominated by excitement, sense of moral outrage, and grand optimism of the 1960s, the black movements, the youth and student revolt, the women's movements and other community-based organizations helped to redefine and revive left-wing revolt in the United States. However, now faced with the changed environment of the 1970s, these social movements have either subsided, or are on the defensive. 23 The 1970s have been rather silent, but Janice Perlman suggests the "silent seventies" are not so silent after all. 24 Perlman suggests that "although they would for the most part not recognize their own roles as such, [the grassroots] groups are part of the class struggle in America today." 25 The grassroots groups that have emerged in the 1970s are a result of a growing anticorporatism, not only in the United States, but in the world in general. "The new ferment involves constituencies scarcely touched by the revolts of the sixties -- for example, blue-collar workers, old people, housewives, and middle-aged homeowners." 26 These "citizen movements" focus on specific issues and are basically result-oriented. However, these groups do not envision rapid, nor far-reaching, social change in the foresee-
able future. In aggregate, the citizens' action movement amounts to a growing organizing effort "analogous to the defensive campaigns waged by unions in the workplace: an effort to organize the public in order to 'bargain' over and 'defend' the terrain of social life." 27

Community organization in other Western countries is very much similar to that of the United States. In our attempt to advocate for community organization as a way of bettering the conditions of the squatters in Nairobi, therefore, we need to envision a community organization along different lines than those outlined above. If community organization is expected to deal with the causes rather than symptoms of squatting, it will have to be more progressive than the current community organizations in squatter settlements of Nairobi. This is because the types of community organization in Nairobi are either of the reformist nature, or organized by opportunist "former" squatters whose objective is nothing but profit maximization, or a poor caricature of community organization in the United States in the 1960s.

Outline of the Study

This study is in two parts. The first part analyzes the social, political and economic factors which explain the nature and extent of the squatting problem, first in the former White Highlands and in Nairobi today. The second part is a case study of community organization in Mathare Valley, Nairobi.

There are seven chapters besides this Introduction. Chapter 1 is basically an explanation of urban development in Kenya. It "sets the stage" of the study by introducing Nairobi to the reader. A major thrust
of this chapter is to show the role of the city, with relation to the
country, in a capitalist economy. It will also discuss the strategies
that are being implemented to deal with the uneven growth, in spatial
and economic terms, that is characteristic of the underdeveloped capital-
ist economy. One consequence of this uneven growth is rural-urban mi-
gration.

Chapter 2: there are many theories concerning the causes of mi-
gregation and subsequent urban or rural squatting, as the case may be.
This chapter will review some of those theories. It will show that quite
a few of them, especially those used to explain the causes of migration
and squatting in Africa, are not valid explanations.

Chapter 3 will give an historical analysis of the roots of migra-
tion and squatting in Kenya. It will show how the colonial government
used political, economic and even "military" power to force Africans to
migrate into the settler plantations to provide the necessary cheap labor.
The main purpose of the chapter is to show that migration and squatting
in Kenya started as a function of labor organization.

Having explained the roots of migration and squatting, Chapters 4
and 5 will deal with the nature and extent of squatting in the "White
Highlands" and Nairobi, respectively.

Chapter 6 is the case study of community organization in Mathare
Valley, Nairobi. It will analyze three types of community organization.
It will give a more detailed analysis of the type of community organiza-
tion practiced by the National Christian Council of Kenya (NCCK).

Chapter 7 will be recommendations, to the NCCK, on how its commun-
ity organization could be improved.
Introduction. References


2. See especially:
   - Janice Perlman, The Myth of Marginality


5. Ibid., p. 85.


10. Ibid., see "Recommendations".

11. Perlman, op. cit., p. 17.


15. Ibid., p. 348.


21. Ibid., p. 79

22. Ibid., p. 93.


25. Ibid., p. 3.


27. Ibid., p. 41.
Chapter 1
Urban Development in Kenya

Introduction
Africa remains an overwhelmingly rural continent. Where urbanization has taken place - especially in eastern, central and southern Africa - it has been relatively recent. Nonetheless, even though African cities are on the whole young and small by world standards, they are growing more rapidly than cities in Latin America or Asia. For example, the average growth rate of African cities is 5.52% compared to 4.25% and 4.45% for Latin American and Asian cities respectively (see Appendix 1:1).

Certainly this rapid urbanization has been an integral part of the socio-economic development in Africa. But the other side to this development is, of course, the under-development of the rural areas. To that extent, it is indeed accurate to say that urban growth - both economic and demographic - continues at the expense of rural development. In its wake, moreover, urbanization has brought about large-scale rural-urban migration and created a severe problem of squatting in the urban centers.

Why has uneven growth been the case and what has been done to alleviate or resolve problems like squatting? These are the questions to be addressed in this chapter by reference to the case of Kenya. In doing that, we will view urbanization as a historical process that is part of the development of capitalism in Kenya. Our object is also to assess the role that urban centers have played in that capitalist
development. As such we will discuss in detail the origins of Nairobi and its growth into a primate city, and show that its role has been to channel part of the economic surplus of Kenya to the world metropoles. Finally we include an analysis of the urban strategies that have been implemented in Kenya. It is our contention that these strategies have largely failed, particularly as ways to resolve the problems of uneven growth and squatting.

**Urban Development in Kenya: Policies and Strategy**

During the time of the first national population census in 1948, there were 17 towns with a population of 2,000 and more, providing an urban population of 276,240 or 5.1 percent of the total national population. By 1969 there was an urban population of about 1,000,000 distributed over 48 towns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Towns and Urban Population, 1948-76</th>
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<tr>
<td>No. of towns by size</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-19,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-9,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000-4,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Urban Population | 276 | 671 | 1,082 | 1,650 |
| Percentage of Total Population | 5.1 | 7.8 | 9.9 | 13.06 |


The table shows that during the period from 1962-69 the average rate of population growth of the country as a whole amounted to 3.3% per year.
During the same period about 240,000 or 11.2 percent of the whole of the increase in rural population migrated to the towns.

Until 1967 urban development planning was carried out on the basis of land use plans prepared by and for each town. Little consideration, and in some cases no consideration at all, was given to the question of the size and function of towns relative to the overall national and regional requirements or to the establishment of a suitable network of service centers (towns) at different levels to serve the rural population. The Development Plan of 1974-78 articulates the consequences of the above phenomena:

"As a result, some centers and services were developed in a scattered, uncoordinated and sporadic manner and the needs of much of the rural population were met inadequately or were provided on an uneconomic basis. Also, the development of towns proceeded in accordance with short term requirements, since no basis existed for long term planning." 

It was with a view to correcting the situation created by the above form of urban planning that in 1967 the Government of Kenya established Physical Planning Department (PPD) within the Ministry of Lands and Settlement. The Ministry provides offices and administrative services, but all other government ministries are represented in PPD.

Since the time PPD was established it has followed the design of the physical planning framework with the preparation and publication of comprehensive physical planning studies for all regions. It has also prepared over 150 detailed long term and short term development plans for individual service centers or towns. In addition, the department has published special studies on urbanization, tourism and housing, and extended its organization into several of the regional centers.

The input that PPD has brought to metropolitan planning is reflected
in the task that this special team was charged with. It was supposed to define population levels and target satisfactory spatial distribution within the social and economic realities of Nairobi, and to formulate proposals for implementation which were related to resource capacity. The current plan adds that "the final output will provide a series of coordinated urbanization projects appropriate for international financing and providing a sound basis for Nairobi development."

In order to make feasible plans for metropolitan development, the PPD has made studies and projections of population growth in the whole country in general and urban areas in particular. At present, the population of Kenya is about 13 million people. Studies by PPD show that by the turn of the century the population is expected to reach between 28 and 34 million. Even by 1980 the total population will amount to 16 million and, if the urban population continues to grow at the present rate of 7.2% per annum, facilities for metropolitan population of 2.2 million – 15.1% of the total population – must be planned for that year. Of these 2.2 million, 82.5% will be living in the 11 largest towns. And it is planning for these 11 central places that the PPD is mainly concerned with. The table below shows the areas in question (see also Figure 1:1).

To achieve the set goals, the PPD formulated urbanization policy and a strategy which give the guidelines for the 1974-78 Development Plan. The objectives of the policy and the strategy are: (a) to achieve the maximum development of the rural areas so as to slow down the rate of migration from rural to urban areas; (b) to establish a more even geographical spread of urban physical infrastructure in order to promote more balanced economic growth throughout the nation and a more equitable
Density of population, 1969, per sq.km.

- Over 200
- 25 - 199
- Less than 25

Major growth centres
Main roads
Railways

Figure I:1 National distribution of population and communications
Source: Nairobi Urban Study Group 1973
standard of social services between regions; (c) to encourage the expansion of several large towns in addition to Nairobi and Mombasa, thereby providing more alternatives for the absorption of the migrant population and avoiding the problems arising from excessive concentration in these two towns; (d) to continue to develop a network of communications, so as to link centers of economic and social development; and (e) to adopt standards for urban infrastructure which are closely related to what can be afforded by the country as a whole. The PPD recognizes that to achieve

Table 1:2

Projected Population of 11 Largest Towns, 1980
Population ('000s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>1,098</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mombasa</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisumu</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thika</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldoret</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitale</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kakamega</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>1,932</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>2,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


the set goals the strategy for urban development must aim at producing the necessary infrastructure at more than 20 times the speed achieved in the past. The major strategy to be followed is that of Growth Centers, hoping that
"concentrating urban development in selected centers will promote the formation of small towns in rural areas. As these towns grow, they will form a level of urbanization which is large enough to be economically served with public water supply, sewerage, disposal, electricity, postal and banking facilities, etc." Thus the policies to change the urban balance in Kenya presupposes growth center strategy. The Kenyan authorities believe that the strategy will help to contain rural-urban migration and eradicate major urban problems like squatting in Nairobi in particular and in other big cities in general. But the question we pose here is, to what extent will adoption of central place strategy be able to alter the fundamental socio-economic structures that create the problems of excess rural-urban migration and squatting. To answer this question we need to analyze the version of central place strategy Kenya is pursuing a little more profoundly.

Theoretical Framework of the "New" Urban Development Strategy

The central place strategy adopted by Kenya seems to be modeled especially after Walter Christaller's and August Losch's versions of central place theory. The 1974-78 Development Plan outlines and locates hierarchical order of service centers. The plan considers the agglomeration of human community (village, market place, or town) to be a good indicator of the "crystallization of mass around a nucleus" (to use Christaller's terminology) and this is seen as a necessary and elementary form of order. It is in such a "nucleus" or central place, therefore, that certain economic activities will be located. Since the central places differ in size, provision of goods and services, etc., they are classified accordingly; hence the hierarchical order of central places. The overall objective adopted in planning the network of central places is to eventu-
ally provide one Local Center for every 5,000 rural population, a Market Center for every 40,000 and an Urban Center for every 12,000. Totalling over 1,681 centers, their distribution in the provinces is shown in Table 1:3.

Table 1:3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Prin-</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cipal</td>
<td>towns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central*</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Eastern</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyanza</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rift Valley</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10*</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>1,681</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Development Plan, 1974-78, p.120.
*excluding Nairobi

It is important to note that while each central place needs to have a threshold size, the importance of the central place is not so much measured by its size as by the functions, goods and services produced by the central place. Hence the nature of the central place is determined by either of the following principles:

Market principle - there is hierarchical arrangement over landscape to minimize the distribution of various types of goods with the least number of places, e.g. Meru, which gets priority because it serves a large concentrated population isolated to some degree from any other towns; or
Traffic principle - which maximizes the movements of goods at minimum cost. Examples of the traffic principle are Nyeri, Kakamega and Embu municipalities which get priority because, although they are provincial headquarters they are comparatively small in size with low industrial potential and a level of infrastructure below other municipalities. 8

Hence the consumption of central place goods is more important than their production and consequently it is the trading function rather than the production function of a place that will determine its centrality. Since it is likely that the consumption of those goods will be scattered over regions, each central place is tied to a complementary region that it serves or, indeed, dominates. The relationship between the central place and the complementary region will be determined by the consumption behavior of the people in the region. Hence the plan states that "the successful creation of service centers at all levels depends on the concentration within the center of all urban infrastructures required by the particular area served by the center." 9

Limitations of the Central Place Strategy

There are at least three levels of limitations or problems that the "new" strategy will be faced with. The first level of problems arises from the current socio-economic system in Kenya. One major assumption that the government seems to make is that cityward migration is caused largely by lack of various amenities and services in the countryside. Whereas these are variables that might contribute towards rural-to-city migration, they do not constitute major problems. (This is a point we shall deal with in more detail later in this study.) The government plan overlooks the fact that it is structural poverty which is the root cause of the
problems which planners are addressing. Consequences of structural poverty like income differentials, squatting, lack of adequate low-income housing, etc. are treated in the plan as if they are themselves the causes of poverty and inequalities. By and large, therefore, the plan works out a strategy within the present socio-economic structures that are generating the problems in the first place.

Secondly, the plan - like the central place theory in general - places the success of the strategy on the main assumptions of the neo-classic model of perfect competition, i.e. free entry, minimal profits, etc. The plan states very clearly that "once a central place has its basic infrastructural facilities, it will tend to attract commercial and industrial development which will enrich the lives of the people of the rural areas and provide employment opportunities." Assuming such an assumption is plausible, the fact remains that even if commercial and industrial activities are attracted, the socio-economic status quo is such that they will enrich not the currently poor peasants, but the already rich people who straddle* the urban as well as the rural economy.

Related to the above limitations is a point which has to do with the degree to which Kenya is committed to its plans. With regard to central place planning, Clay Wescott points out that "the Kenyan Government is committed to a policy giving priority to the development of other principal towns besides Nairobi and Mombasa. Yet the government projects that by 1980, 88% of the urban population of the 11 largest urban centers will live in one of the two primary cities."*11

A look at how Kenyan government has remained faithful to its former plans on inequality makes us question how the central places will be made to perform miracles. Observing planning in Kenya, Helleiner shows that it is precisely because the basic interest is not to deal with inequality that any references to it in the plans must remain vague: "The 1970-74 Kenyan Plan emphasizes that a fundamental objective of the government is to secure a just distribution of the national income, both between different sectors of areas of the country and between individuals." But the distributional references are not linked with the rest of the plan. What seems to have moved the government to show concern of dealing with the question of inequality is mostly the overt urban employment which seems to be such a big threat that the Kenyan regime suddenly proclaims unemployment as a major concern of the Second Development Plan. But unemployment "is clearly only a small part of the much larger (and more controversial) issue of distribution....in this sense, the emergence of urban unemployment, when eventually seen in historical perspective, may be regarded as an inducement mechanism, without which the distributional issues would have continued to be glossed over for several decades more." 

The second level of problems is in the theory and its implications. Kenya is adopting central place theory as a development strategy when this strategy is being rejected by some developing countries which have tried it before. In Latin America for instance, Chile, Colombia and Bolivia, "which had developed detailed national plans for growth-center-based concentrated decentralization, have now abandoned them and turned to alternative bases for regional planning." 

The problems of central-place-based development in less developed countries are many. The value-bases believed to be implicit in the theory
(as advanced by Perroux) and the implications of growth center strategies for overall long-run national development must be questioned seriously. Coraggio argues that it is impossible to "separate the reasoning behind internal polarized growth and that same reasoning applied at the international level."

Coraggio shows further that strict interpretation of the theory implies:

1. aligning one's national economy with a world pattern of dominant and subdominant poles of development (which in the contemporary world means submission to the dominance of the economies of the United States, Japan and Western Europe);

2. artificially inducing internal growth consistent with the world system of dominant poles (as distinct from regional organization consistent with presumably more beneficial autonomous national growth); and

3. encouraging further foreign investment as the only feasible means of obtaining the requisite large-scale, dynamic, oligarchic, high-technology, "propulsive industries which Perroux has described as the core of any polarized scheme of development." Some of the implications mentioned above have already begun to be manifested in Kenya's application of the growth-center strategy. It has been reported recently that

"Kenya's efforts to take industries to rural areas is fast gathering momentum with more and more large scale industries coming in selected Rural Industrial Development Centers (RIDCs) throughout the republic. One such industry is the proposed Ksh 40 million new Bata* shoe factory to be built at Voi in Taita-Taveta District."

Voi is one of the many growth centers listed in the 1974-78 Development Plan. According to the Weekly Review, "The Voi factory will bring to a total of 102 Bata shoe factories in 89 countries all over the world." The paper also revealed, although no confirmation was available from

* Bata Shoe Company is one of the largest Multinational Corporations operating in Kenya. Owned by a Canadian citizen (Thomas Bata), Bata monopolizes production of footwear in Kenya.
Bata, that it is understood that the Voi factory had originally been planned for a neighboring country, but the decision had been reversed in preference to Kenya where there is "healthy atmosphere for (foreign) investment."

We note further that besides the Bata Shoe Company, other multinational financiers have begun stepping up huge loans for the promotion of light industries in numerous growth centers in Kenya. Recently, "the government has obtained from the World Bank" a loan of Ksh 800 million (US$100 million). "Part of the World Bank money will also be used to support about 200 workshops for light industrial undertakings in different parts of the country."19

Hence, one tends to agree with the view that "the focus of 'concentrated decentralization' to which growth center strategy logically leads is a solution dictated by an apparently unchangeable private concentration of economic activity in mammoth corporations and by the absence of government policy instruments to effect anything other than the location of these increasingly concentrated units."20 The "new" strategy in Kenya therefore is in effect a new form - albeit more reformed - of persuading the less-developed countries of the capitalist world to open the doors and establish a satisfactory climate for the implantation of multinational corporations and their local branches.

It is also pertinent to raise the question concerning the transferability of the theory from the highly industrialized developed countries, where it was originally conceptualized, to the less developed areas which possess substantially different patterns of organization.

There is a third level of limitations that beset the new strategy. An important issue to raise with relation to whether or not the central
place strategy will eradicate inequality is the role of the city in an underdeveloped country like Kenya. As A.G. Frank points out:

"In each underdeveloped country it is today its national metropolis which had and has the greatest contact with the world metropoles. Simultaneously and consequently, these national metropoles maintain an exploitative relationship with their respective provincial peripheries which is an extension of the relationship the world capitalist metropoles maintain with them. On the regional and sectoral levels as well, the provisional commercial centers which are in the economically disadvantageous position of a periphery with respect to the national and international metropoles, are for their own part in turn an exploiting metropolitan center to their respective rural hinterlands." 21

This exploitative relationship between various levels of urban centers will persist right to the local level, thus preventing the capitalist system in Kenya from arresting the rural underdevelopment. A look at how the centers came into being will reveal that they were either provincial, district or divisional colonial outposts whose primary purpose was to facilitate the colonial machinery. From the local to national levels each center was and is intimately tied to and dependent on the metropoles of other levels. Just as they have some economic power with relation to their hinterlands, the "central places" also have political and cultural power from which they derive the authority to maintain their exploitative relationship. It was the design of the colonial system, and the subsequent inheritance and maintenance of the same system by the neo-colonial Kenya, that each center sucks resources out of the periphery and uses its sanctioned power to maintain the economic, political, social and cultural structure of the periphery and its peripheral metropoles.

Nairobi, being the dominant "growth center", maintains the relationship with the international capitalist system whose interests contribute greatly to mold its (Nairobi's) urban form. This pattern of relationship shows that "the essential internal contradiction of the capitalist system
as a whole, while permitting the relative development of some, thus produces and maintains the underdevelopment of others on the international, national, regional, sectoral and local levels."

Nairobi: The Origin and Growth of a Primate City

The concept of the "primate" city seems to have been formulated into a "law" by Mark Jefferson. To Jefferson, the law refers mainly to the relationship in size and function between the largest city in a country and other cities in the same country. More specifically, it refers to the presence of one city that is clearly dominant in relation to the next largest city. Using worldwide data, Arnold Linsky found that "high urban primacy occurs most frequently in countries with small areal extent of dense population, low per capita income, export-oriented and agricultural economies, a colonial history and rapid rates of population growth." Nairobi clearly meets those conditions, as shown in the above analysis.

Since its inception, Nairobi has grown at quite a remarkable rate. Before 1899 Nairobi was used as a trading center by the Masai, Agikuyu, Akamba and Andorobo. The parties exchanged such goods as grains, livestock, vegetables and game trophies. Blacksmith products from iron, such as spearheads, arrows and axes, were also part of the lucrative business. In 1885 a visitor by the name of Joseph Thomson tells of "a flourishing trade in grain, flour, vegetables and fruit from the Kikuyu side in exchange for sheep, skins and hides from the Maasai." Whereas there is no written record of permanent settlement in the locale where Nairobi now is, there is evidence to show that there must have been a settlement especially by the Maasai who used to water their livestock in Nairobi. (Nairobi is a Maasai name for cold stream.) Andrew Hake
shows that "the point where caravans (traders from the East African coast) touched the southmost tip of the Kikuyu homeland in the Ngong-Kikuyu-Nairobi River area became the scene of a large-scale trade in commodities." He goes on to give the account of Thomson's description of trade in "enormous quantities of sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, sugar cane, Indian corn, millet, etc..., and extremely fat sheep and goats." In 1899 the railway headquarters were moved from Machakos to Nairobi. In 1905 the headquarters of the government of the Kenya Protectorate were moved from Mombasa to Nairobi. Soon after, the railway station yard and Indian and European bazaars established themselves in distinct areas of the central town. As early as 1903 definite land use zones and nuclei of future residential patterns had emerged in Nairobi, as the map on the following page demonstrates.

"Europeans began to build comfortable residences on large plots in the Nairobi Hill area to the west and northeast and in Parklands to the north. The Asians were concentrated more densely in the city center and on its northern and northeastern perimeter." The Africans who came to work in Nairobi during the early stages of its development "may be characterized as a non-industrial class of workers, many of whom were casual laborers on short term contracts. In the early part of the twenties, they worked mainly in the service sector as domestic help, rickshaw drivers and manual laborers for various government departments." Since Nairobi was an administrative center it needed literate Africans to fill various posts in the lower echelons of the colonial bureaucracy.

During this time, racial segregation in Nairobi "was reinforced by a color bar that was partly legalized by more than 100 ordinances and was partly social (denial of access to hotels, restaurants and other private
Figure 1:2 Early Nairobi c. 1903
Source: Andrew Hake, 1977 p. 25
establishments, inequality of educational opportunities, pay differentials, etc.)." 31 Africans, Asians and Europeans lived in strictly defined residential areas. Africans lived in native locations and were expected to provide their own housing and whatever amenities they cared to have. This made it necessary to begin, as early as the 1920's, the first squatter settlements* in Nairobi. It was the only way the Africans could afford to live in Nairobi, both because there were no houses provided for them and their wages were below the subsistence level. Within the city boundaries, African villages such as Pumwani (a place to rest) and Maskini (place for poor people) provided shelter, while "outside Nairobi, peri-urban settlements like Kileleshwa provided homes for workers and petty traders who commuted into town." 32

Until the mid 1930's the African workforce was directed mainly to the White Highlands* and the Public Works Department. It was only after the labor supply in the Highlands became stabilized and light industries were established in Nairobi that there began a great influx of Africans from rural areas to Nairobi. After 1945 in particular, Nairobi's economic role within Kenya and East Africa began to change very rapidly. Roger and Zwanenberg have characterized this growth in the following way:

"The City of Nairobi has grown considerably faster than any other part of the society. There has been a tendency towards the centralization of development in East Africa in Nairobi. Whatever indices one takes, it can be shown that Nairobi has drawn in the people from the countryside, foreign capital and personnel, and light industry from abroad. There seems to have been a strong tendency for Nairobi to suck in a high proportion of development resources from outside.

* The socio-historical process and patterns of squatting will be dealt with in detail in the subsequent chapters.

* Agricultural enclave alienated for European farming.
In a sense, therefore, just as Europe functions as the center of the economic system of which East African [sic] is on the periphery, so Nairobi acts as the center of the East African economic system and the other towns and cities function on the periphery."\textsuperscript{33}

The following table summarizes Nairobi's expansion from 1901 to 1969. It shows expansion both in terms of population and space.

Table 1:4

Nairobi's Growth, 1901-1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Land Area (Sq. Miles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>Asians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>11,512</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>3,582 (31.1%)</td>
<td>559 (4.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>2,665 (8.9%)</td>
<td>9,199 (30.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>5,600 (11.3%)</td>
<td>16,000 (32.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>10,400 (9.6%)</td>
<td>34,300 (31.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>21,476 (8.0%)</td>
<td>86,454 (32.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>28,765 (8.3%)</td>
<td>86,922 (25.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>19,185 (3.8%)</td>
<td>67,189 (13.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Temple, p. 32.

In spite of the fact that various methods to check African inflow into Nairobi were employed, the African population continued to grow even
during the pre-independence period. Africans' numerical preponderance did not, however, stop Europeans and Asians from regarding Nairobi as an area not suitable for African residence. The African was needed only insofar as he was providing labor. The foreigners' attitude towards Africans has been expressed very clearly by a District Officer in 1933:

"It seems only right that it should be understood that the town is a non-native area in which there is no place for the redundant native, who neither works nor serves his or her people, but forms the class from which professional agitators, the slum landlords, the liquor sellers, and other undesirable classes spring. The exclusion of these redundant natives is in the interest of natives and non-natives alike." 34

Because of those kinds of attitudes, the African laborers were paid starvation wages and continued to live in inhuman conditions. Temple notes that "the goals of the municipal authorities with regard to Africans were, however, mutually contradictory. They wanted cheap labor, segregated residential areas and protection against public health threats - all while keeping expenditure on Africans to a minimum." 35 During the period from 1932 to 1947 the Council devoted 1-2% of its net revenue to African services. 36 It was not until the mid 1950's that the necessity to provide reasonable housing to create a stable African working force was accepted.

Until the time Kenya got independence in 1963, enormous inequalities along racial lines prevailed, associated with the differential access to jobs and facilities typified by the wage and salary structure. As late as 1961, as the following table shows, the average earnings of 22,000 Europeans in wage-earning employment were over £ 1,350, compared with those of the Asians (just over £ 500) and the 350,000 Africans (about £ 75). As the ILO mission observed, "The inequalities were enormous but the sense of immediate injustice aroused by their obvious racial dimensions may have obscured their deeper implications for the long run." 37
Table 1:5

Number of enumerated* employees, average earnings and total wage bill by racial groups, 1961 and 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Africans</th>
<th>Asians</th>
<th>Europeans</th>
<th>Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons employed (000's)</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average earnings ( )</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>1,365</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total wage bill ( million)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons employes (000's)</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average earnings ( )</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>2,207</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total wage bill ( million)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In 1970 some self-employment was included but little, if any, in the informal sector.
* Totals may not add up exactly owing to rounding.

The inequalities molded the Nairobi economy in particular, and the nation's economy in general, in several ways:

1. The inequality in incomes led to a pattern of demand which in turn established a structure of supply to meet them. The supply of goods from local production and imports was sharply divided between supplies to meet the high-income luxury market and those for the low-income market.

2. The development of Nairobi was heavily influenced by the Europeans, so that building standards and the urban form in general were regulated primarily in the interests of the expatriates.

3. Multi-national firms had a natural advantage both in local manufacturing and importing manufactured goods.

4. Over time 1, 2 and 3 above molded the attitudes and aspirations
of the emerging national elite so much so that when the national independence was granted, the political aim of taking over the economy became merged almost imperceptibly with individual aspirations to take over the jobs, positions, businesses and lifestyles which the capitalist economy made possible.

Conclusion

One major problem that is caused in part by the pattern of urban development in Kenya is uneven growth. It has been shown that the Kenyan government has decided to pursue central place strategy, for regional spatial and economic development, as a means of eradicating inequality. This decision, however, has been made more as a response to the political implications of problems like excess unemployment and uncontrolled migration than a serious concern for resolving regional inequalities. In any case, this chapter has pointed out the severe limitations that make it impossible for the central place strategy to eradicate problems of inequality or to achieve balanced growth.

The growth and role of Nairobi as a primate city were also discussed. It was shown that Nairobi is a metropolis whose major role is not only to exploit its periphery, the rest of Kenya, but also to channel part of the country's wealth to the international metropoles.

As a primate city, Nairobi is a center that the majority of Kenyans tend to want to end up in. Why is this the case? Why do the peasants, young and old, educated and uneducated, men and women, find it necessary to leave their rural homes and migrate to Nairobi, where chan-
ces are, they will end up squatting? We shall attempt to answer that question in the next several chapters. But first, Chapter 2 will review critically some theories that have tried to give reasons for rural-urban migration and squatting.
Chapter 1. References

3. Ibid, p.120.
5. August Losch. The Economics of Location, translated by Wolfgang Stolper, 1944.
6. Government of Kenya. op. cit., p. 120.
7. Ibid, p.121.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
15. Ibid, p.373.
16. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
22. Ibid, p.228.


27. Ibid, p.20.

28. Ibid.


31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.


34. Ibid, p.38.

35. Ibid.


38. Ibid, p.87.
Chapter 2
Some Theories on Migration: A Critique

Introduction
In the previous chapter, we discussed the uneven development that is caused partly, but not wholly, by the rural-urban migration. There is a growing body of literature that tries to explain the causes of rural-urban migration and one of its subsequent consequences, squatting. In this chapter, we shall review some of those theories with a view to determining whether and which of them are applicable to situations like Kenya.

In particular, we shall discuss the "push-pull" theory which has, for a long time, been relied upon as offering adequate explanation of rural-to-urban migration. A second theory to be considered is that of "two-sector internal trade-model with employment" formulated by John Harris and Michael Todaro. We shall argue that those theories do not offer adequate explanation for the causes of migration. By and large, such theories are inadequate explanations because they do not go deep enough to unearth the fundamental structural factors that create rural-urban, or in some cases, rural to rural-enclave, e.g., large-scale farming, as an integral part of the economy. In my view, migration and squatting are features of organization of labor in an underdeveloped capitalist economy.

Secondly, there will be a discussion of some theoretical positions on squatting. Shortage of housing is seen by many scholars as the major cause of squatting. Champions of this view, who do not bother to
explain why there is shortage of housing for a certain class of people in the first place, include Charles Abrams, Charles Maar and William Mangin. John Turner bends towards this theory, but he champions more in offering the solutions, themselves ineffective, to the squatting problem. Another view to be discussed is the one which sees squatting as primarily a legal problem.

In our view, the above theories offer neither valid explanations nor effective solutions to the migration and squatting problems.

One of the factors that many studies consider to be an important cause of squatting is migration from rural areas to the cities. Migration studies frequently rely upon either a "push" or a "pull" theory as the main explanation for the movement of the people from the backward and poor rural areas to the advanced and rich urban areas. The city "pulls" while the rural area "pushes". The city attracts because the employment opportunities (especially in the industrial sector), social services, and other amenities have, over time, become concentrated in the largest cities.\(^1\) Secondly, the minimum wages in the industrial sector, however low they may be in absolute terms, tend to be comparatively higher than those in the agricultural sector. On the other hand, rapid population growth, the mechanization of commercial agriculture and the acute shortage of new cultivatable land have put extreme pressures on rural employment opportunities, argues Martinez Rios.\(^2\) Octavio Ianni is of the same opinion. He sees cityward migration as related to the "changes in the technical and social conditions of production in several of the agricultural regions....Little by little capitalistic technology in the rural areas expanded, producing unemployment and the expulsion of
a portion of the labor force.³

As to the question of who migrates, the students of modernization have this to say: "rural dwellers who choose to avail themselves of this opportunity for socio-economic mobility tend to be younger, better educated, and more skilled occupationally than the average economically active resident in their community of origin."⁴ Kemper adds that the migrants tend to be positively selective as compared to other residents of their community of origin, in terms of such traits as innovativeness and achievement orientation.⁵

John Harris and Michael Todaro⁶ have formulated a rather sophisticated migration model which has influenced migration studies. They, however, regard their model as "extremely simple". As they suggest, the model could be described as "a two-sector internal trade model with unemployment."⁷ The two sectors are urban and rural. The central assumption in this model is that cityward migration will always occur as long as "the expected urban real income at the margin exceeds real agricultural product -- i.e., prospective rural migrants behave as maximizers of expected utility."⁸ Hence, the term induced migration. That means "the greater the urban-rural wage differential, the more responsive expectations to increased probabilities of finding a job."⁹ Similarly, if the economy is less sensitive to prices and marginal products in the agricultural sector, the result will be greater migration induced by creation of an additional job in the urban sector.

Analyzed critically, however, this model only builds upon what we have discussed in the preceding pages. All that has been introduced into
the variables -- the gap in income between the city and countryside and
the possibility of being employed in the city -- is an abundance of eco-
nomic jargon. There are at least three major problems with the model.
The first two are limitations admitted by the authors. These limitations
are: the model is "gained only through compromises with reality," and
secondly, the model's analysis is extremely static in character. Above
those two limitations, we argue that the most critical problem with the
formulation and, therefore, also with the general push-pull hypothesis,
is that the approach is descriptive rather than explanatory. Whereas the
proponents deal with some variables (like income differentials and lack
of social amenities) that might lead to migration, they do not show dia-
lectically the causes for the need to migrate cityward. The situation
does not just spring from nowhere. They do not tell us why the town al-
ready is in actual fact the concentration of the population, of the in-
struments of production, of capital, of pleasures, of needs, while the
country demonstrates just the opposite fact: their isolation and separ-
ation. Why is it necessary to have the division of labor between the
urban and country? Without dealing with such fundamental questions, I
do not see how adequate explanation of migration can be given.

In our view, the spatial regional distribution of various factors
is primarily a result of a pattern of development which, as in the case
of Kenya and many other countries, especially Latin America, Africa and
Asia, has been characterized by capitalist penetration within the poli-
tical framework of colonialism and neo-colonialism (this is a point we
shall discuss more fully later in this study).
There are empirical studies that have discredited the importance of push-pull factors in migration. Germani found no correlation between the degree of rural poverty and the tendency to migrate. He believes instead that "objective factors are filtered through the attitudes and decisions of the individuals....Therefore, rural-urban migration is not merely a symptom, a demographic fact, and a response to a certain economic pressure, but also the expression of a mental change."¹² In his study of Brazilian rural areas of varying degrees of poverty and economic-climate depression, Werner Baer found no greater migration was evident from areas where push factors should have been strongest.¹³ In her empirical study of Brazil, Perlman found the following to be the case.¹⁴

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Migrating</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic concern</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or health reasons</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to join a relative or spouse, escape from a difficult situation, find a husband or wife, or get medical treatment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push factors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., natural disaster, climatic or soil conditions, or &quot;acts of God&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull factors</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(attraction of the city)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military service or other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tabulation demonstrates that the "push" and "pull" factors account for only 7 percent of the reasons for rural-urban migration in Brazil.

McGee, too, has examined the conventional theories concerning the
nature of migration and squatting. His conclusions are that the theories are inapplicable to the situation that now prevails in South and South-east Asia. He questions very strongly the assumption that decisions to migrate are made with full knowledge of the variables of income and potential employment. In the largest cities, McGee argues, the rates of growth are double that of the national population, unemployment is high and poverty and squalor are a major part of the city life. The question that McGee poses is what sense it makes for a peasant, who has full knowledge of the hostile conditions in the cities, to migrate. Or, in other words, could a squatter have done otherwise under the prevailing rural conditions? Even before he migrates, the peasant is already part of a system which causes him to make the decisions the way he does. Without a clear understanding of the roots of that system, it will be difficult to understand why rural people migrate, and eventually become squatters.

The popular approaches to the study of squatting consider squatting as basically a consequence of urbanization and industrialization; hence, the proliferation of squatter settlements is seen to be a function of variables such as inadequate housing, cityward migration and high rates of unemployment. Charles Abrams regards the squatter's shack to be a mark of industrialization in the developing countries, just like the urban slum was the mark of industrialization in Europe and later in America. "Squatting", argues Abrams, "is triggered by many factors -- enforced migration of refugees because of fear, hunger, or rural depression, the quest for subsistence in the burgeoning urban areas, and simple opportunism. Usually, it is the byproduct of urban landlessness and housing fam-
There are other scholars who, like Abrams, treat squatting as primarily a housing problem. Charles Maar, Marcia N. Koth, and William Mangin consider housing as the most spectacular among many other problems associated with rapid urbanization. David Collier, in his study of squatters in Lima, Peru, argues that "their [squatters] appearance was unquestionably accelerated and facilitated by the Peruvian government." However, he hastens to contend that "it should be emphasized that squatter settlements would have unquestionably played an important role in the growth of Lima without government intervention."

To the above school of thought a legal dimension is added by scholars such as Mary Hollinsteiner. She sees the legal status of land and the unwillingness of the planners to work with people in solving their housing needs as the major impediment to successful amelioration of the squatters' housing needs in Manila.

John Turner has two major points concerning the squatter problem. First is in the psychological sphere. He argues that one finds satisfaction in owning or possessing something that he can say is his. Hence, he advocates for self-help housing and lower-standard housing that will eventually lead to squatters' "legal" ownership of their shelters. He and Don Terner start from the hypothesis that

"When dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contributions in the design, construction, or management of their housing, both this process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being..."

Second, John Turner argues that the governments charge the poor people for what they do not consume. In this respect, we agree with him except that
he does not see the problem from a structural point of view, but as simple corruption.

All the above theoretical positions point to the same policy implications as far as the squatting problem is concerned. They advocate squatters' participation in the market systems that operate within the same socio-economic structures that produced the problems in the first place. At best, they advocate transfer payments to ensure minimal adequate standards of housing. As we shall contend in this study, implementation of such policies will not solve the squatters' problems. Whereas we respect and admire the organization and ingenuity of the squatters in planning land invasions, negotiating with governments for basic services, etc., we agree with Diego Rivas that in the final analysis, "the interests of the elite are better served by this hidden subsidy from the labor and scarce capital than are the interests of the poor themselves who really need jobs and a fairer distribution of income."23

Conclusion

We have reviewed two views, migration and housing, that are frequently used to explain squatting. As far as migration is concerned, we discussed the "push-pull" theory and the Harris-Todaro Model. The positions of some others that see housing as the major cause of squatting were also discussed. It was argued that as explanations the theories are not adequate. Even a more serious shortcoming is the policy implications of the theories. The authors do not put the migration and squatting phenomena into a structural context. They assume that the capitalist system can be turned around and solve the problem. As we have stated
earlier, this assumption is wrong.

There is an obvious contradiction of the capitalist system as far as migration-squatting-employment is concerned. The government encourages, sometimes by use of force and in other cases even finances, migration because the system thrives under cheap labor. But simultaneously, the government demolishes those people's houses. It is, therefore, only by understanding the varying needs and demands of the capitalist system that we can adequately explain migration and squatting. That is exactly what the next chapter will do.
Chapter 2. References

19. See David Collier, *Squatters of Lima, Peru*.
20. *Ibid*.

Chapter 3

The Roots of Squatting in Kenya: An Historical Overview

"From about the year 1902 increasing numbers of white men arrived, and portions of our land began to be given out to them for farms, until large areas in Kyambu, Limoru, Kikuyu, Mbagathi, about Nairobi, and at Ruiru and beyond, had been disposed of this way. These lands were not bought from their Kikuyu owners, and any compensation they received [for land actually under cultivation only, and at an extremely small rate per acre] was quite inadequate. The natives on them had either to become squatters [on what had been their own land] or else move off. Many of them to-day are squatters on up-country European estates and many have become wanderers, moving from one estate to another."

-- Extract from a memorandum presented to the Parliamentary Commission (of the United Kingdom) in November, 1924, by the Kikuyu (Native) Association.

Introduction

As we traced the growth of Nairobi into a primate city, we noted briefly some discriminatory practices used by the colonial government to actively discourage African dwelling in the city. An immediate response to that discrimination was the rise of the first squatter settlements around Nairobi. But even though the discrimination may indicate the form that squatting took or where it was located, it cannot adequately account for the material conditions that spawned squatting in the first place. That is to say, it hardly explains the social origins of squatting as a phenomenon that arose in a particular period of Kenya's history.

Similarly, however, squatting cannot be any better understood as a "natural" and incidental byproduct of "modernization"; nor should it be posed simply as the logical outcome of African peasants leaving a subsistence sector in which their "marginal productivity" was zero, as some theorists would have us believe. On the contrary, we believe, squatting
in Kenya arose directly out of the capitalist development the British imposed on Kenya. It is, therefore, for more than mere historical interest that we will trace squatting in Kenya to its roots; for it is only by analyzing squatting at the moment of its inception that we can really grasp the social forces and circumstances that interacted to give rise to it.

Several things are outstanding in this regard. To begin with, the British alienated massive tracts of land from African control by political means. Second, the colonial government also utilized various measures to "supply" labor to the settler plantations that grew up. It was as a direct consequence of these that the increasing proletarianization of the African peasantry took place. By that, we refer to "the increasingly 'necessary' character of African participation in the labor market, and hence the closing off over time of available alternative means of getting a livelihood."¹ This entails an entire process of social transformation through which Africans increasingly took up waged employment or had to spend a sizeable part of their time seeking such employment either in the agricultural economy or in the urban center. We will show in this chapter and the next one that this process engendered first rural squatting, and then urban squatting. This chapter will include detailed discussions of the process mentioned, analyzing the various measures used by the British to deliberately develop the European sector, and underdevelop the African sector.

Theoretically, our framework borrows from Giovanni Arrighi's work on the African peasantry in Rhodesia.* At the same time, we provide a

critique of the theoretical viewpoint of W. Lewis, and the analyses that have been influenced by his work. It will become clear that what amounts to abstract theorizing (on the part of Lewis), uninformed by deeper insights into African society, cannot accurately explain the issues that concern us here.

Colonialism and the Land Issue

To begin with, we shall try to define colonialism. Colonialism is a system of rule which assumes the right of one people to impose their will upon another (Brett, 1973). This inevitably leads to a situation of dominance and dependency which will systematically subordinate those governed by it to the imported culture in social, economic, and political life. To get the maximum out of Kenya, the British colonial power had to destroy the traditional social structures which were not conducive to the type of economy they wished to introduce. And this is the point in history at which the story of colonialism in Kenya begins. The story of colonialism is essentially a description of the beginning of underdevelopment of one people (Africans), on the one hand, and on the other, the development of capitalism for the benefit of the British Empire, and at the local level, of white settlers and European industrialists. What was African undevelopment was turned into the underdevelopment of Kenya (Rodney, 1972).

The first steps in alienating the African land from the Africans were taken in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1895, the British government took over the British East Africa, hereafter referred

plies in Historical Context: A Study of Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia."
to as Kenya, from the Imperial British East Africa Company. In 1897, the Foreign Office of the British government issued a new set of Regulations with regard to land ownership in Kenya. The Regulations empowered the Commissioner to grant to any person a certificate authorizing him to hold land and occupy the land described in it for a term not exceeding twenty-one years and at the end of which the permission would be renewed. 2

When he got to know Kenya better, Sir Harry Johnson sent a report to the British government in 1900, wherein he remarked that in the eastern part of Uganda there was "a country almost without parallel in tropical Africa." He described this country as "admirably well watered, with fertile soil, cool and perfectly healthy climate and covered with noble forests." He concluded that the country is "as healthy for European settlers as the United Kingdom, British Columbia, or temperate South Africa. ...I am able to say decidedly that here we have a territory admirably suited for a white man's country." (Ross)

In response to that report, the British government authorized the Commissioner "to grant to any person, if he thinks fit, a certificate authorizing him to hold and occupy the portion of land described in the certificate for a term not exceeding ninety-nine years." However, this Regulation stated further that "no certificate would be granted in respect of any land which was lawfully held and occupied by any person, whether a native or not a native, who held such land under a documentary title which Her Majesty's Commissioner was prepared to recognize." (Ross) It is important to note here that not a single African in Kenya then had any such documentary title. That left all the land in the country at the disposal of the Commissioner to parcel out as he thought "fit".
When Sir Charles Eliot became the Governor in Kenya, his conception of the future of the country was very clear; the railway was meant to open up the interior and that heralded the creation of a white man's country. With this notion as his central theme, "he made suggestions for improving administration and investigating the commercial possibilities of the country."\(^4\)

Around 1900, the British colonial government in Kenya, in collaboration with its mother government in London, was considering a policy of using Indians for economic development in Kenya. In 1901, Commissioner Eliot, reacting to mounting pressure for concrete steps toward economic development, approved the immigration of Indian agricultural settlers (Wolff, 1974). In 1902, Crown Lands Ordinance was enacted. It enabled Commissioner Eliot and his successors to dispense land "on such terms and conditions as he may think fit...." During the same year, Eliot supported land grants, free seed distribution, and agricultural loans to Indian settlers in the highlands of Kenya. However, efforts in recruiting Indian settlers failed and were totally abandoned in 1905 in favor of mounting interests of Europeans who wanted to come to settle in Kenya. Tracts of land at very little or no cost were alienated from African peasants. Where a little cost was involved, it was paid not to the African landowner, but to the colonial government. As the table below indicates, by 1906 there were as many as 4,756 Europeans (a good many of them from South Africa) who had come and settled in Kenya.

To increase the influx of Europeans into Kenya, the colonial government did everything possible to make the conditions for the European extremely favorable. In a kind of advertisement fashion, the government
declared in 1906 that "white people can live and will live here [in Kenya], not as colonists performing manual labor, as in Canada or New Zealand, but as planters, etc., overseeing natives doing the work of development."5

TABLE 3:1. European Population in Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Europeans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1,814</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1905, the government formulated a policy that granted exclusive rights to Europeans in the Highlands -- henceforth known as the White Highlands (Norman Leys, 1925). Some Indians were permitted, by the same policy, to enter and remain as retail traders or as laborers and to settle in lands deemed unsuitable for and unwanted by Europeans (Wolff, p. 55).

The land given to the European settlers is situated in the region of Kenya generally most favorable to agricultural production. As Figures 3:1 and 3:2 indicate, the areas thus alienated were among those with the highest and most advantageous levels of precipitation. The area totaled 35,000 square miles and about 90 percent of it is over 4,500 feet above sea level. By 1914, as much as 3,138,745 acres of the best land in the
country was alienated for the Europeans' settlement.

**TABLE 3:2. Land Alienated to Europeans in Selected Years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Holdings Allocated</th>
<th>Acreage Allocated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Pastoral</td>
<td>Fibers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>3,991</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>14,520</td>
<td>193,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>26,126</td>
<td>329,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>18,394</td>
<td>350,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>7,370</td>
<td>601,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>14,052</td>
<td>494,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>9,635</td>
<td>630,005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


World War I interrupted the inflow of settlers and the alienation of land to Europeans, but the end of it offered new opportunities to stimulate white immigration. In 1919, the government formulated a policy which was given enthusiastic support by the settlers already established in the White Highlands. This policy paved the way for the preparation of the soldiers' scheme. As a result, a further 2.5 million acres were given out as free farms. By 1920 the government had alienated more land for Europeans than they were able to utilize. Table 3:3 shows the European land uses as compared to land available to them.

The major consequence which the overall land policies from 1900 to 1930 had was the discriminative spatial population distribution by race. The policies favored the white settlers against the Africans. In 1915, the Crown Lands Ordinance provided for the conversion of 99-year to 999-
Figure 3:1. Patterns of Rainfall in Kenya

Settlement in Kenya in the 1920s

year leases for the land owned by the white settlers. It reduced the rents and the minimum values of the required improvements.

TABLE 3:3. European Land Uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Land Development, 1920-1930</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land occupied (acres)</td>
<td>3,157,440</td>
<td>5,111,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land cultivated (acres)</td>
<td>176,290</td>
<td>643,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion under cultivation</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land used for livestock (acres)</td>
<td>1,137,354</td>
<td>2,054,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of European occupiers</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>2,097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Land Use in 1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land available to Europeans (acres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land alienated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed land available for alienation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Land not used, in proportion to land available = 64.8%


The land given to the Europeans had to be withdrawn from the ownership of Africans. Since in the process Africans were deprived of enough land on which they lived, the next thing to be done was to make policies concerning the African habitat. In 1905 a policy designating areas as "native reserves" was formulated. It is important to note here that "fixed reserve boundaries were not simply measures to keep people within defined areas but a policy which greatly reduced most people's opportuni-
ties for:

"a) developing their flocks and herds for the market;

b) continuing their traditional intertribal marketplace economy; and

c) adjusting to natural conditions by migration. The Reserve boundaries significantly altered the ecological balance between man, animals, and land." 6

In response to the Africans' bitter protests that ensued, the government ruled that "regardless of native land tenure systems, all land -- even that which was 'reserved for natives' -- remained Crown land. All natives remained tenants-at-will of the British Crown." 7

To begin with, the policy established specific "native reserves" for the tribes whose land had been taken away. But, gradually, this pattern was extended to other areas and tribes. Corollarily, the same move served "to establish firmly an administrative policy of setting precise limits on European 'areas'" (Wolff) into which it was illegal for an African to go without permission. This was as true of areas in the countryside as it was of urban areas. Because of a lack of good land, Africans crowded around the outskirts of the towns that had begun to emerge. But the growing European and Indian populations sought to expand outwards from the town centers. This made the government once again take away the lands Africans had occupied. Especially in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Eldoret, which were located close to European-settled areas, the Africans were removed to specified "locations" further removed from the urban center.

What we have tried to show in that section is the process through which the British colonial government in Kenya rearranged the geographic
distribution of black, brown (Indian) and white populations. The government policies that were adopted shifted control of land resources much as they moved populations, all with the purpose of creating conditions under which one group of people will benefit over another.

European Agriculture and African Labor

In a fully developed capitalist system, it is not entirely necessary for the state power to be applied in directing labor; once capital is monopolized by the minority the corresponding inability of the majority to produce independently ties them to the owners of capital. The situation ensures that the majority poor will always be available at a price which the owners of capital are willing to pay. In a capitalist system during the period of primitive accumulation, however, it is necessary for the government power to be used for direction of labor. Kenya was in this stage during the period immediately preceding World War I. In the 1910s and the early 1920s, the European settlers found it difficult to recruit labor from among the peasants. The difficulty emanated from two factors. First, the African peasant was not interested in working as a wage earner for the white settlers. Second, around this time the colonial government was using a considerable amount of African labor in building the railway and roads. The white settlers, therefore, had to compete for labor with both the peasant agriculture and the Public Works Department. Under these circumstances, the settlers inevitably "turned to the state, committed already to provide them with many of their requirements, to put its coercive capacity more directly at their disposal and force labor out of the (African) reserves and on to the farms." To
this end the white farmers mounted a campaign with two objectives in mind -- to ensure the maximum flow of labor out of the reserves, and to keep wages in the public sector as low as possible.

The theory of the supply and demand of labor within an underdeveloped capitalist economy in Africa has been greatly influenced by the work of W.A. Lewis. Lewis proposed a two-sector model of labor reallocation from a low productivity "subsistence sector" to a high productivity "capitalist sector" (Arrighi, 1973). Lewis argues that the peasant marginal productivity is zero. That means that there is, in the subsistence farming, a surplus labor (or disguised unemployment) because "a part of the labor force could be withdrawn without causing a reduction in total output, or at least without causing a reduction greater than the amount of means of subsistence customarily allocated to them." In this kind of a situation, a good part of the labor force will be prepared to leave the subsistence farming to seek employment in the capitalist sector, where wages are expected to be much higher than the value of production in the former sector. Therefore, because of inexhaustible supply of cheap labor, the capitalist sector will expand indefinitely without an increase in wages becoming necessary to attract the growing amounts of labor. This position bears striking semblance with the "push-pull" hypothesis in the migration studies; the subsistence sector is predominantly in the rural areas (although it also has its counterpart in the "urban subsistence" sector, otherwise known as the informal sector) and the capitalist sector is like the city that attracts

and pulls labor from the countryside.

Another central assumption in the Lewis theory is that "the entire surplus is always reinvested in a way that increases the demand for labor."\(^{10}\) As the system matures, the "surplus of labor" in the subsistence sector will finally disappear. If in the unlikely event the wages rise before the system matures, the capitalist accumulation will be slowed down. This event may occur if the average productivity in the subsistence sector increases. Such increases would occur if any of the following reasons prevail:

(a) the expansion of the capitalist sector is rapid enough to reduce the absolute population in the subsistence sector;

(b) there is substantial technological increase in the subsistence sector; and

(c) the terms of trade turn against the capitalist sector.\(^{11}\)

Besides the Lewis theory being apolitical, its basic assumption with regard to Africa is highly questionable. This assumption is that the development of capitalism in Africa was exclusively a function of market forces.

Let us take different facets of Lewis' theory and weigh them, using the experiences from Kenya. First, I shall deal with the notion that the peasants' marginal productivity is zero. This notion has its origin in the colonialists' attitude towards the African peasant. By asserting that Africans were lazy, the colonialists merely sought to justify first the taking away of the Africans' land, and next, forcing the natives to work for the settlers. The Europeans claimed that in Kenya, males, especially the young and able-bodied, were idle and that they would benefit
from working in the European plantations.

A more serious observation on the African life pattern will show that their so-called marginal productivity is nowhere near zero, let alone zero. (We shall show later that there was a high probability that the peasant's participation in wage labor resulted in negative productivity for him and his family.) To show that the Africans were not idle, Chief Wambugu observed that:

"...in the shambas [cultivated land] all helped. The men cut the grass and dug up the soil, the women and men weeded, the women planted and harvested and the men did the grain-store construction. Men plant yams. Each section had its work."

I can support Wambugu's observation with my personal experiences in peasantry farming. If one did not know the African people well and came to the villages during a given season, one might think that a whole lot of Africans never worked. If one came during the beans' harvesting season, for instance, one may conclude that it is only women who worked. One may not at all realize that the men had done their part in digging up the ground. Or, if one found women plastering the grain-store or a house, and men resting under the shadow of a tree, it would be easy to conclude that only women work at all in the society. A casual observer may not know that it was the men who cut and carried the building poles and did the building. The peasant economy is such that the work done by members of one sex or one age-group is complementary to that done by the others.

J. Van Velson, too, has challenged the "fallacies" in the notion of "leisure" or idleness of Africans. He argues:
"Those who hold this notion seem to think that unless people are working manually they are not using their time gainfully... If a similar view were adopted for an industrialized European society all judges listening to cases in court, all those bankers or business managers concluding important contracts... and all those not actually using muscle power or even pushing a pen would be considered to be enjoying "leisure" instead of working for livelihood. This would of course be wholly unrealistic. It is equally unrealistic to think that people in tribal societies are indulging in unprofitable leisure unless they are handling a hoe or an axe or are doing other physical labor. When men and women are sitting together chances are that they are not just wasting their time in idle talk but are in fact settling a dispute over, say, garden boundaries or are discussing the desirability of moving a village to a better site or, again, are arguing about the merits of some new farming techniques... These are activities which vitally affect the welfare of individuals or the community as a whole." 13

Various economic and financial analyses have been used to suggest that in countries where there is a low degree of industrialization, there are periods when no alternative agricultural employment exists, and, therefore, a seasonal "surplus labor" is observed. "During those seasons, the opportunity cost of family labor can be considered as zero."14 The arguments these scholars put forward are rational but only to a limited degree. We maintain that whereas it is easy to rationalize that the opportunity cost to peasant labor is zero or close to zero, the withdrawal of one portion of the population from subsistence economy puts a big burden on those left in the subsistence, while at the same time the peasants hardly ever benefit from participation in the wage labor. This was the case in Kenya during the period under consideration, as we shall show below.

Let us accept, for the purpose of argument, that the marginal productivity of a peasant is zero and, therefore, the opportunity cost to a
peasant's availability for wage labor is also zero or close to it. Mkulima,* who is the head of a peasant household, gives up his subsistence farming in favor of employment in wage labor in the capitalist sector. His withdrawal from the peasant farming does not reduce the total output. Let us further make the assumption that the subsistence level in the part of the country where Mkulima works is Shs. 220 per month. But Mkulima is employed at Shs. 180 per month. What does this mean to Mkulima and his family? It means that he either leads a life which is below the poverty datum line or he must be subsidized by his wife from the peasantry farming. Mkulima's withdrawal from peasantry farming, therefore, will have a high cost to his family who by subsidizing him will have to live less well while they have to work harder.

Mkulima is employed in wage labor, and yet he has ended up becoming a "parasite" on his family.

The idea of the laborer being subsidized by his family is not a farfetched one. David Leonard, quoting Mahmoud Mamdani, points out that:

"...wage employment for Africans was generally insufficient to support the laborer's family and often himself. The worker was therefore dependent upon the agricultural farming of his wife, tying him integrally to the peasant sector...the very act of employing Africans involved an extraction of value from the peasantry, for the employee had to be subsidized by his family." 15

A deeper analysis of our argument will show that the cost was not only paid in quantifiable economic terms. The nonquantifiable costs, such as the psychological consequences of the head of the family staying

*Swahili word for a peasant.
away for months on end are also great. The social relations between the husband/father and his wife/children will be negatively affected by the fact that he has been away for so long, and in the end brings nothing home. From my own observations, men who were faced with such a situation would rather end up squatting in the city than return to bear the inevitable shame. In the final analysis, therefore, the peasant's participation in that kind of economy has a negative productivity to his family.

What the above case shows us is that a casual observation of the peasant's life pattern may make economic analysts conclude that the peasant's marginal productivity is zero. In hypothetical terms, that may make some sense. Still, the analysis is incomplete, and certainly misleading, without a proper consideration of the type of economy the peasant actually participates in. Under wage labor in a capitalist economy, the worker depends solely on his real income since he does not benefit from the profits of his productivity.

The other aspect of Lewis' theory to be considered here is the market mechanism and its relation to peasant labor. Lewis posits that since wages in the capitalist sector are high, the peasants will be attracted to it and the wages will determine whether or not the laborers will stay in wage labor. My position is that it is political mechanisms rather than market forces that "cause" African peasants to participate in the capitalist sector in Kenya. Barber, who applied Lewis' theory, argues that the labor shortages during the preliminary years "were due to a 'delay' in African response to market opportunities for increasing their incomes and that extra-economic factors played the role of leading
the African peoples on to the path of rational behavior."\textsuperscript{16} Our analysis will show that after many years of savoring the "market opportunities", Africans realized their real incomes did not increase, and the only rational decision they could make was to quit wage labor -- a decision that would have been carried out were it not for certain "extra-economic factors".

After a sizeable number of Europeans had settled in Kenya, "the African population was regarded simply and solely as a labor-force for the planters and farmers."\textsuperscript{17} That was a view as much cherished by the government as it was by the planters and settlers. In its first Labour Circular in October, 1919, the government showed concern over the fact that:

"...there appears to be still considerable shortage of labor in certain areas due to reluctance of the tribesmen to come out into the labor field; as it is the wish of the government that they should do so, His Excellency desires once again to bring the matter to the notice of Provincial and District Commissioners, and at the same time to state that he sincerely hopes that by an insistent advocacy of the government's wishes in this connection that an increasing supply of labor will result." \textsuperscript{18}

The same circular, which McGregor Ross considered to be the evidence of the "high-water mark of exploitation by a British Government in our times," continues to stress that the larger and more continuous the flow of labor is from the peasantry sector, the more satisfactory will be the relations between the native people and the settlers, and between the latter and the government. Through the circular, the government officials were reminded that it was their duty to ensure a constant and sufficient level of labor in the plantations. This they had to do by exercising "every possible lawful influence to induce able-bodied male
natives to go into the labor field." And where firms were situated in the vicinity of a native area, women and children should be encouraged to go out for such labor as they can perform (Brett, 1973). In response to the circular, the District Commissioner of Kiambu, one of the main labor-supplying areas, issued his own circular directed mainly to the settlers. He informed them that as he understood from the Labour Circular No. 1, a considerable amount of additional labor was required to get in the coffee crop, and "as I intend to arrange for a temporary supply of child labor from the Reserves, I shall be glad if any coffee grower who may like to employ these children will write his name hereon, stating the number required, the time for which they may be most needed."20

The Resident Natives Ordinance, as the Labour Circular was called, was used to recruit 2,208 laborers between February and December, 1920.21 However, direct forced labor was in operation for just a short time. It was abandoned because it was severely criticized from two circles: the liberals and humanitarians in the United Kingdom; and the Church circles in Kenya. In the latter case, though, only the Bishop of Zanzibar condemned forced labor outright, while other Church leaders were more ambiguous; they accepted the need for some compulsion in the interests of "economic development", while expressing concern that the methods laid down were subject to abuse by labor recruiters (Brett).

In view of the opposition mounted against direct forced labor, the government switched onto more subtle policies which worked just as effectively. These policies were taxation and prevention of Africans
Taxation and Services

Brett has observed that "the State's ability to create an economic infrastructure depends upon its capacity to extract a surplus from the population, and the way it invests that surplus determines the economic life-chances of the various actual or potential groups engaged in production. It is therefore necessary to ask questions about the extractive and investment stages of the cycle, in simple terms to ask who pays and who receives, how much and for what purposes." During the early periods of building a settler community in Kenya, the situation was such that the Africans paid and the Europeans received. This is because the settler sector required a very costly level of services in order to meet the expectations created by the government which had invited them in the first place. But the settler sector did not have the means to pay for such services. Hence, the government turned to the only other productive element in the economy, the African peasant sector, to pay for the services required by the European sector. This was done through taxation. The other equally important function to be fulfilled through taxation was to create in the peasant sector an urgent need for a cash income.

When Africans were required to pay tax for the first time, in 1901, it was left open to them to pay in cash or in kind. In some areas, a sheep or a goat was accepted in lieu of two rupees; in others, farm produce was accepted in lieu of cash or livestock. In 1903 the Hut Tax Ordinance was introduced. This demanded that a male had to pay tax on...
every hut -- that meant for every wife -- he had. In 1903, the Africans were required to pay the Hut and Poll Tax. The tax was raised from 2 to 3 rupees, which was still payable in cash or in kind. However, when in 1919 the demand for labor became high, a piece of legislation was enacted that required the tax to be paid only in cash. That was shortly after the direct forced labor was abandoned. In 1922, a Dispatch was sent out which pointed out to the local authorities that while "...no actual force can be employed to compel a man to go out to work, he can, however, be made to pay his tax." Three months later, the Hut and Poll Tax was raised from 10 s. to 16 s. (Brett, Wolff).

The Governor in Kenya then threw more light on the function of the Hut and Poll Tax: "...we consider that taxation is...compelling the native to leave his Reserve for the purpose of seeking work." Nor was taxation introduced as a means for raising the incomes of the Africans. This idea is supported by an opinion from a government official who confided to another concerning this matter. According to a senior district official in Nyanza Province then, "...taxation has been imposed upon natives more with the intention of producing cheap manual labor than of conferring benefits on them" (Brett). On the other hand, Europeans did not pay tax because, according to the government then, "...taxation on Europeans reduced their incentive to produce while that on Africans forced them to engage in modern economic pursuits which would not otherwise have interested them."

From the above presentation it becomes clear that a taxation system of that kind only increased poverty and dependence in the "native re-
serves" by a net transfer of resources out of them. The system forced a large percentage of the able-bodied men to get out to work in the private sector and simultaneously, through low wages and high taxes, supply the sector with the surplus used to build up its productive capacity.

Where the need to raise cash to pay the Poll Tax benefited the white settlers, the cash generated from the taxes was invaluable to the government budgets. The table below shows the Hut and Poll Tax's share of the overall tax revenue.

| TABLE 3:4. Kenya: Receipts from Main Heads of Taxation 1920-1939 (£000s) (four-year averages) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                 | 1920-1923 %     | 1924-1929 %     | 1930-1935 %     | 1935-1939 %     |
| Customs and     | 337 36          | 788 48          | 672 42          | 850 47          |
| Excise          |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Native Hut and  | 458 50          | 553 34          | 542 35          | 527 29          |
| Poll Tax        |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Other Taxation  | 128 14          | 285 18          | 358 23          | 433 24          |
|                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| TOTAL           | 923 100         | 1,626 100       | 1,572 100       | 1,810 100       |

Source: Brett, p. 192.

From the table, we find Africans must have contributed nearly 70 percent in the first of the above periods, almost 50 percent in the second, slightly more in the third, and probably just less than 40 percent in the fourth.

An important question to raise is how Africans benefited from the government in terms of the services they received. The answer, very
simply, is very little, if anything at all. In terms of infrastructure, the African Reserves made do without roads, hospitals and certainly recreational facilities. It has been argued by some historians that Africans benefited from the schools that the colonial government introduced. But a look at the government expenditure on education in the 1930s and even as late as the 1940s questions seriously the kind of benefits the Africans obtained. "For every shilling spent by the Government on an African child at school in 1945, 150 were spent on a European counterpart. A comparison of expenditure per head on children of school age shows that the Government spent 500 times as much on a European child as it spent on an African child."\(^{25}\)

**TABLE 3:5. Government Expenditure on European and African Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>European Education</th>
<th>African Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Pupils in All Schools</td>
<td>Government Expenditure per Head of All Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>49,814</td>
<td>1,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>151,215</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Aaronovitch, p. 139.

The same imbalance in the government's expenditure on different races could be established for other services. In the late 1930s, the Chief Native Commissioner himself admitted that "...from my experience of
ten years, the very large bulk of the expenditure of taxation derived from both native and other populations has been poured into the 6,000,000 acres [European land] to the detriment of the remainder.”26 A commission that was set up later to look into the question of taxation and services argued that "the natives had long paid an ample contribution towards revenue considering the services provided in return, whereas the settlers enjoyed all amenities of civilization in return for a relatively light scale of contribution."27

Conclusion

By way of concluding, let us review some of the points raised in this chapter. British colonialism marked the beginning of a process of capitalist penetration and consolidation in Kenya. This four-decade-long process owed little to fortuitous circumstances. Anxious from the outset that the colony was to profit the Empire, British officials designed the expropriation of African land by political and military measures.* But if the expropriation of land was a necessary material condition for capitalist development, it was obviously not sufficient.

The alienation of land from African control both provided the basis of an African labor force as well as created a need for it. "Freeing" the African from his land also meant "freeing" him to work the settler plantations if capitalist agriculture were to succeed. It was precisely their astute understanding of this that led the British to implement Hut and Poll Taxes, coerce labor, utilize female and child labor, etc., in order to get capitalist development going. We should derive a more

*Five "punitive raids" against the Nandi in 1895, 1900, 1902, 1903, and 1905 brought the British not only the bulk of Nandi territory, but also their livestock (Wolff, p. 65).
general point here: under capitalism, it is a mistake to distinguish between the exploitation of natural resources and the exploitation of labor.

Furthermore, the taxes and the extremely low wages paid to labor performed another important function. The taxes directly subsidized infrastructural development in the European sector. An indirect subsidy came from paying less than subsistence wages: the difference between subsistence and the wage was "offset" by the family's contribution. In terms of various social services, therefore, not only was the African sector neglected, it was underdeveloped in order to develop the European sector. We might make an additional general point: underdevelopment and development went side-by-side. Landlessness, the underdevelopment of the African sector, and increasing proletarianization thus formed the material basis of squatting.

It is unnecessary to repeat our critique of W.A. Lewis' theory here. Suffice it to compare that whereas he believed the supply and demand of labor obeyed economic laws, for instance, a more informed man, Charles Eliot, thought quite differently:

"I think it well that in confidential correspondence at least, we should face the undoubted issue -- viz., that white mates black in a very few moves... There can be no doubt that the Masai and many other tribes must go under. It is a prospect which I view with equanimity and a clear conscience." 28 (emphasis added)
Chapter 3. References


2. W. McGregor Ross, Kenya from Within, London (1927), p. 44.

3. Ibid., p. 47.


10. Ibid., p. 181.

11. Ibid., p. 181.


18. Ibid., p. 104.

19. Ibid., p. 104.

20. Ibid., p. 105.
22. Ibid., p. 190.
23. Ibid., p. 193.
27. Ibid., p. 197.
Chapter 4
Squatting in White Highlands

Introduction

The process of laying down the material foundation of capitalism in Kenya, as we have shown in the previous chapter, had two sides to it: on the one hand, land for settler use, and on the other, landlessness among Africans, which formed the basis of squatting in Kenya. But in Kenya, as elsewhere in the colonies of Europe, once the settler plantations had been set up, a supply of labor to them had to be ensured. Depending on the specific social circumstances under which colonial rule was imposed, this "supply" of labor took various forms: slavery in the Americas, corvee labor in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and French Indochina, imported Chinese and Indian labor into British Malaya, etc.

In other words, it becomes pertinent to ask in this chapter why the required African labor force in Kenya was largely organized in two categories: wage labor, and squatters. Since our interest is focused on squatting, it is necessary to explain what particular role squatters played in the initial development of capitalism in Kenya. Put differently, what were the needs of capitalism in colonial Kenya that squatting, and not some other form of labor, could best fulfill?

Our attempt to answer these questions leads us to consider the changing needs of capitalism in Kenya from 1895 to 1945. We will specifically discuss the role squatting played in primitive capital accumulation at a time when the settlers did not possess sufficient capital to organize labor into a waged form throughout. We will further show how squatting became more restricted, even banned, when capitalism had "matured" to
some extent, and its needs had correspondingly altered. It is by pur-
suing this theme that leads us to perceive the transition from rural
squatting to urban squatting -- the form of squatting that we are most
familiar with today.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, there were two
categories of laborers in the European plantations. First, there were
the wage-laborers, and secondly, there were the squatters. A wage-
laborer, as shown in the preceding chapter, was a peasant who still owned
a piece of land but had been forced, either directly or indirectly, to
leave his family to continue with peasantry farming while he worked in a
plantation. The squatter, on the other hand, was a landless peasant who,
together with his family, squatted on the settler's estate. For the pur-
pose of presentation, the discussion is divided into four historical

1895-1919

As Frank Furedi has observed, "the system of squatting was an inevi-
table result of a general pattern whereby European settlers had large
holdings of land and insufficient labour force to develop it."¹ During
this period the settler was undercapitalized and so had little cash for
paying wages. An easier way for him, therefore, was to offer cultivating
and grazing rights to the Africans in return for their labor. The Afri-
can, who in any case had been alienated from his land, found solace in
this kind of arrangement. The tenancy arrangements varied: "Africans
living on European farms paid rent in kind or provided labour services
and in a few instances paid a cash rent."² However, the most generally
accepted arrangement between the European settler and the Africans was one of labor tenancy. This has led some scholars to suggest that "labor-tenant" is the most appropriate term to describe a squatter during this initial period. The result of this arrangement was the establishment of quasi-feudal social and economic relations in the settler estate.

In such an arrangement, what was expected of the squatters was that the settler expected a man and his wife should work for "five months in the year between them: the man should be required to work for three months a year at least." During this period, the squatters were able to extract fairly favorable terms from European settlers. This was possible because of two main reasons: first, labor shortage was acute, despite various labor-getting techniques being employed by the colonial government. Secondly, the settler had an abundance of underutilized land. Hence, "before 1918 there were literally no restrictions on the amount of land that a squatter could cultivate or the number of animals he could keep." There were instances where in one farm 400 acres were cultivated by about sixty squatters. That gives an average of 6 to 7 acres per squatter family (Mbithi and Barnes). The chief crops grown by squatters were maize, beans, and potatoes. Except for the three to five months when the squatter's labor was demanded by the settler, the squatter was free to work on his plot. "During the time that a squatter worked for the European settler, he received a wage of around 4 shillings a month and a ration of maize meal." Squatters could pasture sheep, goats and cattle.

However, there were certain limitations to the squatters' economic freedom. Whereas he had the above-mentioned freedoms, the squatter did
not have complete freedom to dispose of his farm produce. Sometimes, he was required to sell to his landlord at a fixed price. When the landlord did not need the produce, the squatter was constrained by a system of permits and leases which militated against the free movement of produce. Hence, he was forced to sell to the Asian traders who, by this time, had established themselves in all trading centres in this area. The Asian trader was the middleman between the producer and the customer. That is why there was not a direct trade between the squatters and the Africans in the reserves.

In spite of the various constraints experienced by the squatters, their lives were quite prosperous in comparison to that open to the other Africans in the reserves (Furedi). Barnett and Njama are of the same opinion. "Notwithstanding the tragic loss of his mother and three sisters and the absence of any opportunity for formal education, Karari views his childhood on the Boer farm as a relatively 'good time'." Karari Njama gives an account of his family's life as follows:

"My father had a large herd of livestock at this time, consisting of 600 head of sheep and goat plus a number of cattle which were taken care of along with the European's large herd. In addition, he had a large flock of Rhode Island Reds from which we obtained a good many eggs.... When I returned home from the pasture in the evening, I played with the Boer's many children. We often went swimming in the dam or into the forest to shoot birds with our slingshots or simply played in the fields." 8

The above account illustrates the fact that many squatters were able to accumulate a considerable amount of property. Socially, the squatters led a reasonably unregulated life. They followed the same life pattern led by Africans in the reserves. Ceremonies such as marriage and various initiations, like circumcision, were carried out according to custom.
(Mbithi and Barnes).

By the year 1919, squatting had become a very important economic phenomenon in the agricultural economy. For instance, Kaffir Farming* was competing with the settlers' farming. Since the settlers were unable to use their land productively, African squatters emerged as a group of independent producers. This is clearly demonstrated in a statement made by the D.C. of Naivasha in 1917: "Agriculture has made little progress except at the hands of native squatters." 9

The squatters' contribution was not limited to agriculture only. The colonial government admitted that the economic contribution made by the squatters was vital to the Crown. As Furedi has highlighted it:

"The importance of squatters in the settler economy can be illustrated by the fact that 'development' effected by squatters was accepted by the Land Commissioner in 1918 as improvements necessary to substitute the labor of their squatters for capital investment in order to meet the development requirements of the Crown." 10

The settlers were not happy with the "native competition". They tried various devices to stop it. They formed a "Masters' Union", whose major discussions were centered around "native competition" and how to stop the squatters' emergence as independent producers. A typical expression of this fear was articulated by a Mr. Stimar at a meeting of the Kenya Colonists Association in September, 1910:

"It was necessary for a farmer to get natives on his land for purposes of labour. There must be some quid pro-quo

* Kaffir farming in Kenya was practiced by the most undercapitalized sections of European settlers. This arrangement implied the exchange of access to land in return for a rent in produce, livestock and sometimes in cash. Kaffir farming was most prevalent among Boer farmers in the Uasin Gishu District. These arrangements were rare in those districts (Nakuru, Naivasha, Nyeri and Thomson's Falls) where Kikuyu squatters lived in great numbers.
for labour. But the farmer objected to introducing on his farms a Swahili or other foreign native, who could undersell him in the market with, say, potatoes. It was ridiculous to sell potatoes at 75 cents per load when they were worth a penny per pound."

During this period it was not easy for the settlers to accomplish the objectives of the "Masters' Union" because they lacked enough capital and, therefore, were unable to obtain an adequate supply of labor on terms other than some form of tenancy arrangement. They also depended on the rent obtained from the squatters.

1920-1930

The favorable conditions in the settler estates led to an influx of squatters during the decade of 1920-1930. However, the influx was a function of the following factors, which are a result of cumulative effect of the colonial economy on the African reserves:

(1) the growth of population in the African reserves, whose boundaries were fixed, resulted in considerable pressure on the land;

(2) soil erosion within the reserves reduced the return from reserve lands, and hence, their attractiveness could not match that of the settler land -- usually virgin land -- offered as part of a squatter contract;

(3) As African population density increased in the reserves, so did that of their livestock. Increasingly scarce inside the reserves, available grazing land was an important attraction of squatter status;

(4) An increase in European settlers due to the establishment of the Soldiers Scheme. Since the settlers often preferred squatters
to monthly contract workers, there was an increase in demand for more squatters. The demand was met through "advertisements circulating in the reserves [which] led Africans to believe that life on the European farms would be a 'paradise' for them."\(^{14}\)

(5) The need to meet increasing cash requirements in the countryside.

Thus, in Nakuru district, for instance, in 1920 out of 9,116 Africans, 8,000 were squatters; only 215 Europeans lived in the district.

The increase rate of squatters in Laikipia district is a good indication of the influx during the decade of the 1920s. In 1921, there were only 18 squatter families; 58 settlers owned land in the district. In 1923, the number of squatter families had risen to 1,81 and that of settlers to 166.\(^{15}\)

In general, we can note that the growth rate of squatters surpassed that of African population growth rate in the reserves. Wolff shows that "during the decade 1921-1931, for example, while the overall Kikuyu population increased at an average rate of 1.5 percent per year, the comparable figure for the Kikuyu squatter population was 6.2 percent."\(^{16}\) Statistics for the early 1930s indicate a total squatter population of about 110,000.\(^{17}\)

During the same period, 1920-1930, European farming was established on a more secure basis. There was a direct government intervention in development of European agriculture. Up until the mid-1920s, maize was the main crop both for settlers and peasant farming. But in the early 1920s, coffee and sisal were introduced as important cash crops. Only European settlers were permitted to grow cash crops. In the arable land, wheat was added to maize and both became the center of agricultural activ-
ity. As one scholar has shown:

"Maize emerged as an important export crop and was chiefly
grown in the TransNzoia, Uasin Gishu and Nakuru districts
on a monocultural basis; similarly, wheat was grown in higher
altitude farms in the Uasin Gishu and in Nakuru, once more
on a monocultural basis." 18

The table below shows the great expansion in European agriculture
during the period from 1920-1930.

**TABLE 4:1. The Use of the Cultivated Area in the Highlands,**
1920-1930 ('00 acres)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>1,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cereals</strong></td>
<td>372</td>
<td>2,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisal</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>1,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wattle</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Plantation Crops</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Plantation Crops</strong></td>
<td>706</td>
<td>2,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and Vegetables</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder Crops</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Crops</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallow</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cultivated Land</strong></td>
<td>1,634</td>
<td>6,026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


With the settler agriculture doing so well, the active and independent
role played by the squatters in the agrarian socio-economic structure in
the White Highlands became unacceptable both by the settlers and the
colonial government. In 1924, the government passed the Resident Native
Labor Ordinance. The ordinance granted the governor the power to waive
the plantation owners' obligation to pay their squatters for the mandatory work. It further stipulated that, when a squatter's son reached the age of sixteen, he would automatically become subject to the squatting contract then binding upon his father.\textsuperscript{19}

The ordinance was meant to serve two main objectives: first, to stabilize the supply of labor to the settler agriculture; and second, to eliminate the status of the squatter as an independent producer. Other measures taken to this end were:

(1) To reduce the amount of land cultivated by the squatter for his own existence. As well, between 1925 and 1929, the settlers started shooting animals owned by the squatters. Almost all cattle belonging to the squatters were gone by 1929 (either shot or hidden in neighboring areas).\textsuperscript{20}

(2) The number of mandatory working days for a squatter was increased from 90 to a minimum of 180 days.

(3) Transform the squatter into a laborer rather than a tenant.

\textbf{1930-1939}

The basis for taking the above measures was the awareness of the settlers' relative weakness and the potential strength of the squatters. By the late 1920s, the squatters' population had increased immensely and so had the acreage of land under their cultivation. In one district, Nakuru, for instance, there was in 1927 a total population of 31,396; 1,190 were European settlers, while 29,316 were squatters.\textsuperscript{21} The squatters had under their cultivation 60,456 acres and owned 42,032 goats, 30,981 sheep and 4,312 cattle.\textsuperscript{22} The settlers feared that eventually Africans might claim
ownership of part of the land they cultivated or grazed. Hence, the bitter campaign that began in the mid-1920s.

The settler campaign against the squatters continued into the decade of 1930-1940. The settlers wanted the government to sort out the ambiguous status of the squatters. The government's response was to set up the Kenya Land Commission, whose task was "to define the White Highlands and thereby the rights of squatters in the settled areas." The Commission satisfied the settlers, since the report explicitly rejected any notion that Africans had any rights to land in the White Highlands. In concluding its findings and recommendations, the Commission stated that:

"Squatters have no right to land...but they have temporary right to use land while in employment. In our view, care should be taken to ensure that the essence of the contract is a labor contract." 24

The government accepted the Commission's recommendations. In 1937, the Resident Labor Ordinance (1937) was enacted. It specifically defined squatters as laborers and from then on squatters were legally forced to relinquish their tenant status.

The effects that the changing situation had on the squatters is best articulated by Karari Njama, himself a victim of it:

"...the owner of the farm planted wheat and kept large herds of cattle. He at first used ploughs drawn by bullocks to cultivate his fields; later, when these originally poor Boers began to make a good profit from their crops, they replaced their bullocks with tractors and bought harvester machines. ...Only later when African labor began to be replaced with machines, and European farmers like Mr. Daniel became rich men, that people like my father began to suffer. Government passed a law to the effect that no African was to own cattle in the White Highlands in 1936. My father had to herd his cattle into Nyeri Reserve and sell them at a low price. Shortly after he returned, he was faced with another government order forbidding African laborers to keep more than 30 sheep or goats. The figure was reduced to 15 almost immedi-
ately. Land, too, was reduced. Previously a man could cultivate as much land as he and his family could manage with their labor; now each laborer was allowed one acre per wife. My father, angered by the restrictive regulations, decided to take his large herd of sheep and goats to Nyeri District. In June, 1937, we packed all our belongings and loaded them onto our donkeys."

Njama's family is one of the thousands that left the White Highlands between 1930 and 1937. Furedi shows that the number of squatters in the White Highlands fell from 113,176 in 1931 to 93,112 in 1936.26

But the decade did not augur very well for the settlers and the government. There came the Great Depression and with it the collapse of the international prices of agricultural produce. This had a negative impact on European farming, which had just begun to shape rather well for the settlers. The drop in price of maize, more than anything else, contributed to the setback of settler agriculture. This led to a decrease of land under European cultivation. The situation got worse, so much so that in 1937 the Commissioner of Land and Settlement reported:

"During the recent visit of the Advisory Land Board to the Uasin Gishu and TransNzoia Districts, the Board was impressed by the large areas of underdeveloped and unoccupied farms. In some instances the farms appeared to have been partially developed and abandoned; in others no sign of past development could be discovered." 27

Because of the deteriorating economic conditions, the tenancy system of squatting reasserted itself in the late 1930s. Regardless of the fact that the system had been made illegal, the government decided to give the settlers the benefit of the circumstances. As the Principal Inspector admitted:

"The question has not been that of getting labor at any cost but of getting labor at under market rates and of getting free or at nominal cost such squatter products as manure, milk and actual stock. That is, of course, illegal but there is a widespread conspiracy between [settlers] and squatters
to circumvent the law in this respect and from the nature of the case such a conspiracy is difficult to detect and impossible to control."  28

Not only did the government allow the law to be circumvented, but it went a long way towards giving the settlers whatever support they needed to survive the difficult years of the Great Depression. The settlers demanded, and the state endorsed, that the squatters should sell their produce to them.  29 On its part, the government took steps to control the squatter produce trade. In 1936, the Native Produce and Marketing Ordinance was applied in Nakuru District. A marketing and inspection organization was set up to control the 200,000 bags of maize which were sold by squatters annually.  30 In 1937, the inspection of African-grown potatoes was made compulsory.

Towards the end of the 1930s pyrethrum was introduced. As other cash crops, only the Europeans were allowed to grow it. Pyrethrum is a crop that requires a small initial capital investment, but demands a high rate of labor. Hence, the tenancy system of squatting was ideally suited to the growing of pyrethrum. The state waived the legislation preventing the tenancy system so that:

"The infiltration of [African] squatters into the Nakuru District continued unabated and was stimulated by the demand for the labor of the women and children as pyrethrum pickers..."  31

1939-1945:
The zenith of settler farming and the end of the squatting system in the White Highlands

The historical epoch we shall describe in this section has a striking similarity with the one which prevailed one century before in England. As Karl Marx observed:
"...between 1849-59 a rise in wages took place in the English agricultural districts....this was the result of unusual exodus of the agricultural surplus population caused by demands of war, the vast extension of railroads, factories, mines, etc...." 32

The way capitalists responded to the situation was by introducing "...more machinery and in a moment the laborers were redundant again in a proportion satisfactory even to the farmers. There was not 'more capital' laid out in agriculture than before, and in a more productive form. With this the demand for labor [in the agricultural sector] fell not only relatively but absolutely." 33

The Second World War years could be seen as a turning point in settler farming in Kenya. The new wartime demand for agriculture produce necessitated increased production and this led the government to actively assist and direct large-scale farming. "Long- and medium-term credit for European farmers was made available and through the 'Increased Production of Crops Ordinance' (1942) subsidies facilitated the expansion of agriculture." 34

To correspond with the need for increased production in the White Highlands, there was great demand for labor. The Resident Labor Ordinance was suspended, as its implementation during this period was directly against the interests of both the settlers and the government. As a high-ranking government official disclosed:

"Bearing these considerations in mind, and remembering how very important it is at this time to retain the good will of the native labor, I suggest that His Excellency might consider suspending the operation of the ordinance insofar as TransNzoia, Nakuru and Laikipia [districts] are concerned." 35

But the demand for labor was so great that even the squatting system and other conventional methods for labor-getting did not suffice. European settlers demanded the introduction of compulsory labor, and the
state met the demand when, "on March 2, 1942, compulsory labor for essential agricultural production was introduced." Furedi shows that this move by the state had the desired effect, as the supply of labor was substantially increased by forced labor. By November, 1944, the conscript labor contributed greatly to the large-scale farming, as the table below indicates.

**TABLE 4:2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Crop</th>
<th>Conscript Labor as % of the Work Force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pyrethrum and Mixed Farming</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Estates</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisal Estates</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Furedi, p. 6.

By the end of 1944, the supply of labor had become pretty stabilized. A class of undercapitalized settlers had begun to succumb to a strong class of capitalist large-scale farmers, no longer threatened by competition with "Kaffir farming". This class of capitalist farmers decided in 1944 that the time had come to enforce the R.L.O. The working conditions for the squatters deteriorated as their economic conditions were severely curtailed. The squatters reacted by refusing to accept the new terms. "At the request of the Agricultural Production and Settlement Board, the Government implemented a standstill order. This order put a 'standstill' on the engagement of squatters and aimed to force resident laborers to remain on the farms where they were." With the end of World War II, we witness the systematic postwar
policy of transforming the squatter from a labor tenant to an agricultural laborer.

Conclusion

From the above description we have established and learned the following:

(1) The squatters, together with the wage-laborers, played a vital and indispensable role in the capital formation in the agricultural sector during the historical period dealt with in this chapter. But because of the production relationships between the producer (African squatters and wage-laborers) and the owner (European settlers) of the means of production, the Africans did not have a share in the fruits of their labor. Whereas they were not marginal in producing, the squatters cum wage-earners were denied a share in the profits which accrued from the products. When their labor became less demanded by the capitalist mode of production, they were kicked out of the plantations altogether. What happened during this period cannot be any closer to Rosa Luxemburg's view of the accumulation of capital and the workers' role in it. During primitive accumulation of capital, she argues, "capital cannot accumulate without the aid of noncapitalist organizations nor, on the other hand, can it tolerate their continued existence side-by-side with itself. Only the continuous and progressive disintegrations of noncapitalist organizations makes accumulation of capital possible." 39

(2) During this period of primitive accumulation of capital, the state power was used not only for direction of labor, but also for determining the production relationship between the African squatters and the
European settlers. The status of the squatters, and how it changed over time, was determined as much by the settlers as it was by the government. The ordinances and other legal devices enforced by the government were used in favor of the settlers over and against the squatters and wage-laborers. Without the use of the state power it appears as if squatters could have emerged as a class of independent producers. This could have been the case particularly during the decade of 1900-1919 and in the mid-1930s, when squatter farming or the so-called "Kaffir farming" became widespread and productive.

(3) After the agricultural capitalist accumulated some capital and began to mechanize agriculture, he decided to turn loose many of the squatters and wage-laborers as well. This was done (not without the help of the state), first by transforming the squatter into a wage-laborer, and second by firing him. In consequence, the process led to the creation of a surplus labor force, the majority of whom were the landless squatters and the wage-laborers displaced by machines. In the case of the latter, as we noted in the preceding chapter, most of the men did not go back home because they had nothing, in the form of cash or kind, to take home. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that shortly before and during the 1940s, armed with nothing but their labor power:

"...bands of Africans were reported wandering the country looking for work; a reserve army of the unemployed ready and available for work in the settler sector." 40 (And, obviously, in any other sector.)

The situation served the purpose of keeping wages in check so that surplus value and accumulation may continue. This is "the characteristic
and essential features of capitalist production." So, even when out of work, the squatters and other former wage-laborers, through their active competition in the labor market, continue to exercise a constant downward pressure on the wage level, thus being of vital "service" to the capitalist production.

What alternatives did the squatters have? There were three alternatives:

(a) To squat on the forests and other government-owned land near the plantations so as to remain within proximity in case job opportunities arose;

(b) To return to the African reserves. But these were already overcrowded and could absorb only a very small percentage of the surplus laborers. Besides, in the reserves the opportunities for making a living were very remote; and

(c) The biggest percentage migrated to the urban centers where chances for getting employment were high.

The third alternative was the most appealing, because around the same time there began a rapid growth of secondary and tertiary industries especially in Nairobi and Nakuru town. In particular, there were developing industries for processing agricultural products. Such industries were owned by the same class of capitalists who owned and controlled large-scale farming. Once again, therefore, the system creates conditions which force the laborers to go to participate in the capitalist production; this time, in the urban industrial sector. So, the type of rural-urban migration that ensued in the early 1940s should be conceived of as reallocation of labor from agricultural production to capital for-
motion in the industrial sector, thus sustaining the demand for African labor.

Seen against that proposition, this chapter becomes very relevant to this study. It has located the dialectical relationship between squatting in the White Highlands and "modern" squatting in the Kenyan cities, especially Nairobi. That relationship is not only seen in spatial and demographic terms, but also in terms of class struggle between the peasants/Workers, on the one hand, and the capitalist class, on the other.

The figure on page 102 in Chapter 5 articulates the process we have discussed in this chapter and how it is linked with the current rural-urban migration to, and squatting in, Nairobi.
Chapter 4. References


3. Ibid., p. 45.


11. Ibid., p. 3.


13. Ibid., 126.


15. Ibid., p. 47.


17. Ibid., p. 126.


22. See Agricultural Census, 1928.
23. Furedi, _op. cit._, p. 5.
24. _Ibid._, p. 5.
25. Barnett and Njama, _op. cit._, p. 84.
26. Furedi, _op. cit._, p. 5.
27. _Ibid._, p. 5.
29. _Ibid._, p. 5.
33. _Ibid._, p. 88.
34. See Nakuru District Annual Report, 1940.
35. See _E.A. Standard_, April 17, 1942.
36. Furedi, _op. cit._, p. 6.
40. E.A. Brett, _Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa_, p. 190.
41. Sweezy, _op. cit._, p. 87.
Chapter 5
Squatting in Nairobi

Introduction

The preceding chapters have brought us from discussions of rural squatting to those of urban squatting. We have tried to capture the complexities of squatting as a social phenomenon closely bound up with capitalist development in Kenya. It should be evident by now that we regard it a mistake to perceive narrowly of squatting as an unfortunate product of uncontrolled migration into cities unable to sustain rapid population increases. That is to say, we also regard as inadequate any formulation of squatting as merely "an urban problem" detached from broader considerations of the overall organization of colonial and post-colonial Kenya to fulfill the needs of capital accumulation. In the final analysis, such an uninformed approach would be misleading precisely because it sees as the disease itself what is after all only a symptom. It entirely loses sight of the plight of underdevelopment that afflicts Kenya today.

Meanwhile, it is true, however, that squatting remains a "problem", especially in Nairobi, since the immediate factors which precipitated this particular form of squatting remain: high unemployment, uneven distribution of income, and inadequate housing (for the poor, we must add). And insofar as squatting is regarded as "an urban problem", squatters will continue to be talked of as "marginal" and treated as "undesirables". Stereotypes of squatters (as "vagrants", "loafers", "criminals") abound, but they amount to no more than justification for governmental action taken against them, be it in the form of persuasion, regulation, or demolition. Recent experience indicates that the last has certainly not been the least.
In criticizing such absurd stereotypes in this chapter, we are not glamorizing the image of the squatters, either. Nonetheless, it is essential to recognize that despite all obstacles, squatting has not only been preserved, it has even grown in proportion. Thus, in the face of such a perplexing situation, if we must consider squatting as "undesirable", it must be because we consider it to be a symptom of an "undesirable" disease.

Figure 5:1 summarizes what has been discussed in Chapters 3 (The Roots of Squatting in Kenya: An Historical Overview), 4 (Squatting in White Highlands), and what will be discussed in this chapter. Large-scale farming was mainly in the White Highlands, although it was practiced in other districts like Nakuru, Laikipia and some parts of Meru. From the early 1900s, the colonizers used political, economic and every military means to force Africans to leave their activities in the so-called African Reserves and seek employment in the settlers' agricultural sector. (A) indicates that stream of African labor force.

In the mid 1930s, we witness for the first time a surplus labor, which I also refer to as reserve army of labor force, in the large-scale farming. During that period, as we have shown in the preceding chapter, there were squatters (and wage-earners, too) who were forced to leave the settler farms. A large number left the plantations (E) while the rest of the surplus labor force (B) continued to squat on the available land near the settlers' farms. When, in the early 1940s, the capitalist farming began to expand, some from the reserve army of workers (C) were rehired. Towards the mid-1940s, however, the situation got worse for the laborers and there was an exodus from the European farms (E) and the areas around them (D). Some of those who left found their way back to the countryside
Figure 5:1
Migration and squatting process in Kenya

A. New workers (wage-laborers, squatters)
B. Displaced (fired, especially squatters)
C. Rehired in the large scale farming
D. Retiring from the agricultural surplus labor
E. Retiring from large scale farming especially in late 1930's
F. Some % of (E+D) to countryside and certainly in 1944
G. Other % of (E+D) to industrial and commercial (urban) sector
H. New workers from countryside
I. Unable to find jobs
J. Displaced workers
K. Rehired (mainly on temporary basis)
L. Retiring from labor pool (or giving up job-seeking)
M. Retiring
N. Some might go back to the countryside. Included are the so-called circular migrants
(F) and others (G) migrated to the city. Most of (F) were older people who were wage-laborers and still owned a piece of land in the African reserves. Whereas there may be cases of (A) today, it is not very significant in the current rural-urban migration pattern. Most of those who migrate to Nairobi in stages transit mainly in the smaller towns.

(H) represents the stream of new job seekers from the rural areas. Prior to the 1940s, many in (H) were doing menial jobs and others served in the colonial administration and in the Indian shops. After World War II, the influx increased tremendously. However, between 1952 and 1958, when there was a State of Emergency as a result of Mau Mau,* the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru people were restricted from going to Nairobi. It is important to note that the Operation Anvil of 1954 was responsible for the removal of over 24,000 Agikuyu, Aembu and Ameru from Nairobi. After the Operation, passbooks were issued to Africans in the city, and African housing was reorganized in the locations on an ethnic group basis. But during the same period, there was a great influx into Nairobi of Africans from other ethnic groups. It is not everybody in (H) and (G) who enters directly into the industrial/commercial employment. Some, failing to find employment (I), join immediately the ranks of the reserve army. (K) are those rehired mainly to do casual jobs, especially in the construction industry, but also to do other manual jobs like loading and unloading within the "formal sector". Leaving industrial/commercial employment are, first, the retiring workers who have finished their productive careers (M) and, second, those who are displaced from their jobs (J) and hence, enter

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*The popular name for the War of Liberation in Kenya.
the pool of the reserve army. (L) are those who, after fruitless efforts at job-seeking, finally give up and join those retiring from employment.

Conventionally referred to as circular migrants, (N) is losing significance in the migration pattern. This is because today it is neither easy nor fruitful for the peasants, just fresh from the countryside, to obtain casual employment in big cities. With unemployment and underemployment being so acute in Nairobi, the reserve army of workers are forever ready to swoop upon whatever casual jobs will be available. In any case, it is becoming increasingly commonplace for "target" migrants to go back home with empty hands and usually thinner than when they left the countryside.

There are three interrelated variables that will determine whether or not a migrant will become a squatter. These are employment opportunities, income level and supply of "legal" housing. I shall deal with one at a time, with a view to showing their influence on a migrant's propensity to squat.

Employment

In Nairobi, the expansion of employment in enumerated activities -- government service and private firms covered by annual enumerations of employees -- has proved inadequate to provide urban opportunities for the existing adult population, much less the annual increase of adult population resulting from migration. Officially, the urban employment problem is indicated by a rate of unemployed of 8 to 14 percent (or a weighted rate of 11.5 percent). The ILO suggests that to the 11.5 percent must be added "the urban working poor who, if defined as persons earning less than 200 shs. a month, would be more numerous than those openly unemployed."

The
ILO concludes that, taken together, those who are not adequately remunerated in the urban areas exceed 20 percent of the males in Nairobi, with a much higher incidence among women. The situation is summarized in the following table.

<p>| TABLE 5:1. Proportion of Unemployed Persons and of the Working Poor in the Adult Population of Nairobi, by Sex and Household Status, 1970 (Percentages) |
| Males | | Females | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of Households</th>
<th>All Members of Households</th>
<th>Heads of Households</th>
<th>All Members of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Poor</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unemployed persons are those with zero incomes who are seeking work.

Source: ILO, p. 64.

With the unemployment problem being so acute, therefore, it is no wonder that more often than not the migrants do not get the jobs they go to look for in Nairobi.

According to the Metropolitan Growth Strategy, it is assumed that Nairobi's employment will increase somewhat faster than the projected national rate of 3 percent per annum, but not all employment categories will grow at the same rate. The categories referred to here are the "formal sector" which will grow at slightly over 4 percent per annum and the "informal sector" (IS) which will grow at roughly 3 percent. But if "inform-
formal sector" includes all the industry and businesses outside the "modern sector", it is more than likely that it will grow at a faster rate than the Nairobi Urban Study Group predicted. However, even if it does, the Nairobi Study Group further predicts that it is extremely unlikely that the informal sector would account for more than 100,000 jobs by the year 2000. The Group adds:

"In any event, no matter what the techniques used, and irrespective of the exact assumptions used, the inescapable conclusion is that much of the future population of metropolitan Nairobi will be poor, by any standard, and that the part of the population without visible means of support will be very poor indeed." 2

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Figure 5:2. Nairobi Labor Force and Employees

The figure shows that employment in the modern (formal) sector will yield a figure of little under 650,000 in the year 2000. Even if this figure is augmented by up to 100,000 of those in the other two categories, it is clear that a substantial proportion of the labor force will be outside the range of gainful employment. It is possible that over 250,000 potential wage-earners will be unsuccessful in finding any kind of work in Nairobi in the year 2000. On top of that, there are reasons to believe that many of these will experience chronic unemployment, being subjected to prolonged and unfruitful search for work.

Income Distribution

It is extremely difficult to get reliable data on incomes in Nairobi. Among others who have attempted to show the income distribution in Nairobi are ILO and Temple. But they, too, used basic income figures from the results of a household budget survey conducted in Nairobi in 1968-69 by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The results of this survey must be treated very cautiously because of biases in the sample. According to Temple, the major biases arose through: (i) omitting most of the urban shanty areas from the sample frame; and (ii) excluding many African household servants (serving Europeans and Asians), many of whom earn less than 200 shs. a month. 3

The undersampling means that the data we shall use below understates the size of the poorest one-third in Nairobi. The poorest one-third are those whose incomes are below the poverty datum line estimates of Ksh 200 in 1969.

The data which were computed and in the long-run used by the ILO
to plot the Lorenz curve for Nairobi is in the table on the following page (Table 5:3).

**Housing: Demand and Supply**

The problem of housing is most acute for the poor people. In fact, there is no shortage of housing for the rich class of people. According to the government plan, "more high-cost housing units were constructed (1970-1974) at the expense of low-cost housing. The housing shortage, therefore, has seriously increased in the low-income brackets." 4

The (1970-1974) Development Plan estimated that 5,880 new units would be needed each year in Nairobi during the plan period to accommodate the expansion of households (i.e., ignoring replacement of old units and without endeavoring to alleviate overcrowding). 5 Nor is the demand for housing by the unemployed included in the targeted new units. The Urban Study Group estimated that by 1983, 7,700 new low-cost units would be needed annually to meet population growth, reduce overcrowding and replace obsolescent units. 6

It is generally accepted that the public sector should assume the responsibility for housing the poor in Nairobi. The two public agencies that are charged with that responsibility are the Nairobi City Council (NCC) and the National Housing Corporation (NHC). But since 1963, there has been a marked decline in the ratio of City Council units to Nairobi's population, as this table shows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rental Units</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>342,764</td>
<td>14,203</td>
<td>1:24·1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>585,191</td>
<td>19,269</td>
<td>1:30·4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Income Groups (Shillings per Month)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-199  200-299  300-399  400-499  500-699  700-999 1,000-1,399 1,400-1,999  2,000  Whole Sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash from Regular Employment</td>
<td>40   218  307  410  557  770  1,042  1,430  2,524  746</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash from Casual Employment</td>
<td>9    -   -   -   -   -   7    4    -   2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Business Profit</td>
<td>25   14   6   15   3   18   11   7   69   16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of Own Produce</td>
<td>5    -   -   -   -   -   6    -   4    -   1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of Payments</td>
<td>8    3    11  -   12  1    16   10   94   15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cash Income</td>
<td>87   235  324  425  572  795  1,076  1,455  2,687 780</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Subsidy</td>
<td>-    18   15   14   18   25   105   180   203  47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income in Kind</td>
<td>-    -    4    4    1   13   -     24   -    4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income (Cash and Kind)</td>
<td>87   253  342  444  592  833  1,181  1,659  2,890 832</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size (Persons)</td>
<td>3.47  3.38  3.57  4.26  4.46  4.75  5.14  6.14  6.28  4.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income per Head</td>
<td>25   75   96  104  133  175  230   270  460  189</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposable Income (After Income Taxes)</td>
<td>86   245  330  326  571  794  1,126  1,591  2,698 801</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ILO, p. 348.
The table shows that in 1963, Nairobi's population was 342,764 and the City Council had 14,203 units of rental housing yielding a ratio of one unit per 24.1 people. By 1971, the population had risen to 585,191, while the Council's housing stock grew to 19,269; the ratio thus rose to one unit per 30.4 people. During the eight-year period, the population grew by 242,427 and the Council's housing stock by 5,066, representing an increase of one unit for every 47.8 people in the population growth. Therefore, we agree with Temple that the activities of the City Council and other government agencies in the housing field have not been keeping pace with Nairobi's rapid population growth.

The following table shows the percentage of dwelling units constructed by the NCC and NHC between 1968 and 1971 and the percentage of African households who could afford them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Cost Category (Shillings per Month)</th>
<th>Percentage of Public Sector Units, 1968-71</th>
<th>Percentage of African Households Able to Afford This Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 54/-</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54/- to 80/-</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81/- to 107/-</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108/- to 134/-</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135/- to 188/-</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189/- to 269/-</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>270/- to 377/-</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>378/- to 539/-</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540/- and over</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Temple, p. 212.
The table reveals that between 1968 and 1971 nothing was built by the public sector which fell within the means of the poorest one-third of African population. Remembering that the data used to work out this table were the data that undersampled the poorest Africans, it is evidently clear that even the table understates the size of the population in the bottom third. The table also assumes that even the urban poor are willing to spend 20 percent of their income on house rent. This assumption is challenged by the results of a survey which revealed that improved housing standards were not regarded as a high priority by the urban poor. When asked, Nairobi squatter families listed their priorities in the following order:

Essential:

1. Food
2. Current standard of shelter on this location
3. School fees (for those with children of school age)
4. Clothes

Desirable:

5. Money to buy land
6. Money to contribute to extended family
7. Money to extend business
8. Money to build another room (possibly for rentals)
9. Money to rent or buy a better house or room to live in
10. Improved transport to job

The study which was conducted by NCCK in 1971 shows that the squatters who have regular jobs can only afford a monthly house rent of Shs. 38.

We can draw several conclusions from the above discussion. First,
it is extremely difficult for migrants (except those whose standard of education is higher than high school) to get employment within the "formal sector". Second, the income of the working poor is too low to afford house rent for available houses. Third, the public sector housing program has catered much more to Nairobi's middle- and upper-income groups than to the poorer inhabitants. Because of the above, the poorest 34 percent and many others who have been labelled the "working poor" by the ILO have one alternative to meet their most basic needs. That alternative is to squat.*

Typology of Squatter Settlements

In 1971, it was estimated that one-third of Nairobi's population -- about 167,000 people -- were living in unauthorized housing. These settlements are scattered in various parts of the city. There are at least five different types of squatter settlements: the first is what we shall call street-sleeping. To this type would be added the "twilight housing" and mushroom shanties. These are for nocturnal use only. They are made or erected in the evening and dismantled again in the morning. The other four types are those described by David Etherton: semi-permanent rural which, like traditional African houses, are round thatched huts, such as those in Langata. Semi-permanent urban are the better-organized communities of squatters, like those in Mathare Valley and Dagoretti. Temporary urban consists mainly of temporary houses constructed of scrap materials. Semi-permanent and temporary infill, found especially in the Eastlands, are built of scrap materials, but are attached to existing buildings or

* Squatting for the unemployed does not mean sleeping shelter alone, but also unauthorized business.
their courtyards (see Illustration 5:1 for those settlement locations).

Of all the types, the semi-permanent urban and the semi-permanent rural are the ones where there exists some form of organized communities. Some of the inhabitants of those communities are registered squatters. This, however, does not mean they are treated any better by the authorities when it comes to squatter settlement clearance. Registration of squatters was started immediately after attainment of national independence in 1963 to identify the landless people in Nairobi. Originally, those registered were promised a piece of land somewhere, sometime in the future, but the exercise, having served its political purpose, has long since been abandoned. The political purpose was to appease the squatters, most of whom had fought in the War of Liberation, while the newly formed African elite government consolidated its power.

Although the squatters have been under a hostile environment since 1901, the squatter settlements have always been growing at a remarkable rate. In 1921, there were 12,088 squatters living in separate villages. In 1971, the 167,000 squatters were composed of 34,613 family units living in 49 settlements in addition to Mathare Valley and Dagoretti. Examples from all over the world," writes Etherton, "show that if the urban economy is unable to provide the work and facilities sought by urban immigrants and the growing population, independent development will take place and gradually overtake 'official' development policies." Andrew Hake shows that in Nairobi, the "self-help city", as he calls the "unofficial" side of Nairobi, "is now building more houses, creating more jobs, absorbing more people and growing faster than the modern city." Mathare Valley, for example, was reckoned in 1970 to be growing at 16 percent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Public Utilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Street Sleeping</td>
<td>Center of city</td>
<td>Blanket for cover</td>
<td>Begging</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twilight Housing Mushroom Shanties</td>
<td>Along the Nairobi River</td>
<td>Sack for lying on</td>
<td>Hawking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cardboard or polystyrene</td>
<td>Vending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Semi-permanent Rural</td>
<td>Peripheral areas of Nairobi</td>
<td>Traditional layout of buildings</td>
<td>Local markets</td>
<td>Water from nearest spring or permanent house (inadequate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Semi-permanent Urban</td>
<td>Peripheral areas of Nairobi (1 1/2 mile radius of city center)</td>
<td>Informal village layout</td>
<td>Some wage employment outside settlements</td>
<td>Pit latrines (inadequate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mud and wattle with some scrap materials</td>
<td>Self-employed in informal sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Temporary Urban</td>
<td>Central city area (within 3-mile radius)</td>
<td>Entirely scrap materials</td>
<td>Casual, wage, and self-employment</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Along river valleys</td>
<td></td>
<td>Food/kiosks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Temporary and Semi-permanent Infill</td>
<td>Attached to or within courtyards of existing housing in specific areas of Nairobi</td>
<td>Scrap material Sometimes corrugated iron roofs</td>
<td>Wage, casual and self-employment</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shops in surrounding areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted, with modifications, from David Etherton, Mathare Valley (op. cit.), p. 4.*
AB4L TYPE AND EXTENT OF UNCONTROLLED SETTLEMENT: SCALE 1:500,000

NAIROBI (EXCLUDING THE CENTRAL AREA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMI PERMANENT RURAL</th>
<th>10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Degoretti</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Riverside</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Garden Estate</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Stai Estate</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Coffee Estate</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>17,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMI PERMANENT URBAN</th>
<th>35,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Degoretti</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Riverside</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Garden Estate</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Stai Estate</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Coffee Estate</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Azmere Estate</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>37,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEMPORARY URBAN</th>
<th>1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL FOR NAIROBI</td>
<td>38,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CENTRAL NAIROBI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEMI PERMANENT RURAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMPORARY URBAN</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMPORARY AND SEMI PERMANENT INFILL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES

Approximate population figures calculated at 4 persons per household.

The historical development of these areas is described in appendix A, pp. 71-76.

Recently demolished areas: 30
yearly, which means its population will double in five years if the same
growth rate is maintained. "This 'other' urban revolution," he concludes,
"is thus taking the lead in many aspects of Nairobi's growth, with the
modern city following on behind." 15

Demolition of Squatter Settlements and the Act of Blaming the Victim

As early as 1901, the Municipal Council of Nairobi passed a by-law
to "eliminate squatting"; to this day, neither the colonial government nor
the post-colonial one has managed to eliminate squatting. The government
and the Nairobi City Council have devised several ways of at least con-
trolling what they call uncontrolled settlements. We can identify three
devices:

(i) Regulatory measures

Examples of this are the Vagrancy Acts. The government passes
and tries to enforce the law, hoping that it will be obeyed.
To go with the law are always the promises of a "better place",
e.g., to a site-and-service scheme or resettlement on a piece
of land in the countryside. However, the promises are given
up almost as soon as the first "vagrants" are arrested. In
1962-1963, there were as many as 2,000 people arrested every
month under the Vagrancy Ordinance. Such persons were ordered
to be repatriated to rural areas; if they had no home there,
they would be sent to a detention center for three months. 16
The first form of Vagrancy Act was passed in 1901, 17 and the
one which is still in force was passed in 1968.
(ii) Persuasion

This was done mainly by national politicians immediately after national independence. The squatters are reminded that they have a role to play in national development and they could best play this role in the countryside. The appeal to the unemployed groups in the city to "go back to the land", however, was given up in the late 1960s (and replaced by the Vagrancy Act in 1968), when it became clear that most of the unemployed did not have land to go back to either.

(iii) Violence

Demolition is the third device and the most commonly used. In this section, we shall therefore deal mainly with demolition.

Demolition of squatter settlements and their business is as old as Nairobi City. In 1923, three of the eight African villages in Nairobi were destroyed and their inhabitants were moved to Pumwani, Nairobi's first site-and-service scheme. In 1954, it was reported that "the police and City inspectorate are holding the position with great difficulty... demolishing 30-40 structures a week."18 The latest demolition was in November, 1977, when about 10,000 people were rendered homeless.19

There are various rationales for demolition. The colonial government justified demolition primarily as a tool to maintain public health standards. This excuse is given to this day. In addition to maintaining public health, there is the City Council's and the government's concern to maintain governmental control over development. As the Town Clerk once remarked, "You allow these shanties to go up and you will one morning
wake up to find several of them right in the center of the city."  

Thirdly, there is the desire to maintain the image of the "modern city". It is commonplace to read in newspaper reports about clearing the undesirables from the city. Those with liberal attitudes and sympathy to the "undesirables" feel strongly "that it is up the government to save the public from the embarrassment of the public display of deformity [beggars] or desitution."  

That kind of an attitude complies with the general view of the image of the modern city. As Lisa Peattie and Alejandro Portes have pointed out, the city has traditionally been viewed as "always a fortress of high culture, the citadel of the elites and highly homogenous in class composition." The reason given for demolitions of October and November, 1977, is because the City Council wants to turn the area into flower gardens and recreational parks.  

The manner with which the demolitions are carried on reveals the authorities' attitude towards the squatters. The following newspaper statements show that there is no respect whatsoever of the squatters and their possessions by the authorities:

Headline: Shanties Flattened in Bulldozer Swoop  
"Police reinforced by administration police and city askaris surrounded the Nairobi River slums shortly after midnight. They ordered a curfew and no one was allowed in or out until dawn....The massive military-style clean-up operation left thousands homeless."  

Headline: Out Go the Squatters  
Axe Squads Flatten Huruma Shanties in Dawn Swoop  
"Demolition squads swooped without warning on Nairobi's Huruma settlement at dawn yesterday to kick out thousands of illegal squatters."
"fighting broke out yesterday in a Nairobi produce market when a group of City Council askaris tried to confiscate vegetables from a number of women...onions, tomatoes, bananas, peas, peppers, cabbages, carrots and other foodstuffs were thrown into a heap by the askaris." 26

Such inhumane acts occur because of the general image people have of the squatters. In summary, the squatters are characterized as:

- idle and shiftless members of the population
- loafers and ne'er-do-wells in town
- robbers and thieves
- temporary or transitory immigrants from rural areas
- parasites in the city
- vagrants and lawless people
- those who feign poverty and prefer life in slums to going back to the land

In general, squatters are seen as those poor people who get everything from the city and contribute nothing. The above list is made up of quotations from Nairobi newspapers reporting official statements as well as from Andrew Hake's and Frederick Temple's studies of Nairobi.

The image of the squatters in Nairobi fits well into the general concept of marginality which has been applied to squatters almost everywhere else in the developing countries. We shall use the information provided by a survey of temporary structures, conducted by the National Christian Council of Kenya, to assess the validity of this image of squatters.

First, the squatters are not temporary or transitory immigrants. The average length of residence of the squatter was found to be nine
years, while that of the city in general is 13.6 years. Only roughly a quarter of adult respondents had come to Nairobi within the past five years. Three-quarters had been squatting for an average of seventeen years. For those who lived in Mathare Valley, where the survey was done, 42 percent had come from another Nairobi squatter area, mostly due to demolition.\(^27\) That shows there is long residency in other squatter areas, too.

More than anything else, the squatters' contribution to the general economy of the city is grossly understated. The NCCK survey showed that 45 percent of the squatters in Mathare Valley had wage-employment, with an average monthly income of Shs. 225. Another 36 percent were self-employed, with a monthly cash income of Shs. 95. The overall average monthly income, including the 19 percent who said they had no cash income at all, is Shs. 142. This amounts to a monthly cash income of Shs. 16,908,750. Since most of such income is for subsistence, we assume that the bulk of it is consumed in Nairobi. The self-employed, or those in the "informal sector", probably created, by 1971, over 50,000 jobs which did not appear anywhere in any other statistics.\(^28\) The ILO estimated that about 30 percent of Nairobi's population live out of the incomes generated in the informal sector. Studies of squatter economics in other developing countries show that this "secondary economy" is definitely a subsidiary of the general monetized economy. "Although good studies of barrio economics are lacking -- and much needed," argues Professor Lisa Peattie, "the evidence in the literature and my own experience in Venezuela would suggest that even the limited part of barrio economic life which lies outside the regular market economy is quite dependent on
the inflow of money represented by the wages of those employed in the 'modern sector'. It is those wages which are redistributed through the kinship networks, which become the payments for purchases at the neighborhood stores, and which form the capital on which local businesses are founded."

In 1970, the cost of squatter houses in Nairobi was estimated at Shs. 5,000,000. In 1970/71, 8,943 dwelling units were demolished by the City Council, equal to four times the number built by the public sector in the same period. The shelters which housed 48,000 people caused a capital loss of approximately Shs. 2,800,000 to Nairobi housing stock.

It is, therefore, a myth that the proponents of marginality theory uphold when they contend that squatters are a drain on the urban economy. Squatters in Nairobi contribute to the urban economy both in terms of labor and consumption. In general, most of the employed persons in squatter areas are employed outside the squatter area. Therefore, it would be found that the squatter area is part of a city- or national-scale economy. Bamberger argues that "shanty-town also provides the major source of labor for much of the city's industry and through not having to pay rent, the cost of labor is kept down." Janice Perlman is of the same opinion: "Because there are so many tavelados [squatter settlements], there is an ever-willing labor pool which enables wages to remain at low levels and employers to avoid workers' benefits requirements."

The NCCK survey results invalidate the myth that squatters are lazy people who run away from the rural areas. The study reveals that 73 percent of household heads do not own rural lands anywhere. Only 27 percent of the respondents indicated that they own land outside Nairobi. These
were asked how many people were currently living on their land. The tab-
ulation showed that there was already an average of only 0.5 acres per
person. If these people went back to the land, there would be an average
of only 0.33 acre per person. They would therefore worsen the agrarian
conditions that forced them to migrate in the first place. It is not
surprising, therefore, that when asked where they would go if their
houses were demolished, only 3 percent replied that they would return
upcountry. 97 percent said they would either rebuild on the site, move
in with friends (temporarily) or build new shanties elsewhere in Nairobi.

There is also ample evidence to show that squatters are not politi-
cally marginal people. As a matter of fact, the struggle for liberation
that is believed to have won the Kenyan independence was organized from
the slums of Mathare Valley until the infamous Operation Anvil of 1954.
As one scholar has shown, "The 40 Group and other movements associated
with it, represent the most successful populist political initiative in
Kenya's history to this day."33 Today in the squatter settlements, par-
ticularly types 3, 4, and 5, there is a branch of the ruling -- and the
only political party in Kenya -- KANU. In his study, Marc Ross shows
that the squatters of Mathare Valley are politically integrated into the
national politics. They attend political meetings and they participate
in voting.34

Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has revealed several things concern-
ing the squatters in Nairobi. First, the capitalist system does not pro-
vide the squatters with even the most basic needs, much less the social
amenities enjoyed by the richer members of the society. Secondly, the system has very negative attitudes towards the squatters, and through demolitions and general harassment, has treated them in a most inhumane manner. Thirdly, the squatters are not marginal members of the urban society. They contribute both economically and politically to the growth of the city.

As it has been contended, "it turns out that development of squatter settlements is one of those regular irregularities through which societies are able to do things which they find necessary, while at the same time denying the existence of, or at least any support to, the phenomenon." 35

Whereas the authorities, some analysts and even public opinion from some circles may fail to recognize it, both the so-called "modern", or "formal", sector and the "informal" sector are integrated into the society; only that they are on very different terms. Squatters are not marginal to the Nairobi society, but integrated into it in a manner detrimental to their interests. They are not socially marginal but rejected; not economically marginal but exploited; and not politically marginal but repressed. In a word, squatters are a very oppressed class of people.

Finally, we have shown that the various methods (regulatory, persuasion and violence) of dealing with the squatter problem have failed not only to eradicate but even to effect minimal control over squatting. The erroneous image of the squatters as marginal seems to be the basis for employing such methods. But the basis of squatting, as it has been established in the previous two chapters, is the capitalist mode of production that has been prevailing in Kenya in the last seventy years. Our
contention is that, insofar as urban form flows from, and is an integral part of, the general economy of the society, none of the seemingly urban problems can be eradicated within the structures that generate those problems in the first place, and nourish them in the next place, also. Nor can the squatting, or indeed any other socio-economic problem affecting the lot of the urban poor, be abolished in isolation.

It is because of that proposition that I decided to look at a slightly different approach to the squatting problem. It is called "slightly different" because even the types of Community Organization practiced in Nairobi squatter areas today have very little effect on the root causes of squatting, as we shall see in the next chapter.
Chapter 5. References

5. Ibid., p. 509.
7. Ibid., p. 208.
8. Ibid.
15. Hake, op. cit., p. 95.
16. Ibid., p. 189.
18. Ibid.
30. Ibid., p. 102.
31. Ibid.
32. J. Perlman, op. cit., p. 156.
35. Lisa Peattie, op. cit., p. 106.
Introduction

Our study so far has dealt with origins, nature and extent of squatting in Kenya in general and Nairobi in particular. It has been shown that squatting is basically a structural problem. The problem developed out of capitalist socio-economic structures which evolved from colonialism and continues to thrive under neocolonialism. In this chapter the primary concern is that of the solutions to the problem. In post-independent Kenya, demolition of squatter settlements and, of late, rural incentive schemes and concentrated decentralization - through central place strategy - are official means of resolving the poverty and inequalities, urban squatting problems included. In our view, demolitions and similar public policies will neither stop the proliferation of squatter settlements nor better the socio-economic conditions of the squatters. This case study is an analysis and a discussion of a different approach used in improving the living conditions of the squatters. This approach is community organization.

The purpose of this chapter is basically to analyze a case of community organization in Mathare Valley. In our view, community organization is simply local-based efforts of addressing the problem facing the local people. The nature this local way of addressing the problem will take depends solely on how those engaged in it perceive the problem they are trying to solve. The analysis in this chapter will show that none of those involved in community organization in Mathare Valley are seriously
tackling the sources or roots of the squatting problem

In this analysis it will be shown that community organization in Mathare Valley has been a result of the following: In the case of base-group initiatives, community organization comes out of desperation and is basically a means for survival. (In this study, base-groups refers to the squatters' organizations.) Secondly, community organizations and community development have emerged from opportunism by profit-oriented groups, mainly referred to as private companies in Mathare Valley. A third type is that initiated by voluntary organizations like NCCK which sees the squatting problem as an inevitable consequence of urbanization and modernization. NCCK gets involved to demonstrate to the authorities that more positive strategies than demolition or redevelopment are viable. It also sees its involvement as a vocation and "Christian commitment to the poor."

First I shall discuss briefly the typologies of community organization in the squatter settlements of Nairobi and especially in Mathare Valley. The three types we shall deal with are categorized according to the group or agency which initiates the mode of community organizing. The three initiators which were mentioned above are the squatters, the private companies in the squatter settlements and voluntary associations. Then, in further detail, I shall analyze the type of community organization sponsored by a voluntary association, in this case NCCK.

A major concern in analyzing community organization as a solution is to look at it against the problem as analyzed in the preceding chapters. It will become evidently clear that considered against the problem, the solution offered by community organization is piecemeal. But so far it is the community organization that has had tangible positive impact on
the lives of a good many squatters.

Definitions

Before going into the case study, let us deal with definitions and concepts of the main terminologies that shall be used in this analysis. These terminologies are community organization, community development, and participation.

1. Community Organization

Most of the definitions of community organization are not concise. It is therefore not easy to quote a single definition that can embrace the concept of community organization. The following definition includes most, but not all, of the elements of community organization:

"Community organization refers to various methods of intervention whereby a professional change agent helps a community action system composed of individuals, groups or organizations to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with social problems within a democratic system of values. It is concerned with programs aimed at social change with primary reference to environmental conditions and social institutions. It involves two major interrelated concerns: (a) the interactional processes of working with an action system, which include identifying, recruiting and working with the members, and developing organizational and interpersonal relationships among them which facilitate their efforts; and (b) the technical tasks involved in identifying problem areas, analyzing causes, formulating plans, developing strategies, and mobilizing the resources necessary to effect action." 1

For our purpose, this definition is adequate only for the type of community organization practiced by the NCCK. The definition includes, on the one hand, working with an action system and mobilizing the resources needed to produce change and, on the other hand, diagnostic and planning tasks. It focuses more sharply on the professional "change agent" who interacts with an "action system". That is why it refers to "methods of intervention". Intervention presupposes an outsider; so for the type of community organization practiced by the victimized people in the community,
in our case the squatters themselves, the idea of intervention does not arise.

In their definition, Kramer and Specht include not only organizing but also planning. That means community organizing includes both the intellectual process and defining problems and proposed solutions, and the activities that stem from those plans, involving mobilization of necessary resources to achieve a result.

For the purpose of our analysis, I shall accept the above definition but add to it one important dimension. My concept of community organization will include the efforts made by the people at grassroots level to deal with their day-to-day mundane problems. This includes the spontaneous response, on the part of the squatters, to interventions like demolition. It also includes other activities such as organizing the security of the community, building a nursery school or raising funds to pay fines for their members who have been arrested by the police.

2. Community Development

Community development is seen as one type of community organization, the other being social planning. There are several definitions of community development that are worth noting:

(a) "Community development is a process of social action in which people of a community organize themselves for planning and action; define their common and individual needs and problems; ... [and] execute these plans with a maximum of reliance upon community resources." 3

(b) "Community development is a social process by which human beings can become more competent to live with and gain some control over local aspects of a frustrating and changing world. ... Personality growth through group responsibility for the local common good is the focus." 4

(c) "Community development can be tentatively defined as a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance on the community initiative." 5
The first and third definitions stress local initiative and use of local resources. This presupposes that community change may be pursued optimally through broad participation of a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in goal determination and action.

Taking all the three definitions we have emphases on the following: locally defined needs; local action; reliance on local resources; personality growth via group interaction; and harnessing underutilized human resources. All those are important elements in community development. Among the three definitions we have all that it takes to have community development.

3. "Citizen" Participation

Community participation* has been inadequately developed as a specific conceptual area of social science. Its definition is therefore more problematic than definitions of the other two. In a given context, participation is normative and not merely descriptive. As Roweis points out,

"citizen participation, viewed as a mode of societal and political existence, can only be normatively considered in the context of societal guidance or social change." 6

Often "citizens" are invited to participate in something introduced into their community from outside. That means somebody other than the "citizens" will determine the nature of and the extent to which they will participate. This raises the question as to what degree do "elites" or "experts" and to what degree do "citizens" set societal courses of action. The capacity to determine another party's participation in something connotes the capacity to limit or control his degree of participation.

*In this analysis, community participation will be used instead of citizen participation.
In spite of the concerted efforts at advocacy for people's participation in the matters that vitally affect their lives, it is important to note that as long as the status quo is maintained — in other words, as long as the dichotomy between the elite and the "citizens" prevails — there will always be a "class" of people — the elite — with a higher perception of what is desirable than the less educated, the citizens. In such a situation, argues Roweis, "the elites are relatively free to set societal courses of action as long as such actions entail only minor changes in citizens' societal knowledge. When, however, elites initiate changes that fall outside the perceived boundaries of existing contexts, they first have to inform and win the consent of citizens. Hence, the raison d'être of citizen participation." 7

There are different ways of "informing and winning the consent of citizens", depending on situations. In squatter settlements it almost invariably begins with dispensing of benevolent goods through welfare service.

In the area of community organization, participation has been viewed in various and not always compatible ways. Sometimes, participation is spoken of as a goal in its own right. This view sees psychological satisfaction in participation. This concept is cherished mainly in industrialized countries. In the United States, for instance, citizen participation is considered crucial since

"...in an impersonal urban environment, where associational ties have supposedly been weakened, the core objective of practice has been viewed by some to be the restoration of potential ties for meaningful human interaction through participation." 8

Among the proponents of this view are William and Loureide Biddle. 9 In such a formulation substantive results, such as specific health and educational programs, are not so important as is the more fundamental
objective of providing channels for meaningful interaction. Whereas such participation might be desirable in industrialized countries of the West, where citizens feel lost and impersonal in the "urban jungle", it is not the kind of participation that is necessary in squatter settlements in developing countries where, if anything, human interaction among the squatters is the order of the day.

Sometimes participation is viewed as "a means for achieving more concrete programatic ends - but as a constant, unvarying means." Murray G. Ross is a leading advocate of this view. He contends that community organization requires the participation of the people of a community because what is to be united in common action is people. And what is to be changed is to be changed by people.

A third view of participation is more relativistic and analytical. It looks at participation also as a means, but as a conditional means to be employed selectively for certain goals and under given circumstances.

In my view, community participation has two dimensions. The first is expressive-oriented. This is where members of a community, in our case the squatters, act in concert to express their feelings about an issue. While in the process they achieve substantive results they also, more importantly, express their inner feelings. In such a case they conceive, plan and execute their plans. The second is task-oriented. In this we concur with Murray Ross' view. The squatters participate in programs designed to achieve a task - sometimes all by themselves, at other times and more often in collaboration with an external agency.
Typology of Community Organizations in Nairobi

Community organizations come into existence to meet the needs and serve the purposes of a group or groups of people. Since needs and purposes of different groups of people vary, there will tend to emerge different types of community organizations. An organization which serves the purposes of only one group of people, especially if it is a group without sanctioned power like the squatters, will hardly last a long time. On the other hand, a community organization which serves several purposes and/or purposes of several groups will tend to last for a long while.

As indicated above, there are three types of community organization in Nairobi. These are base-group organizations, private company organizations, and organizations of voluntary associations.

1. Base-group Organizations

This is a community organization that comes into existence as a result of squatters' initiative. It happens when people get so desperate they make things happen in their own interests. It is in this kind of a community organization that the people could be said to be genuinely participating in shaping the events which vitally affect their lives. In base-group organizations, plans are made and executed by the victims themselves. Such organizations are characterized by the boldness with which squatters act. They defy the authorities and the law. When they are task-oriented, as they often are, base-group organizations aim at short-range social change.

In Nairobi the activities of base-group organizations are not physically violent but they tend to produce immediate and positive
results. There are many examples of such activities but I shall mention only two. The first one is about an incident which happened in 1970 after a squatter settlement was burnt down at Kaburini. The victims organized themselves to confront the authorities. Andrew Hake gives an account of the incident:

"Three days later....there was an obviously well-organized demonstration of Kaburini residents, 'mostly women with babies on their backs and clad in tattered clothes to which banana leaves had been tied. With their faces painted with black ashes and carrying charred remains of their burnt-down houses', they marched singing past City Hall, the Parliament Building and the office of the President in Harambee House, and 'sat outside the main entrance of the new Hilton Hotel, in the mistaken belief that they would see [the].... President....there and could tell him of their suffering'." 12

As it happened, they never saw the President, but it was not long before they were settled in another location.

The second incident happened in September 1977, after the city council police confiscated the merchandise of market women in Nairobi:

"Following the incident, a large group of women marched on City Hall to demand an explanation from the Mayor for the constant 'terrorism'." 13

It was only after the march that the women recovered their foodstuffs.

Base-group organizations are found in the squatter settlements that fall under types* (2) semi-permanent rural, (3) semi-permanent urban and, to a lesser degree, (5) temporary and semi-permanent infill.

Base-group organizations basically serve the interests of the squatters only. Once base-group organizations have made "some victories", there will be a tendency on the part of the authorities to co-opt the leaders. The authorities will respond promptly to the demands of a base-group organization but after that it will take time to work out

* See page 112 above.
longer-term strategies for dealing with the organization. That is why it happens that base-group organizations will either be co-opted or liquidated. The more permanent a squatter settlement becomes, the higher are the chances of its base-group organization being co-opted or integrated into the system. A case in point is Mathare Valley.

In Mathare Valley there are nine villages. Except for the two more recently settled villages, all others have each an elected chairman and village committee. In villages I, II and III the organizational set-up is closely connected with the KANU* (Kenya African National Union) political organization.14 Villages IV, V, Ngei I and Ngei II also have similar organizational set-ups, although officially not along the KANU lines. The village committees are responsible for settling disputes and for community (village) development. The only primary school in the Valley is situated in Village I. Each village has contributed to the building and maintenance of the primary school either in cash, in kind or by supplying labor. Seven villages have each built a nursery school and, with the exception of three villages, all others have each built a community hall. The community hall is the center of the village social life; dances, committee meetings and village meetings are held there. Open-air markets and kiosks (for selling foodstuffs and other basic goods) are organized by the village committees.

Community development is done mainly through self-help projects organized by the committees. Through such self-help activities Village II has managed to install pipe-borne water, although not to individual houses. The activities are organized to raise funds or to provide

* Kenya is de facto one-party system and KANU is the only ruling party.
labor or to contribute goods which could be sold for cash.

For many years the squatters in Mathare Valley organized their own police to provide security as well as to regulate drunkenness in the villages. With Mathare Valley being politically integrated into the mainstream political system, the ruling party has taken over in overseeing the security of the villages. Today, "The villages all have KANU youth-wingers to act as police, who seem to have been effective in dealing with less serious offenses...."15 But as the political integration of squatters in Mathare Valley becomes more successful, the role of the youth-wingers is also diminishing. This is best explained by the situation in the "best organized village."16 As Etherton observes, "they were most effective in Village II, but now that the police are able to patrol the area without fear of being beaten-up themselves, the youth-wingers are less effective."17

An important point to note here is that it is not just the role of one aspect of Mathare Valley life - like youth-wingers - that is diminishing, but as the squatters are being more politically integrated the vitality and dynamism of base-group organizations are being seriously threatened. To illustrate this point, let us look briefly at the leadership in the village which is supposed to be the best organized.

Community organizations in Mathare Valley began as base-group organizations. As indicated above, they still retain some but by no means all the basic characteristics of base-group organizations. When he was doing his studies in the area in 1971, Marc Ross shows that among all the Mathare Valley leaders the one of Village II was the most integrated into the metropolitan politics. In the village committee the leader/chairman is the dominant figure.
"While other people participate in the village committee meetings as well as in general public meetings, it is the leader-chairman who decides when they will talk, how long they will speak and whether they will be praised or rebuked for their remarks." 18

Ross continues to show that the leader uses the public meetings to communicate threats to village groups which he feels are opposed to his leadership. In what is considered to be a typical general village meeting, there are twenty-four recorded items in the minutes, of which twenty-two are records of what was spoken by the leader/chairman. The remaining two were an announcement by the leader of youth-wing and a point of information by the vice-chairman. More than half of the twenty-two items accorded to the leader/chairman are to do with law and order and the ruling party. That is no wonder because, as Ross notes, "it is difficult to separate [the leader's] party role from his role as village chairman or head of the co-operative society. He is able to provide the party with supporters for political rallies and with voters on election days." 19

2. Private Company Organizations

In the late 1960s, groups of squatters in Mathare Valley organized themselves into co-operatives with an aim of purchasing the land they were squatting, thereby securing their houses from the constant annoying demolition raids conducted by the authorities. 20 That move was considered necessary because

"although politically well-organized and supported by their Member of Parliament, the squatters...had failed in their attempts to win recognition from the Nairobi City Council and from the central government." 21

The late 1960s were very bad years for the squatters because they were the peak of the records of squatter settlements demolitions in Nairobi.
Originally, there were twenty-five land-buying co-operatives, but today only one of them is co-operative. All the others changed status and became land-buying and house-building companies organized on limited-liability and share-holding bases.

The co-operatives became companies because it soon became clear that land-buying and house-building was lucrative business. When more people sought to buy it, the land acquired more value, and as more groups entered the market, prices rose. As Temple learned,

"in 1967 one company acquired a 12 acre plot for 3,000 shillings; in 1969 another company bought a plot nearby of the same acreage for 25,000 shillings; the next-door plot, again of 12 acres, is now selling for 60,000 shillings. The most expensive plot, 15 acres close to the town center and with a few stone houses, has just been sold for 800,000 shillings.'22

The sale prices were between two and ten times greater than the Nairobi City Council's valuations for the plots. Land in Mathare Valley began to cost slightly less per acre than in Muthaiga, an upper-class area which contains Nairobi's "embassy row".

What is even more pathetic is the fact that soon after their formation, companies began to take in outside members from other parts of Nairobi and even from outside Nairobi. Etherton shows that by mid-1969 all but six companies had outside members. By the end of 1969, new companies organized completely outside the squatter villages began to buy land in Mathare Valley.

Today, the land-buying and house-building companies are capitalist enterprises. There are bitter conflicts between them and the squatters. Most companies are known to have written to officials demanding the squatters be removed by the government and settled elsewhere.23 In some cases, companies have harassed squatters by tearing down latrines and
building houses among the old villages.

We have included private company organizations as a type of community organization not because of what they are now, but because of the original impetus that led to their formation as co-operatives. They are involved in community development in Mathare Valley, but their activities are detrimental to the advancement of squatters as a community.

The company houses are too expensive for the squatters and this accounts for the drastic and dramatic change of the character of Mathare Valley between 1969 and 1971. During that time, "the population more than doubled as 'housing companies' built 7,628 one-room units of housing without the approval of Nairobi's governing authorities." 24 Most of the people who came to occupy those units were those with regular jobs, but because of the general shortage of cheap housing and their meagre income, could not afford better houses elsewhere. Such people do not feel the strong sense of community that the poorer and more desperate squatters feel. Nor do they feel obliged to participate in community development since in case of complaints they have their landlords to bother.

With demand for cheap housing exceeding by far the supply, house-building in Mathare Valley became one of the most lucrative businesses "in town". As Etherton explains:

"The basic reason for this economic bonanza is the fact that a six-room structure costs around Shs. 4,500/- to build, but each room is rented for Shs. 70/- per month. On a yearly basis this becomes Shs. 5,040/-. Subtracting maintenance and loss through defaulters the revenue for about one year is about equal to the cost of the house. From that one ought to adjust for the cost of land, but even so, the return on investment is above 50%, which makes it one of the most attractive investments in Nairobi." 25

Whereas they contribute to the physical development of the squatter settlement, the companies therefore have inverse contribution to the human
development of the squatters. With the kind of housing improvements they are making, and motivated by nothing other than profit maximization, sooner or later the companies are going to drive away the squatters from Mathare Valley. Already, the influx of outside speculators has increased because they see that the area is an excellent site for housing development with its many accessible undeveloped sites located only five miles from the city center. 26

In the final analysis, I predict that for the squatters the situation in Mathare Valley will get worse before it gets better. We have pointed out that the leadership of base-group organizations has been co-opted into the mainstream of the socio-political system, thereby being deprived of its power capacity to make things done in the interests of the squatters. The leaders of the village committees are themselves leaders and shareholders in the "Private Companies Limited". The need to revitalize base-group organizations, therefore, is greater now than ever before.

3. Voluntary Associations

The third type of community organization work among the squatters is that of voluntary associations.

NCCK is regarded as a voluntary association because it fits the definition of a voluntary association. According to Rothman:

"Voluntary associations are often viewed as mechanisms of mediating between the individual, made small by the growing size and complexity of society, and larger community and bureaucratic structures that affect one's life. In this sense, voluntary associations represent collective instrumentalities through which individuals in concert, especially those with little power or resources, may make a greater impact on their social environment than if they acted independently."

Whereas the formulation defines what NCCK represents, it is, however, important to note that the squatters in Mathare Valley had organized
themselves as communities even before NCCK began its work there. It is best, therefore, to view NCCK as mediating between the squatter communities and the bureaucratic authorities.

In this section we shall do a more detailed case study of NCCK's work in squatter settlements of Nairobi and especially in Mathare Valley. I chose to do a more detailed analysis of NCCK's work because of several reasons:

(a) In my opinion, NCCK has done more to better the conditions of the squatter in Nairobi than any other agency, public or private.

(b) NCCK, as a voluntary association, and with great concern for serving the poor, has great potential for doing even more valuable work in this area than it has done hitherto.

(c) Data on NCCK's work have been available.

Method of Analysis

The method used in analyzing NCCK's Urban Squatter Improvement Program (USIP)* and its work in Mathare Valley borrows from several scholars. The first part, which is an analysis of NCCK as a community organization agency, borrows from the method suggested by Mayer Zizald. The second part, which is an analysis of NCCK's social problem-solving process, is based on the method proposed by Robert Perlman and Arnold Gurin, Alfred J. Kahn and to a lesser degree by Jack Rothman. The third section of this case study will discuss the work of NCCK in Mathare Valley and the fourth section will deal with the major accomplishments. A final section is a critique of NCCK's approach to community organization and community development in squatter settlements of Nairobi.

* USIP was originally known as Mathare Valley Development Project. In 1976 it was called Urban Community Improvement Program. For the purpose of this study, we shall use USIP.
A. Organizational Analysis

Four interrelated aspects form the core of this analysis:

(1) USIP's basic goals;

(2) The organization's constituency and resource base;

(3) The organization's target populations, whose interests and purposes are served by its work; and

(4) External relations.

(1) Basic goals and modes of procedure

The basic goals can be divided into two categories. First are the service-oriented and secondly the change-oriented goals.

(a) Service-oriented goal

"To help raise the standard of living of squatter communities economically, socially and spiritually."\(^{32}\)

This goal is to be achieved by:

(i) encouraging job creation through self-help methods;

(ii) assisting small businessmen with small loans and management skills;

(iii) providing employment to groups of people through organizing small-scale industries which are run as far as possible by the workers themselves;

(iv) providing nutrition guidance to mothers in the community;

(v) offering social welfare service to the destitute in the community.

(b) Change-oriented goals

Two goals can be identified: first is "to develop leadership and awareness among the squatters;"\(^{33}\) secondly, "to influence change of
policies and programs of the local government.\textsuperscript{34} These goals are to be achieved by:

(i) encouraging formation of interested groups to deal with common problems;

(ii) providing a forum through which individuals and groups can meet to identify their common problems and plan solutions;

(iii) dialogue with the local government on how best the problems of Mathare Valley could be solved.

My observation, to be elaborated in a later section of this chapter, is that NCCK has made more progress in achieving the service-oriented goals than it has the change-oriented goals.

(2) Constituency and resource base

Constituency in this respect does not refer to the clientele but rather to the kind of staff and practitioners who make the program function. The resource base refers to both personnel and funds.

The director of USIP is the staff person who supervises the entire work in Mathare Valley. The director and his staff are responsible for planning of activities as well as resource allocation. Their plans have to be approved by an advisory committee, a majority of whose members are not NCCK employees. The committee members are people working with government, private business or in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi. The director is answerable to the general secretary, who is the chief executive of the NCCK. At the moment, there is a staff of fifteen, the majority of whom are social workers.\textsuperscript{35} With the exception of one volunteer, a carpentry instructor, all others are Kenyan nationals.

Like most other NCCK projects, the bulk of USIP's funds comes as aid from overseas churches and church-related organizations.\textsuperscript{36} However,
it is important to note that the small-scale industries are self-sufficient in terms of paying wages to the workers.

There are three points to note with relation to constituency and resource base. First, USIP's staff is composed of indigenous people. This is important since a few years ago there were quite a few expatriates in the program. Whereas we do not mean to suggest that the indigenous staff will always have a higher perception of the problems involved in the work than foreigners, it is nevertheless highly probable that they will tend to understand the squatters better. If nothing else, they speak the same national tongue—Kiswahili.

Second, the director and his staff have a high degree of freedom from the mother organization as far as program development and implementation are concerned. This is important in that it is the staff who are out in the 'Valley' working with squatters and so in the best position to identify the problems. As Zald found out, "when an organization is directly dependent on its constituency for achieving organizational goals, greater attention will be paid to constituency wishes and participation." 37

Third, most of the work is funded from external sources. This, however, does not mean that the external sources have control over the work. The funds given are earmarked but the decision on how they are used to do the work is entirely left in the hands of the program staff. 38

(3) Target populations
The main target group is the squatter communities in Mathare Valley. To a lesser degree the local government, too, is a target group insofar as NCCK's program aimed at changing social relationships and attitudes between Nairobi City Council and squatters. To achieve this aim it was necessary for USIP to establish a network of trust with both target groups.
This is because "to the extent that members of target groups are suspi-
cious of an organization, communication channels will be blocked." 39
And without communication no useful work could be done.

To establish such a situation with Nairobi City Council was not a
very difficult thing since, as we shall show in a later section, NCCK
and Nairobi City Council saw eye-to-eye in major issues. To establish
an NCCK-squatters linkage was more problematic because NCCK personnel
and the squatters come from different social classes. A necessary pre-
requisite, therefore, was to minimize the social distance between the
squatters and the outsiders. This was done by having the pioneer workers
from USIP serve multiple purposes. The first practitioner represented
the "ego-ideal" of the squatters. For quite some time she even lived
among the squatters. It was only after establishing a network of trust
with the target groups that USIP sent specialists like nutritionists and
technical advisors to Mathare Valley.

As a casual evaluation, I would say that NCCK did establish a good
linkage both between Nairobi City Council and the squatters. However,
as far as changing the norms, values and social relationships between the
two target groups, it has a long way to go.

(4) External relations
The NCCK program could not succeed in mobilizing the squatters or in
reaching its major objectives without dealing with other agencies. This
is because NCCK is but one among several organizations that have interests
in the squatters. The motives for the interests are not necessarily
compatible. Nairobi City Council has already been mentioned as one agency
that NCCK had to deal with. The other was the central government.
Nairobi City Council and the central government have business in control-
ling development not only in squatter settlements but in metropolitan Nairobi in general. The way NCCK dealt with those agencies will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

When NCCK began its work in Mathare Valley there were no rival organizations. But later the land-buying and house-building companies, mentioned above, began to do rival work. However, some NCCK officials consider the companies' activities to be complementary. My prediction is that in the near future conflict will develop between NCCK work and that of the companies, unless USIP's basic goals will change to accommodate the kind of exploitation inherent in the work of the private companies.

How does the relationship between USIP and those external organizations enhance or impede its work? To a large extent, this will depend on whether the activities of all those organizations can be merged, coordinated or have a "peaceful co-existence". As a general postulate, coordination, sharing of facilities and proper integration are likely to take place only when all the concerned agencies are likely to gain.

This can be the case under the following specific conditions:

(1) The greater the symbiotic relation between the agencies, the more likely the coordination. For instance, when the work of USIP helps to create amicable social situations in Mathare Valley, the police can carry on their official duties without fear of being beaten up by the squatters. On the other hand, when the government refrains from demolition of Mathare Valley, NCCK's work becomes easier. In such a case, the two organizations stand to gain by cooperating. But as far as the private companies are concerned, especially after 1970, they will stand to gain if the
government demolishes the squatter houses. 42

(2) The greater the marginal profits, the more likely the coordination. Or, stated differently, the greater the marginal cost of coordination and integration or the lower the marginal profit, the less chance of integration and coordination of activities. 43

The example in (1), above, explains this condition as well. (3) The less constituencies overlap, the more likely it is that the constituencies are either neutral to or distrust each other and thus the longer it will take and the more difficult it will be to gain cooperation. 44 Experience elsewhere shows that overlapping constituencies contribute to coordination of the work in community organization. 45 The social workers of USIP and those of Nairobi City Council work closely together in Mathare Valley. They share their findings and experiences. Nairobi City Council and USIP are represented in each other's relevant committees. What the above propositions suggest is that NCCK, Nairobi City Council and the government do, and will continue to, cooperate in their programs in Mathare Valley. But the NCCK and the private companies will, if they have not yet, conflict because the work of each tends to have negative implications for the other's interests.

B. NCCK Social Planning Process

Having made an analysis of NCCK's community organization, we shall now analyze another vital aspect of its work. This is the NCCK's social planning process. It is vital in the sense that it shows the steps or stages NCCK went through in developing its work in Mathare Valley. Explicit in this analysis is the NCCK's theoretical and conceptual framework of what the squatting problem in Nairobi is and its under-
standing of how it can be resolved. In this section we shall use NCCK rather than USIP because we are dealing with the period prior to formation of the squatter improvement program.

In a social planning process there are two important aspects: planning and organizing. Our definition of planning borrows from A.J. Kahn. He defines planning as "a policy choice and programming in the light of facts, projections and application of values." Choice and values in this analysis are not necessarily objective; they refer to the choice and values of NCCK, as we shall show later in this section. Planning can also be considered as the analytical task of the practitioner, or a development process in which the several levels of intellectual undertaking are in constant interaction. Organizing takes on a broader definition. It is "both the intellectual process of defining problems and proposed solutions, and the activities that stem from those plans, involving mobilization of necessary resources to achieve a result." In other words, it could be considered as the interactional tasks in the social planning process.

The two – planning and organizing – go together and the absence of either of them could be futile to the work of an organization. Without mobilizing the people and resources, planning is sterile. It is through organizing that new policies and programs are put into effect. On the other hand, organizing people to achieve social change requires planning to guide both ends and means of their efforts. A synthesis of the two is the problem-solving process.

NCCK's social problem-solving process has the following steps:

(1) defining the problem

(2) building the structure or the communications system for addressing it
(3) consideration of alternative solutions and adaptation of policy

(4) implementation of the program

(5) revision of the above decisions and actions in the light of continuous monitoring, evaluation and feedback

A more complex but better articulated way of explaining the steps was developed by Kahn (p.62).

1 Problem definition

Defining the problem is, in my view, the key step in a problem solving process. The way an organization defines the problem or conceives of it presupposes the ideology of the organization. The way in which a problem is formulated will strongly influence how it will be handled in the succeeding phases of problem solving. "In other words," contend Perlman and Burin, "the formulation of the problem to a large extent sets the direction for thinking about it and acting on it." 49

When defining the problem, NCCK is confronted with the issue of whether to accept an already existing formulation provided by other institutions or a popular theoretical position concerning the squatting problem, or to undertake its own research and come out with a new formulation altogether. Generally the NCCK concept of the squatting problem seems to be greatly influenced by schools of thought that view "squatters as communities striving for elevation" and "squatting as inevitable blight" (see the introduction to this study).

In the preamble to the problem definition step, the NCCK study seems to accept squatting as "simply the manifestation of normal urban growth processes under historically unprecedented conditions. The tragedy is not that such settlements exist - which is inevitable - but that many are so much worse than they need have been." 50 The position is clearly
John Turner's.

The NCCK study considers squatting to be a matter of course in a developing country like Kenya because the "inevitable break-up of traditional living and land ownership patterns brought a flood of young and old to the swollen towns seeking work, excitement or just a change of lifestyle." In independent Kenya, rural-urban migration increased all the more because "freedom of movement of all 'wananchi' [masses] was one of the first and most cherished rights of the new citizens."

With so great an influx into the cities, and without adequate stock of low-cost housing to cater for them, "shantytowns sprang up in the nooks and hollows of the city, offering a realistic - if rather unsightly - answer to the basic needs" of obtaining food and shelter.

To show that "this [situation], of course, is not unusual," it is observed that "United Nations figures show that in the past decade over 200 million people have moved into cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America alone." And, in any case, "by 2050 it is estimated that fully 91% of the world's population will be living in cities."

However, in its process of developing the Mathare Valley (Community Work and Development) Project, NCCK appears to believe that its own theoretical model is the most useful in defining the tasks that needed to be performed, since the planning process essentially rests on an appraisal of the situation that is to be effected. This was a commendable idea to cherish because "the exercise of appraising the problem with as much freedom from predefinition as possible provides an opportunity to consider a range of alternatives in addition to those that may already exist." But, as will become evident later in this analysis, neither
the analytical nor the organizational tasks of NCCK's work in Mathare Valley were original.

In its planning process NCCK was very concerned about coming out with realizable solutions. It is true that the research which was undertaken could not have been very useful without clearly set criteria of what is and what is not relevant. As Kahn observes, "planning without adequate investigation of relevant realities, relevant social facts, is utopian thinking or traveling blind. Planning that assembles volumes of data without imposing criteria of relevance and priority in their appraisal is useless ritual. Actually, one does not know what facts to assemble and how to weight them without simultaneous attention to preference and value questions." The question that should be raised, however, is how objective the 'social realities' are. From what perspective are the 'social realities' being viewed.

Before undertaking the project the NCCK states clearly that it will seek solutions "that must be financially, technically, politically and administratively viable." In which case it will play any one or progressively all three of the following roles.

"(1) Agitator/or initial community link, because the church or other private agency is at least closer to the squatter community than either the academics or officials.

and/or (2) The 'priming' exercise, i.e. taking the first step in initiating pilot work along new lines where more conventional or conservative elements hold back.

and/or (3) Gap-filling, where the constellation of organizations concerned with the problems of low-income families still lack any effective official coordination."
In considering those roles which NCCK can play singly or simultaneously, its work in Mathare Valley could then be viewed as typical community organization as conceived in the United States.* The Mathare Valley (Community Work and Development) Project fits into Kahn's definition of community development. Community development, according to Kahn, is a term that describes "both field and method, refers to community organization in underdeveloped countries or deprived areas in developed countries with a goal of creating 'community competence'. It involves adaptation to the special circumstances of the poor, the powerless, the unskilled and the uneducated." Hence, the role of a community organizer is that of 'change agent' or 'enabler' in community work. NCCK sees itself fulfilling, and in its work in Mathare Valley has fulfilled, that role. Besides the social work and establishment of cottage industries in Mathare Valley, which will be discussed below, the NCCK was instrumental in establishing "Mathare Valley Development Committee". The committee is composed of village leaders, politicians, NCCK and City Council staff. "This group offers strong potential for meaningful community participation."58

(2) Building Structure

When NCCK began its work in Mathare Valley, there did not exist a structure under which it could operate. It was therefore necessary to set one up. In a situation where social change of any magnitude is involved, various parties who have a stake in the system to be effected by the change will be interested not only in the end result but even in the means used to bring about that change. In the case of Mathare Valley, other

* See the definition of Community Organization above.
interested parties were the City Council and the government. The people who were being propelled toward change by the new venture were also interested but, as we shall see later, from a different perspective. All those parties had to be included in the structure.

With all those parties involved, a structure could not be designed without some issues evolving. In a typical community organization situation, two types of issues are likely to emerge. First, if there is a broad consensus on the purposes that different parties would like to see pursued but there are differences as to what measures will be most effective, the structure can be weighted toward maximizing expertise in problem solving. If, on the other hand, there are wide differences concerning values, purposes and goals, there is a prior task of finding a mechanism that can achieve an agreed-on direction with sufficient legitimation to exercise influence on the problem being attacked.59 It seems that in Mathare Valley case the latter problem did not arise. The three dominant parties in NCCK, Nairobi City Council (NCC) and the Government did not have any fundamental differences with respect to values, purposes and goals. As to the fourth party, the people, they seem to have been included in the organizational framework to legitimize the purpose defined below.

The main purpose as outlined in the NCCK report was to work out "a basic approach toward regaining development control where it was lost, and channeling the potential private investment which squatter settlements represent."60 That purpose was set by NCCK, NCC and Government in their joint Pilot Improvement Scheme in Mathare Valley.

Notwithstanding the homogeneity of the above parties, an accepted structure did not come forth easily. Delays were caused by trivial
differences emanating, to a large extent, from lack of sufficient factual groundwork to facilitate productive discussions. As a result, "valuable meeting time was wasted in mismatched and confusing conversation." 61

In the long run, the following structure was chosen: A '3-point system' including the City Council, NCCK and Community Spokesmen with the Central Government at the center. "The central government may not be directly involved, but should be kept clearly in the picture with periodic progress reports and copies of all significant correspondence." 62

The role of the parties involved will be:

(a) **City Council** - gather and circulate official information on forward planning and specific programs for low-income families. Keep up-to-date information on low-cost housing from other countries. Participate in all meetings.

(b) **NCCK** (and/or other voluntary agencies) - help fill the gaps where the city cannot function, e.g. the setting up of small industrial estates or similar schemes designed to stimulate employment and increase incomes in designated target areas. This is the one to be involved in the grassroots work in the squatter settlement.

(c) **Community Spokesmen** - middlemen between the people and the City
Council, but more often than not going through NCCK.

(d) **Central Government** - periodic review of squatter policy. This should include (1) regular evaluation of progress made by the agencies; (2) discussion of the implications of new research findings (both local and world-wide); and (3) proposals for adjusting agency roles or creating new tools altogether to fill developing gaps or deal with new problems.

(3) **Alternative Solutions**

Consideration of alternative solutions to a problem is the stage at which an organization makes a choice concerning the means to be used in achieving the ultimate goal. It could therefore be viewed as policy formation stage. Policy formation takes the point of departure from general statements of goals and values and leads into more specific program measures. Perlman and Gurin call it "an operational statement of goal or goals." The most essential function of a policy is to provide an explicit guide for future actions. In the case of NCCK, making a choice concerning the nature of community organization work had to take was very crucial. This is because it involved laying a foundation upon which to build the future work towards solution of such a serious problem as squatting. It was therefore necessary for NCCK to consider a whole range of alternative solutions before choosing the one it regarded as most appropriate.

The alternative solutions are divided into two categories: deterrent policies and positive policies.

**Deterrent Policies**

The most obvious example of deterrent policies is demolition. We discussed demolition of squatter settlements in Chapter 5. Others are influx
control, where "pass-laws and other methods of restricting population movements have been similarly unsuccessful in solving the squatter problem" and rural incentive schemes and decentralization. Rural incentive schemes and decentralization "is actually a positive form of a negative approach and is listed under 'deterrents' only in that it is usually intended to keep people on the land (or in decentralized towns) and thereby hold down migration to major urban areas."

Positive Policies
There are two types of positive policies: first, recognition and progressive improvement of major squatter areas representing substantial investment, especially in terms of dwelling units and businesses; and secondly, vigorous expansion of the low-cost housing stock. In the case of recognition and "progressive improvement" it was necessary for the following two conditions and one promise to be met before any "progressive improvement" was undertaken.

(i) official recognition of the area by the urban authority
(ii) acquisition of land if it is not already in public hands
(iii) (promise of) provision of essential services (water, roads, sanitation, electricity, health and educational facilities) in the area

After a consideration of advantages and disadvantages of "site and service" approach, otherwise referred to as "progressive improvement", it was reckoned that

"The key to successful progressive improvement lies in limiting public expenditure to a minimum and maximizing the private role, so that improvement is paced to the homeowner's own ability and interest."

Of all the alternatives, NCCK chose the one of improvement of existing settlements with provision of basic services. This was conceived of as
"varied site and service approach". It was noted that the approach is not new. Experiences would be drawn from other countries, especially Latin America where

"new ways are being found of speeding up the provision of these serviced plots for self-help, cooperation or even private commercial building of low-cost homes." 67

The organization was satisfied with its choice of alternative because of the enormous advantages offered by (varied) site and service schemes. Some of the advantages of these schemes are that:

1. investment in infrastructure is flexible and can serve changing land uses;
2. site and service schemes elicit considerable private investment for low-cost housing which would otherwise not be available for this use;
3. responsibility for management and rent collection can be transferred to the private sector;
4. the greater efficiency of the private investor can be put to work for public purposes;
5. site and service transfers the onus of initially low-standard development from public to private shoulders;
6. both home upkeep and improvement costs are borne by the individual; and
7. most important is the fact that The Price is Right.

Those advantages imply that at a conceptual level the burden of housing the poor is not the responsibility of the public sector but that of the private individual. The policy implication seems to be that the authority should relax the housing standards so that the poor can live peacefully (without the authority's undue interference), with his own 'poverty-level' standards.
(4) Program Development

Planning that limits itself only to policy analysis is incomplete from the point of view of practice. It is here that one of the distinctions can be made between academic and practice orientations. An academic orientation may stop with analysis, identifying values, choices and consequences, and developing theoretical frameworks for evaluation. A practice oriented analysis, on the other hand, needs to incorporate all that into an action situation; this is done through building a program to make operational the choices made.

Program involves the mobilization of resources and their delivery to where they are needed. The major elements included in a program, as far as community organization is concerned, are (1) content of the jobs, where it is necessary to spell out what kinds of activities and services are needed in the community, how much of that is needed and through what physical arrangements they can be delivered; (2) a clear consideration of the resources available to do the work. This includes both material and human resources. It is important to know how these resources can be mobilized; (3) what is feasible under the prevailing circumstances. It will be necessary to consider what changes, if any, are needed in order to achieve the objectives in policies and distribution of resources. It is at this point that strategies for achieving the necessary changes are mapped.

In describing its program development, the Mathare Valley Project is described as having "happened in the spontaneous and rather haphazard fits of growth characteristic of locally-initiated work which usually begins on nothing." In the report it is suggested that "we wandered into Mathare Valley one day and simply never wandered out again." But
having taken us through the preliminary steps in social planning, the suggestion that the Project "happened spontaneously" is not very convincing. The Project, as far as our analysis goes, was a result of a very well planned social intervention. Either the report is being humble in explaining a benevolent church organization’s concern in helping the poor, or it is simply glossing over the issue. If the former is the case, then the most important point to note here, which the report tries to dramatize, is the mode of and the point at which the Project intervenes in Mathare Valley. As it is clearly stated, "the void left by a consistent cold shoulder from city and government is often filled with a strong spirit of self-help" characteristic of poverty-stricken communities like squatter settlements. So when NCCK came into Mathare Valley, initiative had already been taken by the people; they were constructing a nursery school in Village 1.

The NCCK's first involvement in community work at the Valley seems to be that of assisting in the construction of the nursery school. "This was achieved with the assistance of students and lecturers from a theological college." It was after that involvement that the Mathare Valley Project (MVP) began to take shape.

The first activities undertaken by the MVP were those whose aim was to alleviate the most basic needs of the squatters. That is why it began by turning to "the unavoidable and urgent needs of providing limited relief to destitute families and periodic fire victims." This was done mainly with resources available within the NCCK social work program.

The next activities were concerned with educational needs. It started with a school fee assistance program, since most of the
squatters could not afford school fees. This assistance "soon necessitated a voluntary tutorial project to upgrade the work of students frequently placed above their ability levels due to their old ages." The last activity related to educational needs was that of conducting training workshops for the nursery school teachers. However, this had counterproductive results because the trained nursery school teachers considered themselves highly qualified and therefore demanded better pay, which the community could not afford. They ended up resigning. As it is reported, "this soon demoralized the training schemes, which were eventually left to the periodic efforts of a few resolute volunteers." During this period the Project began to get some aid from overseas and international agencies.

The third category of activities involved establishment of employment generating cottage industries in the Valley. This was necessary since through its involvement NCCK came to learn that "unemployment was obviously a major problem." The employment schemes gave the project more satisfaction because they were by far preferable to relief payments, which simply developed increasing dependence. All it took was a total capital outlay of 40 ($110) to provide full employment to one of the destitute cases. The cottage industries became part of an ongoing program in the Valley.

The fourth and, according to the documented report, most important category of activities was the squatter housing improvement program. It is considered to be the most important because it provided the legal tenure and urban security the squatters most desired. The NCCK and the NCC formed a joint working party whose task was to prepare details of a pilot project to experiment with the idea of "improvability". The
Pilot Scheme involved (1) the improvement of 2 small Mathare villages, Ngei I and Ngei II; and (2) the resettlement of one unimprovable village outside the Valley, called Kaburini (or Mji wa Huruma) which was burned down in early 1970 by the city, but still remained essentially intact.

By 1970 NCCK had a staff of 10 people involved in community development and community organization in Mathare Valley.

In the above brief analysis, we can identify the MVP's priority in program development. The order of priority is

(i) food
(ii) education
(iii) employment
(iv) shelter

However, in terms of longer term commitment, housing is given primacy over the rest. It is also important to mention that it is not just housing, but housing through the site and service scheme. It is to this program that most of the resources were directed later on. What seems to have happened is that food, education and employment were given priority in terms of chronological sequence in program development to build the people's confidence in the Project.

(5) Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluating information and feeding it back to guide action applies to the problem solving process in two ways. First, in describing a continuous activity that permeates the problem solving process we have described in the above four steps. Second, evaluation applies to the action outcome or end product of the total process. In this section we are concerned mainly with the former.

In a program, monitoring of information is important in that it
helps to correct or modify earlier decisions about structure or even policy. It is highly probable, especially in an experimental program like that of NCCK, that the perception of the problem might change as the process goes on, and/or that the views of people and organizations adapt themselves to one another as they interact. In such cases, solutions to problems tend to be a choice among alternatives, each of which represents some gains and some losses. During the initial stages of program development, the NCCK workers admit that "We tried our hand at many types of work, weeding out the less successful and concentrating our limited resources on those roles which we could perform best, and which would complement and not replace the community's own self-help organizations."76 When it became apparent that nursery school teacher training schemes had inverse impact on community development, the idea was shelved. There is not much documentation of what effect monitoring and feedback had on the MVP's activities, but it seems there was enough flexibility to allow room for modifications, at least.

In concluding the analysis on NCCK's social planning process, there are at least two things worth noting:

(1) The document we have used as data source states that the MVP was meant to supplement the official work in Mathare Valley. If official work here means the work of NCC and government, as we think it does, one wonders what that means since there was, at least until NCCK came into Mathare Valley, no official work of any importance. We will tend to conclude, therefore, that by "to supplement the official work" NCCK is making a policy statement. As the work progressed, it becomes very clear that NCCK, NCC and the government worked in close collaboration.
(2) Whereas one of its major objectives was to involve the people in community development, it is difficult to find evidence of people's participation in the rest of the report. Where it is mentioned, it is only in a very vague manner like "community spokesmen will be included in the committees", or there was "involvement of the resident's development committee in the decision-making process." But it is not spelled out who the spokesmen were or what their role was, although the role of other parties concerned is clearly stated. The only vivid description of people's participation is where they planned and executed their plans - sometimes in unorthodox ways - during the construction of the nursery school in Village 1. But at the time of that event, NCCK was an invited participant and not an initiator.

NCCK Work in Mathare Valley

Before embarking on concrete projects in Mathare Valley, NCCK set for itself what I call here "operating policies". There were two of them:

(1) As far as possible NCCK would utilize its resources to complement but not replace the community's own self-help organization and initiatives; and (2) NCCK work will be directed to the "neediest of the needy".

It was found necessary to set such "operating policies" because when NCCK's staff went into Mathare Valley for the first time, they found the squatters organized and working with amazing spirit. So it was

* A roadblock was established at the Pangani entrance to the village. Everyone who passed into the village was expected to pay one shilling. One man refused, so his cycle was impounded. The angry man complained to the Kenya Police, who sent five constables to enforce the constitutional liberties of the individual. After discussion, not only did the man pay one shilling and get his bicycle back, but the five askaries added five shillings to the school fund.
determined that such spirit should be encouraged and helped to thrive. Co-operation between NCCK and the people was therefore the highest criterion. The co-operation took various forms depending on the nature of the issue. For instance, in determining the neediest families, village committees gave a list to NCCK social workers who verified it by paying home visits to those recommended. This kind of co-operation minimized considerably any unprecedented friction between the social workers and the people.

The NCCK work in Mathare Valley can be divided into five areas: (a) education promotion; (b) health services; (c) nutrition and family education program; (d) employment generating projects; and (e) shelter improvement. We shall discuss each one of these in turn.

(a) Education promotion

In 1968 NCCK staff in Mathare Valley organized a joint meeting between them and the community leaders of Village I. The aim of the meeting was to "list the needs in order of priority and also to suggest ways of meeting those needs." On top of the list was education for children followed by health facilities, which includes a need for clean water and access to a clinic.

It is no accident, therefore, that the first NCCK staff experience in Mathare Valley was in a work camp, during which time a nursery school in Village I was constructed. When the building was constructed NCCK served clean water for the nursery school. That was the first time that clean water had ever been installed in Mathare Valley. The water was also used by the people, especially those close to Village I.

Shortly after the nursery school was opened an event, which was to be a turning point as far as education facilities in Mathare Valley is
concerned, took place. NCCK invited the City Education Officer to visit the Valley. He did not know that NCCK and the community had already organized a multitude of school age children - who never had the opportunity of attending school - to come and "greet the special guest". As Wanjiku Chiuri recalls the incident, "hundreds of children turned up and the City Education Officer was dumbfounded." What ensued during the visit implies that it was the first time a City Education Officer had ever visited Mathare Valley. The results of the encounter were very pleasant. The City Council official "responded by requesting the City Council schools around the valley to create an extra stream to accommodate Mathare children. This necessitated the establishment of a school fees assistance program, a voluntary tutorial project to upgrade the work of students frequently placed above their ability levels due to their older ages."  

The tutorial program which was organized by NCCK staff involved students from Nairobi University, Highridge Teachers College and Kenyatta Teachers College. The children benefited from four hours per week of intensive coaching by the same teacher. The tutoring was spread over two hours a day for two days a week. This program proved to be successful until it was discontinued two years later in favor of training nursery school teachers from the Valley.  

Those initial steps towards expanding the opportunities for children's education in Mathare Valley led to some improvements in this area. In Mathare Valley today there is one primary school and six nursery schools.  

The role of NCCK did not continue to be as active except in assisting the most destitute families with school fees. However, it runs "functional literacy classes" for the workers of the cottage industries in Mathare Valley. The purpose of these classes is "to improve English skills, while using stories which are related to their own life situations in Mathare
Valley. In this way they become more aware of their surroundings and try to discover ways in which to improve the situation. Other classes have been held on African literature and on business management. Without elaborating a little more on how the "functional literacy classes" are conducted, it is difficult for the author quoted to convince us that mere improvement of "English skills" can help to raise the level of consciousness of the workers. While we do not underplay the importance of "functional literacy classes", we tend to believe that all that it amounts to is basically simple adult literacy and not consciousness raising, as the author would have us believe. But our criticism is rather inconclusive because it is made while relying on scanty information concerning functional literacy classes. However, I tend to foster a conviction that an issue as important as consciousness raising of the workers could have been given more attention in a document dealing with "An Experiment in Human Development".

In spite of our criticism, however, we recognize that by and large NCCK played a big role in improving the facilities and conditions for formal education in Mathare Valley.

(b) Health services

One of the problems considered by the Mathare Valley squatters to be most acute and serious is lack of clean water. Efforts at securing clean water were taken by the people before NCCK started work among them. On one occasion the community leaders decided to investigate the possibilities of obtaining water from a city council pipeline passing close by Mathare Valley. To obtain such water an initial capital of Shs 4000 (approximately US$500) was needed. It did not take long before the people raised the required money through self-help activities. But as it
turned out they never obtained the water. Installation of the prospective supply was delayed for some time and finally "the City Council Water Department decided that 'illegal squatters' should not be permitted to use clean water." 84

Whereas NCCK has not done much by way of alleviating the acute shortage of clean water, it has installed water in institutions such as the nursery school and in its various cottage industries in the area. The people have access to such water but the meagre supply is far from meeting the great demand.

Lack of medical services is another serious health problem in Mathare Valley. Prior to 1971 the people spent a good deal of their incomes in having transportation to take patients to clinics in other parts of the city. NCCK has helped to combat this problem with considerable success.

"With permission from the administration, the NCCK helped to construct the first temporary clinic in 1971. The services of a volunteer part-time medical doctor and nurses were secured from one of the churches. Later on the community gave the NCCK part of the classrooms in the community's self-help permanent school. The two rooms are used as a Maternal and Child Health Clinic, which forms part of the Nutrition and Family Life Education Center." 85

Compared to the colossal health problems of the area, the services provided at the clinic are grossly inadequate. However, the approach to health service delivery in the squatter settlement is very commendable. The clinic has become a center for providing comprehensive family-centered health care services. This approach, to be elaborated in the section on nutrition below, is very useful for the inhabitants, whose meagre incomes cannot afford conventional medical services in Nairobi.

(c) Nutrition and family education program

For NCCK nutrition and family education program is perhaps the most
active and valuable involvement in community organization and community
development in Mathare Valley today. Since NCCK started community work in
Mathare Valley in 1968, the organization has been deeply concerned with
the widespread malnutrition, and its derivatives, among the children. As
early as 1969, after NCCK helped in building a nursery school, it was
recognized that one of the problems that constrained the learning capacity
of the children was undernourishment caused by lack of sufficient and
nutritious foods. NCCK organized soup kitchens and distributed powdered
milk in an effort to combat malnutrition. This had limited success, as
far as records go.

It was not until 1974 that there was a breakthrough in the area of
nutrition. That year a study was made by a trained nutritionist working
with NCCK in co-operation with the Medical Doctor who visits the clinic
three times a week. They observed mainly the school children who are
assisted financially by NCCK. The childrens' health and academic perfor-
mances at school were the two major variables observed. The observation
revealed that generally the children from Mathare Valley did more poorly
in school than those from more well-off neighborhoods. Among the Mathare
Valley children those with poorer health had poorer performance in school
than those whose health was better. So it was concluded that there is a
close correlation between poor health and poor performance in schools.
On that basis, the NCCK project "became increasingly concerned about
mental retardation in children due to poor diet." 86

Whether or not mental retardation due to poor diet is widespread
among the children in Mathare Valley is a matter we shall not pursue
in this discussion.* However, our major concern is not so much the reliability of the research findings as the spirit behind the project known as "Nutrition and Family Education Project". The crucial element in the NFEP philosophy of health is that an entire family becomes the "patient". When a child is found to be a victim of malnutrition a complete diagnosis (medical, social, economic, etc.) is done of the child's entire family situation. The family with all of its problems now becomes the concern of the project.

When the project was launched in late 1974, mothers came forward and "gave long stories of extreme poverty". It was found out that the basis for malnutrition was multi-faceted: besides the abject poverty, women had too many children who were too close to one another. Because of too frequent births "the children are weaned to improper foods" too early. Hence there is a high probability for the weanlings to be undernourished. 87

After the thorough diagnosis of the problem, it was found necessary to prescribe a multi-faceted solution as well. It was found necessary to begin a public health program for the mothers. Under that general title were specific activities, namely education and nutrition, family planning and general hygiene. There was another very central aspect of the problem which, if not addressed, could make the abovementioned activities appear too disembodied from reality. This aspect is the resources required to purchase the necessary goods. The project therefore had to

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* At any rate I seriously question the basis on which the children are judged to be mentally retarded. The comparatively poorer academic performance on the part of the Mathare Valley children should be attributed to a multi-variate causation. The physical, social and psychological environment of a place like Mathare Valley is hardly conducive to high performance in formal education.
create occupations for the mothers to increase their earnings and also
to devise ways of ensuring that the added income be used for the intended
purposes.

The project began by establishing a Nutrition and Family Education
Center. Besides the education part of the program, a patchwork project
was started. 100 mothers are involved in sewing patches on pieces of
cloth. They are taught various designs and today the women, a majority
of whom had never been to school, make their own designs. The women
attend the center and after a brief period of instructions on nutrition,
family planning or hygiene, they pick up their pieces of cloth and take
them home for sewing. "The mothers appreciate this arrangement very much
because they can look after their children while they are sewing. The
arrangement is ideal because the mothers cannot afford to hire house-
helpers." 88

Through the project the mothers can earn Shs 50 ($6) per week, "which
is quite considerable, taking into account their financial plight before
joining the group." 89 The low cost but nutritious food produced at the
center seem to have encouraging results. The food is a mixture of ground
soy beans, maize flour and powdered milk. Mothers buy the mixture at the
center and take it home where they prepare it for their children.

Since the project began, a very interesting development - from the
viewpoint of community organization - has taken place. Through their own
initiative the women decided to form a credit union. They appointed
their own committee. The organization required every woman to contribute
Shs 4 (US$.50) every week. "Four different women are selected each week
to receive Shs 92 (about $12) so that they can do much more for the family
that week. Through mutual encouragement women buy necessary items like
blankets and clothes for children. After they have spent the money each woman is asked to invite the committee members and show them what she has bought for the family.90

The project is very encouraged with the impact it has made on the lives of many mothers and their families. It hopes to begin a research on technology of drying and storing foodstuffs. This is because after the nutritionist's observation it is evident that "during the dry months when food is scarce and prices of food go up, poor families cannot cope with the situation."91 This observation is of course a fact; it is usually a matter of common sense and it should not take a specialist, conversant with situations like squatter settlements, that long to realize it. However, the intentions are good and, as the nutritionist contends, if food is bought during the time of plenty and properly preserved, it could go a long way in helping the poor families to contain situation during the time of scarcity when food prices "skyrocket".

The NFEP is a young and very promising program. It is promising because it addresses a very basic problem and involves mothers whose stake in the success or failure of the program is very high.

(d) Employment-generating projects

With involvement, NCCK came to a better understanding of the nature of the Mathare Valley community and its problems. Unemployment was obviously a major problem. In an attempt to address this problem,

"The NCCK initiated, at the request of the community, a chain of temporary workshop clusters which offered employment to the very needy families. No doubt, the job opportunities created were very few, but the items produced, such as copper jewelry, leather shoes, school uniforms, and high-quality educational toys, had a great impact in changing the general public's attitudes towards Mathare people. Many people visited Mathare Valley for the first time while they went to buy from the workshops."92
Four small scale industries are now in operation. These are Furaha Toys, Malaika Crafts, Leo Mpya and Ufumaji (Weaving Project). In all, there are about 100 people employed on a full time basis. Below is a brief discussion on the activities of each of the industries.

Furaha Toys

Started in 1970, this is the biggest of the NCCK workshops in Mathare Valley. It specializes in wooden educational toys. It has the highest output but it is also the most capital intensive as compared with the other workshops. Its output runs to several hundred thousands of toys per year. Some of its products are exported to West Germany and Great Britain and others are marketed locally. The local market is composed mainly of the richer people, tourists and high class schools, since the toys are of high quality and therefore too expensive for an average Kenyan and ever moreso for squatters in Mathare Valley. With a work force of 77 in 1975, "Furaha Toys is now self-supporting and able to pay all the workers more than the minimum wage recommended by the Government."

Malaika Crafts

Malaika Crafts was begun in 1971 with four disabled young men who had been trained in jewelry making at a Government Rehabilitation Center. The workshop employed a total of 18 persons in 1974. All the employees are referred by an NCCK social worker, who tries to determine those most in need.

The workshop is able to pay wages for all employees, with the exception of the manager, whose salary is partially subsidized by the NCCK.

"The workshop produces items in copper and brass, which incorporates the use of local pods, crocodile teeth, fishbone vertebrae, and ostrich egg beads, as well as some clay beads which are made locally. All designs are based on some African motif, and most are now being
created by the workers themselves. The jewelry wholesales for Shs 20 ($2.90) up to Shs 75 ($10.70), depending on the design and materials used."

In 1975 a leather section was opened. The leather goods made include shoes, bags, belts, watch straps and key rings.

Unlike Furaha Toys, Malaika Crafts is entirely labor-intensive. But like it, its finished products too are expensive and are consumed mainly by people of high income classes. The manager of the workshop recognizes this fact:

"Most of our products are marketed overseas through Cottage Industries (Germany, England, Holland), or sold through the NCCK Cottage Crafts shop in Nairobi. Another shop in Nairobi, 'African Heritage', has been instrumental in gaining markets for our jewelry in the U.S.A. In March 1974 the Field Museum of Chicago presented an exhibit of Contemporary African Art which included some of our work."

Leo Mpya

Leo Mpya is basically a training workshop for sewing. The trainees are mostly girls who fail to go to high school. Together with training, Leo Mpya specializes in tailoring. Clothes are made to measure and the making of school uniforms is a large part of their activities.

Since its inception in 1971, Leo Mpya has made a lot of progress. For instance, in September 1975, seven girls who were taking a one year course in dressmaking and design graduated. A few of these girls had indicated their interest in working together as a co-operative, after finishing their course. The project started them off with a loan and also assisted in finding suitable market and adequate premises for their business. The workshop will continue to train more girls who fail to qualify for secondary school education.
Ufumaji* (Weaving Project)

This is the youngest of the workshops. Like Leo Mpya, Ufumaji is basically a training workshop. It weaves mainly woolen material. Unlike other projects, Ufumaji takes in people from outside Mathare Valley. But they are almost invariably needy cases. The trainees are expected to do weaving in other parts of Kenya where wool is plentiful. One remarkable aspect of this project is its ingenuity in utilizing local and most common plants in making dye. The project seems to be making good progress. Its finished products are so popular in Nairobi that production cannot keep up with demand.

Like the products of other workshops, those of Ufumaji are also too expensive for the average Kenyan.

Connected with the small scale industries is the small business scheme. The aim of the project is to assist a few individuals by advancing small loans. It is also the project's aim to "help the people to run their small businesses more efficiently. Group oriented co-operatives have been found more successful. So far 4 groups are in operation trading in charcoal, used clothes and meat. Group members are taught practical bookkeeping, banking and business administration. In this way loss of funds through mismanagement is minimized."

Other businesses that have been set up through loans from NCCK are tea kiosks, fruit and vegetable vendors, and small businesses.

In concluding the section on employment-generating projects we would agree that they have contributed a great deal to the economic progress of a good many households in Mathare Valley. It is important to recognize that helping 100 families in a squatter settlement to have a regular income is a great contribution to the economic advancement of the community.

*Swahili word for weaving.
as a whole. This is because there is a network of kinship relationships among the squatters which makes it possible for an added income to meet the needs of other people besides the individual recipient.

(e) Shelter improvement

The findings of the research on squatter settlements of Nairobi, done by NCCK in 1971, convinced the organization that the most effective way of housing the poor was by improving the shelters on the current locations. Prior to the concept of improvability, the city authorities advocated redevelopment of the squatter settlements. It has been pointed out above (see section on alternative solutions) that, of all the alternatives, NCCK chose the one of improvement of existing settlements with provision of basic services: in other words, varied site and service approach. Ever since, NCCK lobbied the City Council Planning Department and other relevant authorities until the concept of improvability was accepted as the desired strategy for resolving the problem of squatter housing.

NCCK seems to have put a lot of hope in the improvability approach. When the City Council finally accepted the idea, NCCK received the acceptance with a sense of optimism.

"The opportunity finally presented itself when, just before the November 1971 elections, City Council did an about-face in policy and agreed to a joint pilot scheme with the churches to test this idea of 'improvability' to replace the former demolition policy. This would allow the residents to then progressively develop the Valley over time to a better standard housing, but most important, it would provide the legal tenure and urban security they most desired, as well as basic services." 98

Since then NCCK, as the chief protagonist of the idea of improvability, has done a lot to prove that it is the most viable option. It established its first site and service scheme in 1971. The arrangement is that NCCK gives loans, either in cash or kind (building material) and the people
organize their labor, preferably on a self-help basis. The NCC is supposed to provide the plots and services.

As of 1976 168 houses out of a total of 310 plots allocated had been completed. Another type of arrangement within the same program is that of building tenant purchase houses. The houses are built by the City Council and the prospective owners are supposed to pay deposits before they are allocated houses. When the first lot of such houses were completed in 1974, "The NCCK assisted 130 families with a loan to pay for the deposit." 99

In all it seems that NCCK has helped about 133 households through varied site and service schemes. Assuming an average of 5 people per family, about 1,500 people are supposedly living in better shelters as a direct benefit from the site and service scheme.

However, the improvability strategy has not worked as well as NCCK hoped it would. That is because of several reasons. First, the private housing companies in Mathare Valley have become the dominant agency in "improving" housing in Mathare Valley. But as we pointed out earlier, the company houses do not benefit the neediest of the needy in Mathare Valley. Second, the NCC has on many occasions not lived up to its promises of providing plots and services. In one case, that of rehousing people of Mji wa Huruma, it took the City Council five years to allow the people to move into the site which did not have any services. The third reason is even more problematic because it questions the intrinsic viability of improved site and service schemes as a solution to squatter housing problems. Of the 130 families that NCCK helped to acquire improved houses, Chiuri has this to say:
"When the same families were visited after one year, nearly half of them had rented out the whole house and had gone back to rent cheaper accommodation in the squatter settlement. About a quarter of the families occupied the kitchen space only and rented the other three rooms. The other quarter had changed the internal structure construction by putting an extra wall or blocking the existing door and building a door where there was not one."100

In light of the above it seems the NCCK will have to devise another more viable approach to the solution of squatter settlement housing.

D. Summary of NCCK accomplishments in Mathare Valley

To accurately evaluate the achievements of NCCK in Mathare Valley it is important to review its goals. Under the service-oriented goals NCCK aimed at helping to raise the standard of living of squatter communities economically, socially and spiritually. The change-oriented goals are first, to develop leadership and awareness among the squatters and secondly, to influence change of policies and programs of the local government.

In this assessment the accomplishments of NCCK are divided into three areas: first is the general recognition of NCCK's work by other organizations; second is the achievement of service-oriented goals; and third are the achievements towards the change-oriented goals.

1. General recognition

In Nairobi NCCK's work in squatter settlements is known in all circles. In recognition of its work among squatters, the government has granted NCCK's representation in the committees that have anything to do with poverty and welfare. NCCK is represented in committees of international organizations like UNEP (United Nations Environmental Program) and UN Human Settlements Program, both of which are headquartered in Nairobi. Having represented NCCK in the Non-Governmental Organizations under UNEP,
I understand the basis of NCCK's representations to be its contribution towards improvement of squatter settlements in Nairobi.

Perhaps more than any other agency the City Council of Nairobi in collaboration with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) seem to be most impressed and appreciative of the NCCK work in Mathare Valley. As a result, NCCK has been invited to participate in development of the biggest site and service scheme in Kenya, known as Dandora Sites and Services Project. According to the terms of reference with regard to the Project:

"In order to benefit from the National Christian Council of Kenya's (NCCK) experience in organizing and supporting low income communities and because of time pressures for the Dandora Sites and Services Project, the Town Clerk and the Task Force preparing the Dandora Project have requested NCCK to prepare proposals for community organizations and management of the Project."101

More specifically, NCCK was requested to:

"(a) make recommendations on how recipients of serviced lots might be organized, prepared or trained for their introduction into the Project;

(b) decide what role voluntary welfare groups and other organizations, e.g. church groups, should play in support of the project;

(c) decide what productive or commercial enterprises, e.g. small industries and handicrafts, should be promoted within the community - how and at what stage; and

(d) decide what training arrangements should be made to promote self-help housing, productive enterprises, and social services within the community."102

(2) Service-oriented

Using the data available it is difficult to measure how the peoples' living standard has been raised spiritually. But socially and economically it is probable that the standard of living of quite a good number of people in Mathare Valley has risen as a result of NCCK's contribution. Services
in Mathare Valley range from social welfare to financial sponsorship of children in schools to installation of water at the nursery school to provision of clinic services. It was pointed out that the NCCK small scale industries employ no less than 100 workers on wages above those recommended by the government. The numerous small shops and other businesses in Mathare Valley could be attributed, to a large extent, to the NCCK's Small Business Loan Scheme.

The Nutrition and Family Education project has brought under one group 100 women who, besides earning some income through Patchwork, are beginning to be more responsible in caring for their children. In evaluating its one year experience the project has the following to say:

"From observation the women who come to the Center have improved a great deal. They clean a little, wear better clothing and, above all, they are looking after their children better than before." 103

Whereas the shelter improvement program is beset with enormous problems, it is fair to attribute part of site improvements in Mathare Valley to the project. As NCCK admits, with respect to shelter improvement, the project has a long way to go. However, at the very least no less than 100 families have benefited from NCCK as far as improved housing is concerned.

(3) Change-oriented achievements

Perhaps the most important achievement as far as NCCK is concerned is the legal recognition of Mathare Valley as a necessary blight in the normal development of Nairobi. NCCK views the accomplishment with a sense of satisfaction.

"Thus during 1971, despite the delays, frustrations and general scrabble of any work without precedent we feel that the basic aim of the pilot scheme has been achieved: Mathare Valley has been legally recognized." 104
The implication of this is that the authorities refrained from demolishing shelters in Mathare Valley. This creates a good atmosphere under which the squatters can do their work and make some progress, while NCCK too needed the same atmosphere to carry on its projects successfully.

Secondly, the NCCK considers having won the government and City Council into accepting the concept of improvability as a big accomplishment.

A third accomplishment under change-oriented goals is the fact that the City Council changed its attitude towards primary school education for Mathare Valley children. Many children from the Valley are able today to attend schools in some communities within proximity of Mathare Valley.

The area NCCK has had very little or no accomplishments in at all is helping to raise the awareness of the people of Mathare Valley. Perhaps this is because it has not made any effort to do so. The organization seems to have contented itself with social welfare services and mild City Council policy adjustments. In almost all the data available there is no mention of how NCCK has made efforts at achieving its goal of awareness building among the people. However, there is a mention of the need to seriously reconsider the pursuit of this goal in the future.

"Finally NCCK should get away from traditional methods of social work, namely casework and groupwork, and work much more with communities. NCCK should not be tied down with development projects but should be much more a change agent which tries to tackle attitudes and institutions which stifle human development for change. In short, NCCK in problem areas should engage in conscientisation programs where people analyze their own situations and determine their own response to such situations." 105

How scrupulously this goal will be pursued is a matter whose evaluation will not be made in this study.
Finally, we view NCCK’s most important achievement to be that of legitimizing the need for improvements of squatter settlements of Nairobi. Superficial as the current changes might be, Mathare Valley will hardly be the same again. It is pertinent to predict that in all probability Mathare Valley will not be demolished without strong resistance from the communities dwelling there. Through their involvement in self-help projects, in interacting with authorities (with NCCK as mediator), it is highly likely that the people have come to realize their potential as a community. It is just as well that we conclude the summary of NCCK achievements by quoting the view of Mathare Valley people themselves:
"even if NCCK could not do much, at least they cared." 106

E. Conclusions

In concluding the case study let us review the major points we have raised. We identified three types of community organization in Mathare Valley. Whereas all three of them seem to have contributed to physical and economic development of Mathare Valley, none of them has made significant contribution to educational consciousness raising, least of all the private companies whose advancement is detrimental to that of the squatters.

The companies began as self-help organizations whose ultimate objective was to obtain security of land tenure for the whole community. But when the opportunity arose, the leaders seized it and in the long run they are now party to exploitative merchandising in Mathare Valley. This behavior on the part of the squatter leaders is not peculiar to the Mathare Valley people. Generally unconscientized oppressed people tend to yield to opportunism. Observation of squatters elsewhere reveal that
"The oppressed tend to look at immediate, short-range benefits because their situation does not encourage long-term plans and hopes. Even when they have started to struggle for liberation, individual leaders and members of factions can give in to the temptation of immediate gain at the expense of their companions." 107

In spite of all the important work done in Mathare Valley hitherto, the people - the squatting masses - remain demobilized and only organized in a manner that makes them prone to politics of manipulation. A good case in point is the situation in Village II which, incidentally, Marc Ross, Donna Holden, David Etherton, and Andrew Hake all consider to be the best organized and advanced. The criticism I put forth here is not against the point that it is organized and advanced but the important point is, in whose interest is it organized and advanced. Marc Ross throws some light on this. In his thoroughly researched study of political integration of squatter settlements in Nairobi, he best articulates the degree of political manipulation of the people in Village II by the "best" leader in the Valley. Peoples' inertia and lack of conscientized organization manifest themselves again in the current crisis between the squatters and the exploitative capitalist companies.

NCCK's great achievements in raising the standard of living of the squatters lacks a corresponding development in awareness building. That kind of development is likely to lead to a situation similar to that of the companies vis-a-vis the people, if only at micro level. Such a situation is likely to emerge because whereas it is true that the people possess the basic capacity to advocate for things in their interests as a community, it is equally true that when they have been forced to live so long under inhuman conditions, they tend to develop exploiter attitudes and behavior. This proposition has been well promulgated by an authority
on pedagogy of the oppressed.\textsuperscript{108}

NCCK seems to have been obsessed by the notion of "improvability" of squatter housing through varied site-and-service schemes (SSS). But from the experiences with "improvability", it seems to be getting disillusioned about both the efficacy and viability of the strategy. It is beyond the scope of this study to go into the merits and demerits of SSS.

But it is in order to note that the SSS now being advocated and heavily financed by the World Bank (among other agencies) as the "new" and most effective strategy for solving the problem of low-cost housing in underdeveloped capitalist countries, was tried for the first time in the wake of the Industrial Revolution in Europe.\textsuperscript{109} Since then, it has been tried in most of the developed capitalist world. It has never succeeded in solving the problem. We doubt if it will succeed in Kenya.\textsuperscript{*}

In the final analysis, therefore, we conclude that in Mathare Valley, and even more so in other squatter settlements of Nairobi, the solution to the roots of squatters' problems, as analyzed in this thesis, has a long way to go. That is why the next, and last, chapter of this study is devoted to suggestions on how to improve the current NCCK work in Mathare Valley.

Chapter 6. References


15. Ibid, p.16.


17. Ibid.


28. An outline of this kind of analysis is found in Fred M. Cox et al. (eds.). *Strategies of Community Organization*, Itasca (1974), pp.95-104.


32. NCCK Annual Report, July 1975, p.60.

33. Ibid., p.60.


38. See NCCK Annual Reports.


41. Ibid., p.103.


47. Ibid, p.17.


49. Ibid, p.61.


51. Ibid, p.3.

52. Ibid, p.4.

53. Ibid, p.4.

54. Ibid, p.4.


65. Ibid, p.23.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid, p.32.

68. Ibid, p.38.


70. Ibid, p.33.

71. Ibid, p.34.
72. Ibid.
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78. Ibid, p.33.
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85. Ibid, p.27.
86. NCCK Annual Report, July 1975, p.61.
88. Ibid, p.3.
89. Ibid, p.4.
90. Ibid, p.6.
91. Ibid, p.6.
95. Ibid, p.3.


Chapter 7

Recommendations

Our study has spelled out the root causes of the squatting problem in Kenya in general and Nairobi in particular. We also made an analysis of various types of solutions to the squatting problem. Two types of solutions were discussed: first, is the official approach by the authorities; and the second one is community organization. The first approach was shown to be ineffective in dealing with the problem. Whereas the second one has had more positive impact upon the lives of squatters, it also is beset with very serious problems which were pointed out in the previous chapter. One of the organizations involved in community organization among the squatter settlements of Nairobi is the National Christian Council of Kenya. Its work was shown to have contributed toward improving the living conditions of squatters in Mathare Valley especially. NCCK has also expressed concern over wanting to improve its traditional social welfare approach to community organization. It proposes to transcend its present case work and group work approach and "engage in conscientization programmes where people analyze their own situations and determine their own response to such situations."¹

It is on that basis, therefore, that the recommendations in this chapter are made to NCCK. It is also understood that an organization like NCCK can only achieve incremental changes, and then only to a limited degree. NCCK is clearly not a political movement nor a revolutionary organization. That is why our recommendations will be based primarily on what the organization has set as its goals.
The recommendations are made on two interrelated levels. First, is a theoretical or conceptual level. That means the recommendations will be directed towards the theoretical position of NCCK with regard to the squatting problem. The second level is on more pragmatic issues and the recommendations will be addressed to specific work of NCCK.

In making the recommendations, we are fully aware of the socio-economic circumstances now prevailing in Kenya. A consideration is also taken of the limitations to what NCCK as a voluntary church organization is able and capable of doing.

1. Theoretical Position

The analysis of NCCK's "definition of the squatting problem" in Chapter 6 above, revealed that NCCK sees the problem as basically an inevitable consequence of urbanization and modernization. That position seriously understates what this study has shown to be a very complex problem. We contend that such a position was reached at because of lack of clear analysis of the historical process that laid down the basis for squatting in Kenya. Our first recommendation, therefore, is for NCCK to seriously review its theoretical position concerning the squatting problem in Kenya. This study, I believe, has shown clearly the root causes of the problem. It can, therefore, form a sound basis for a theoretical framework from which to conceptualize the problem. We do not pretend to say that the study has exhausted the means by which the problem can be understood. However, insofar as the analysis is based on the historical context within which the present Kenyan socio-economic "development" has taken place, it is pertinent to argue that
an accurate definition of the problem has been made.

Strong emphasis is laid on theoretical framework, because any action which is not based on profound knowledge of the fundamental reality of the problem it seeks to resolve is unlikely to succeed in solving that problem.

2. Recommendations on the Work of NCCK

(a) Pedagogical Role

In the field of community organization, it is common to hear expressions such as "lifting the level of awareness of the people" or "building the people's consciousness". Before making a recommendation on the pedagogical role of NCCK, it is necessary to point out what I understand by those nebulous expressions.

The terms "lifting the level of awareness" and "consciousness-building" can be very misleading. They presuppose two opposing parties; one possessing the tools and technology required to "lift" or "build" the awareness or consciousness of the second party, whose awareness and consciousness are apparently dormant. By implication, the concept considers awareness and consciousness to be static categories that can be "lifted" or "built" at will. In my view, that concept of education is wrong because it treats knowledge as a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know little or nothing. It also treats empirical reality as static. But the real world is very different from what the above concept presupposes. No one individual, group, or, for that matter, class of people can pretend to have a monopoly of knowledge. Nor is reality static; rather,
it is a process undergoing constant transformation, in which case then, it is too presumptuous on the part of some people to see themselves in the business of lifting and building other people's awareness and consciousness.

That, however, does not mean that I do not see some basis on which a certain class of people can be in a more advantageous position than another class of people, in terms of having access to facts concerning systems, institutions or some other dimensions in life. In this respect, there is one basis on which an organization like NCCK is said to be in a position to contribute towards the squatters' understanding of the structures that repress them.

That basis can be seen from the viewpoint of historical reality of the Kenyan situation. Kenya has only just come out of colonial domination. By nature, a colonial situation does not permit the development of sophisticated education for the natives and, therefore, the grassroots do not generally reach a high level of political consciousness before the advent of the phenomenon of national independence. What the colonial system did was to offer the petty bourgeoisie the historical opportunity of taking leadership in formal education and its derivatives. The NCCK staff, composed, by and large, of petty bourgeoisie, could be said to play a role of information-gathering and sharing of it with the squatters.

A good example of how NCCK is in an advantaged position to understand some things that are beyond the social terrain of the squatters, is its role in development of Dandora Site-and-Services Project. NCCK is kept fully informed of the Terms of Reference of the Project. In
the Project Agreement the World Bank, the Kenya Government and the Nairobi City Council agreed on the following terms of reference concerning squatter settlement demolitions. No demolitions will be done except under the following conditions:

(i) there will be thirty-days' notice to the squatters affected prior to demolition;
(ii) the shelter owner asks for demolition;
(iii) there is provision of alternative housing prior to demolition;
(iv) the squatter settlement is seriously needed for public use;
(v) the squatter settlement is clearly a health/safety hazard.²

But as far as we know, the above conditions were not met before the most recent demolitions in Nairobi. According to the newspapers, the demolitions left over 10,000 people homeless.

In that kind of situation, NCCK can help the squatters in resisting demolition without being accused by anybody of sedition. And besides, I believe that every human being has a right to be told beforehand why his house is being demolished. Sharing of the information of that kind can correctly be said to increase the awareness of the squatters and being involved in resistance, which in any case will be within the conditions laid by the authorities, contributes to critical consciousness of the squatters.

(b) Community Organization Training

In the analysis on Chapter 6, it was shown that the leadership of base-group organization in Mathare Valley has been co-opted by the urban political system. It hardly serves the interests of the squatters any-
more. At the same time, the situation of the squatters is now seriously threatened by the proliferation of land-buying and house-building private companies in Mathare Valley. In light of the above, it is correct to argue that the squatter community in Mathare Valley is seriously in need of more enlightened base-group leadership.

As we pointed out above, NCCK has expressed concern for seeking, together with people, viable means of raising the people's level of awareness concerning the structures that oppress them. But as far as we know, nothing has been done in practical terms to implement that concern. We therefore propose that NCCK undertakes training of community organizers from among the squatters themselves. The pertinent question to raise is how feasible would such an undertaking by NCCK be.

It is most unlikely that within the current NCCK staff in Mathare Valley there are people fully equipped to do community organization training. But there are potential people who would need only several months' orientation to acquire the necessary skills. A joint recommendation, therefore, which may be a prerequisite to the above one, is for NCCK to use its connections with other church-based organizations and sponsor some of its staff, or indeed reliable squatters themselves, to train with organizations that have experiences in the area. An organization from which NCCK can benefit in this respect is the Christian Council of Asia (CCA), which runs several community organization training courses every year. To facilitate an arrangement towards this end, the NCCK can collaborate with the Urban Industrial and Rural Mission of the World Council of Churches, whose duty it is to render that kind of ser-
vice to church-related organizations.

**Conclusion**

This study has showed that the squatters are part of the exploited and oppressed class of people in Kenya. It is our contention that the ultimate solution to their problem lies entirely in their hands. But it is also true that any organization that shows concern over the plight of squatters and has gone to some length to demonstrate that concern, both in words and by action, needs to be encouraged to do even more.

It is in that understanding that the above recommendations were made.
Chapter 7. References


### Urbanization Patterns in a Sample of Less Developed Countries

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Per Capita GNP Level in 1972 US$</th>
<th>Size of Population (in 000's)</th>
<th>Percentage Of Urban Population</th>
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