TAMING RAPID URBANIZATION AND TRANSPORT PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS IN NAIROBI CITY, KENYA.

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1.0 Introduction

This paper outlines urban management and transportation policies and strategies adopted by Nairobi City Council of Nairobi, with a population of about 4.0 million (2008) and the capital of Republic of Kenya (see figures 1, 2 & 3). The objective of these policies and strategies was to enhance livelihoods of the urban poor through community empowerment and good governance. The Economic Recovery Strategy Paper of 2003 and the ambitious Vision 2030, Kenya’s new development blueprint covering the period 2008 to 2030, place emphasis on improving road infrastructure in order to reduce poverty and create wealth. The latter aims to make Kenya “a globally competitive and prosperous nation with high quality life in the next 22 years” while the former identified roads as a priority area with special emphasis on rural access roads, concessioning parts of the northern corridor, rehabilitation of the entire road network and strengthening of legal and institutional framework.
In Vision 2030, the role of infrastructure band which includes the roads sub-sector is one of the main buttresses to help the six sectors that constitute the backbone of the vision, namely; tourism, agriculture, wholesale, retail, and manufacturing, marketing local investment potential and financial services\(^1\).

**Figure 1: Map of Kenya**

![Map of Kenya](image)

Often, urban areas especially slums and squatter settlements have no access to basic services like water, sanitation, shelter and infra-structure. The demand for services by the rapidly increasing population has overwhelmed every local authority in almost all the countries. Also, the institutional and legal frameworks are archaic, financially-constrained and lag behind in revenue generation and maintenance of infrastructure. In addition, urban poverty and environmental degradation in the communities living here are major problems. Despite all these factors, the urban sector has great potential that can be harnessed via clear and demand-driven pro-poor urban policies. This implies that in the long run a combination of appropriate strategies and effective policies in urban sector will ameliorate the contemporary inequalities, widespread poverty, pressure and the gravity of suffering experienced by the majority of the urban poor in Kenya. Currently, the economic recovery path for Kenya looks fair considering the overall growth rate of 4.3 % and 5.8 % in 2004 and 2005, respectively. However, there are economic development challenges to overcome in order to accelerate economic recovery and maintain this development pattern.
The Government of Kenya has entered into partnerships with the development partners based in Kenya implement urban sector reforms for improving the lives of the people of Kenya especially the urban poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized.

Figure 2: Aerial Map of Nairobi City, Kenya

There is a positive correlation between levels of urbanization and national economic development. Often, highly urbanized countries tend to have stable economies, higher incomes per capita and robust institutional framework. Ample evidence in Africa
indicates that urban areas make great contributions to development goals. Nairobi City accounts for between 40 and 50 per cent of Kenya’s GDP. Table 2.1 compares urbanization levels in 2005 in Kenya with some selected developing countries.

### Table 2.1 Urbanization levels in Selected Countries in 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Urban Pop (%)</th>
<th>Rural Pop (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoH (2007), Ministerial Team Analysis

Certainly, urbanization reduces agricultural land pressure by providing assured markets for agricultural products and creating abundant non-agricultural employment and investment opportunities. If poorly managed urbanization precipitates socio-economic inequalities and population marginalization. It is worthwhile noting that urbanization process and sustainable growth of cities favour national development by income diversification, broadening innovations, cultural changes and acquisition of skills. Urban areas in Kenya have suffered from poor planning and inefficient urban management practices. Rapid urbanization and unplanned informal settlements have contributed to a myriad of problems experienced in the urban areas and resulting to unsustainable urban development. In 2005, Kenya had an estimated 20.4% of population living in urban areas and it is estimated that by 2030 about 63% of the total population will be urbanized. Table 2.2 shows population projections, 1999-2030.
Table 2.2 Population Projections, 1999-2030.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Urban Pop.(mil)</th>
<th>Rural Pop. (mil)</th>
<th>Urban Pop. (%)</th>
<th>Total Pop. (mil)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2027</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2032</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The population projections in Kenya indicate that after the year 2025, the rural population will decelerate while the urban population will experience a quick rise before slowing down a little. The urban and rural population projections in Kenya for the period 1999-2030 are shown Figure 2.

Fig.2: Population Projections in Kenya 1999-2030

Rapid urbanization will be guided by planned programme in urbanization and housing consistent with the trend of economic and social investments expected by Vision 2030.
2.0 Urban Management
The main matters addressed in urban management include, but not limited to; urban governance, urban policy formulation, strategic spatial planning, shelter and slum upgrading, land tenure, provision of basic services and environmental management. The Urban Sector in Kenya may be categorized in three broad areas, namely;
   a) Urban governance – community participation, decentralization and private sector.
   b) Urban finance
   c) Urban infrastructure and services.

Currently, apart from the key government ministries providing urban public administration functions there are varied stakeholders in the urban sector. For instance, the municipal governments are mandated to regulate, maintain and control urban management activities. In addition, working groups whose work is critical to urban development including; land, water and sanitation, education, environment, GJLOS and others are engaged. The major ones that are critical to urban development include; land, water and sanitation, education, environment, GJLOS and others.

Sound land use planning is a major determinant in the efficiency and effectiveness of urban management. Kenya has a fairly well-developed spatial planning history and most urban areas have development plans are to guide the development of urban areas and their environs.

These development plans address spatial needs and problems of:
   a) City planning and development,
   b) Transportation system and traffic management,
   c) Planning, development and managing the utilities - water supply, sewerage system, telephone system, electricity supply,
   d) Planning and development of civic amenities - schools, hospitals, shopping centres, etc.
   e) Protecting the assets of local authorities,
   f) Monitoring property tax collection,
   g) Monitoring sanitation, parks and playgrounds,
   h) Managing other services - emergency services, crime detection, etc.

3.0 Road Sub-Sector Reforms
The roads sub-sector reform process started in the mid nineties in line with Sub-Saharan Road Maintenance Initiative (RMI). The major reform achievements include; the establishment of the Road Maintenance Levy Fund (RMLF) in1993 to ensure a sustainable source of maintenance funds and establishment of the Kenya Roads Board Authority (KRB) in 1999 to separate the roles of financing and implementation. KRB concentrates on funding maintenance of all roads including approval of maintenance work programme, technical and financial audits of works it funds.

In 2005, the government initiated steps to develop a Traffic Management Authority (TMA) for managing the heavy traffic congestion experienced in Nairobi City\(^2\). The primary focus of the Authority was to develop mass transit for Nairobi Metropolitan
Area, increase capacity and operation, land use planning, traffic demand and capacity building in traffic engineering.

Provision of public infrastructure between urban and rural services is a critical management tool. Improved spatial linkages impact the movement of goods, people and capital. Improved infrastructure will provide the critically needed level of interaction of people and exchange of goods between urban and rural areas. Access to agricultural support activities and social services gets improved and could also be shared amongst villages located close to each other. Better connectivity of villages to urban areas and improved social services pull migrants to touch base frequently. Development of infrastructure and services should be in complement with the policies as stated earlier to prevent the adverse effects of connectivity from occurring.

In 2007, Roads 2000 Strategic Plan was launched with a dual purpose of improving road infrastructure condition and employment generation for it uses labour-based contracting.

The enactment of Kenya Roads Act, 2007\(^3\) will enhance the efficient implementation of the road sub-sector reforms. The Act created three new road authorities, that is; Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeERRA) and Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA). These authorities will be under the Ministry of Roads. KURA is the authority under which the City Council of Nairobi will be operating and implementing these road reforms. Thus the Urban Roads Authority will be responsible for the management, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of all public roads in the city except the national roads\(^4\). The classes of roads under KURA include; arterials, urban collectors including primary distributors and urban local roads.

4.0 Lessons Learnt
Some of the emerging lessons in urban management in roads sub-sector worthy of noting and recommended for replication in cities in developing countries with similar characteristics like Kenya include;

a. Adopting good governance principles, accountability, transparency, and social responsibility by the local authority that empower the local communities,

b. Integrating strategic planning, budgeting and implementation to promote prioritized actions through consensus of all stakeholders within the communities,

c. Introduction of public private partnerships for efficient provision, delivery of basic services and traffic management,

d. Introduction of innovative human resources management like; performance contracts, urban pacts and service charters,

e. Formulation of City’s vision and mission to chart development road map to meet citizens’ changing needs, aspirations and prudent use of available resources without compromising needs of future generations and

f. Encouraging establishment of inter-ministerial, inter-government and inter-donor coordination in the development agenda.

5.0 Conclusions
The reforms noted above demand effective management of urban growth, change management and robust local capacity with inputs from central government, local government, private sector, partners and local communities.

In view of the lessons learnt from the above factors and past case studies on sustainable cities it can be concluded that there are numerous benefits from the actions listed below:

a) Establishing effective, administrative and management structure based on good local governance, accountability and transparency,

b) Development and promotion of broad-based local capacities especially labour-intensive methods,

c) Efficient delivery and provision of basic utilities and infrastructure services especially to the poor,

d) Adopting strategic spatial strategies and sound the environmental planning principles and
e) Creation of public-private sector partnerships between public sector agencies, civil society and local authorities to enhance investment opportunities.

6.0 References:

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4 Ibid.