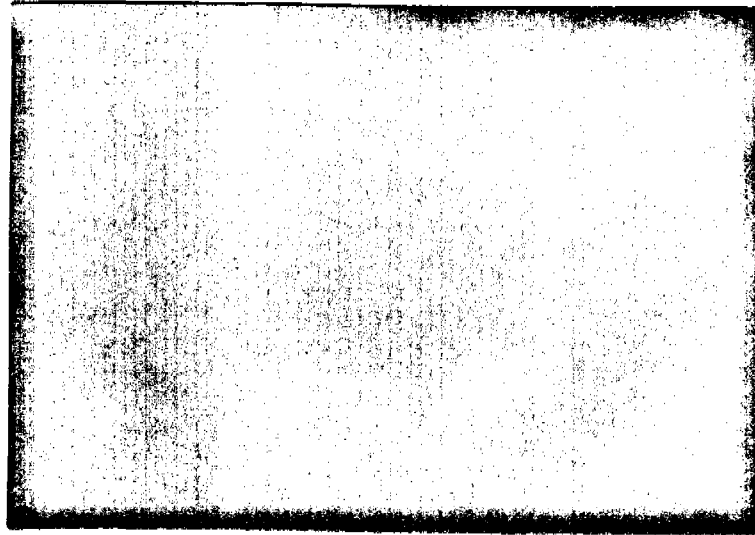




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**NGO SUPPORT TO INFORMAL  
SETTLEMENTS:  
A Case Study of Kibera, Nairobi**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

APD	-	Architecture and Planning Department
CDO	-	Community Development Officer
CPK	-	Church of the People of Kenya
DDC	-	District Development Committee
DO	-	District Officer
ESA	-	External Support Agency
HFCK	-	Housing Finance Corporation of Kenya
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
KAR	-	King's African Rifles
KIE	-	Kenya Institute of Education
KWAHO	-	Kenya Water for Health Organization
MNPD	-	Ministry of National Planning and Development
NACHU	-	National Cooperative Housing Union
NCC	-	Nairobi City Commission
NHC	-	National Housing Corporation
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organization
PHD	-	Public Health Department
PHO	-	Public Health Officer
UBEP	-	Undugu Basic Education Programme
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
VIP	-	Ventilated Improved Pit (latrine)
WHO	-	World Health Organization
WSD	-	Water and Sewerage Department
YMCA	-	Young Mens Christian Association

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## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Kibera\* is the largest informal settlement in Nairobi with estimated population of 400,000 living in an area of about 110 hectares. The settlement's population has grown dramatically over the last two decades from an estimated 20,000 in 1970, while the area on which the informal settlement is situated has been shrinking slowly as a result of redevelopment activities on the fringes. The result is surging demand for limited housing, congestion and overcrowding, and overburdened services and utilities. Water, sanitation and waste disposal facilities are especially poor, and present serious health hazards. Living conditions will continue to deteriorate if nothing further is done to alleviate the situation.

As the settlement is informal there has been little or no planning or provision of services by Local Government. In the absence of strong Government involvement, NGOs are the primary agencies involved in the development of Kibera. They provide a range of services from latrine emptying to business loans. Lessons learned from the development activities initiated and supported by NGOs will be of paramount importance if and when the area is upgraded and services are improved. Current indications are that Kibera will be redeveloped as a high density middle income housing area: the option of allowing the area to remain a low income area while carrying out some upgrading and improvements is not an alternative currently under consideration by Government. Given the lack of development of low-cost housing, the slow rate of redevelopment efforts, and the high population and continuing growth in the area, the process of transformation and redevelopment to high density middle income housing will take a number of years. This raises two questions:

- What can be learned from NGO experiences especially in water and sanitation, for application on a wider scale as long as the settlement remains informal, and as long as present policy persists?
- How can these lessons be usefully applied by the authorities in a way which allows for the provision of a higher level of services, while taking into account long term development plans for the area?

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\* In this report the name Kibera is used to indicate the area currently occupied by the informal settlement and does not include the redeveloped portion "better Kibera" which was part of the original area gazetted as Kibera.

The main lessons from NGO experience are:

1. **Low income households are willing and able to pay for services. They can and do repay loans.**
2. **Appropriate new technology can have a dramatic impact, however it needs to be continuously adapted to suit changing local needs.**
3. **Despite insecure tenure, a long term planning perspective is possible and necessary to ensure sustainability of development projects.**
4. **Women have a special role because they are more present, organized and therefore more receptive to community development initiatives.**
5. **NGOs have a special role because they are able to operate outside channels open to public agencies, they are flexible and therefore able to use various approaches to serve a community's needs.**

The authorities can best absorb and utilize these lessons by :

1. **Making services available on a strictly cost recovery basis, employing unsubsidized credit facilities where appropriate;**
2. **Encouraging experiments with promising new technology, even if not in strict compliance with existing practices or rules;**
3. **Adopting a medium and long term perspective about the present inhabitants of the area and their needs;**
4. **Recognizing and facilitating the role of women in improving living conditions; and**
5. **Encouraging NGOs to work closely with Government as intermediaries serving the needs of the community.**

The remainder of this paper expands on these findings. Section 1 presents the background to the problem; Section 2 provides the policy framework; Section 3 provides an overview of two of the main NGO's - KWAHO and Undugu - activities; Section 4 expands on each of the lessons learned; and Section 5 provides recommendations for future action.

## 1. BACKGROUND

Urban areas in developing countries are growing at an overwhelming pace. By the year 2000, 50% of the developing world's population will live in urban areas. In Africa, urbanization has proceeded despite the continued focus on rural development and decentralization. The pace of development has not kept up with rapid urban growth. Shortages of low-cost housing persist and thus informal settlements continue to absorb the majority of the population increase. In Nairobi, alone the number of people in such settlements is estimated at over one million.<sup>1</sup>

Population growth rates in informal urban settlements in Kenya are as high as 12 percent per annum<sup>2</sup>, whereas the overall urban growth rate is 6 percent per annum and declining. Informal settlements currently accommodate about 40-60 percent of the urban population. However, because they are illegal, services such as water and sanitation are usually deficient or lacking altogether. Government agencies are often unwilling to invest resources in informal settlements without formal planning and authorization. Any services they provide are often limited to those for which costs can be recovered immediately; and are administered informally on an ad-hoc basis.

### INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN NAIROBI

Informal settlements have been present in the Nairobi area since the early 1900s. Initially they were allowed to develop because of the colonial Government's segregationist policy which restricted "Africans" from living in areas reserved for "whites"<sup>3</sup>. Subsequently, with the lifting of the "emergency"<sup>4</sup> and the declaration of independence, there was a large influx of "Africans" into Nairobi.

Some settlements have a long history: Pumwani, the oldest "African" settlement in Nairobi was established in 1919. Although most of the original settlement has been redeveloped, overcrowding and growing housing demand in the area have led to the development of a number of informal settlements in the vicinity. In 1912, the area known as Kibera was allocated, through temporary residency permits, to Sudanese soldiers who fought with the Kings African Rifles (KAR). Mathare, now the second largest settlement, dates back to 1939 and has a long history of successive demolitions.

Most of the existing informal settlements in Nairobi are on the fringes of the city; many of those closer to the city center have been demolished. However, a few settlements such as Kibera are now within the city due to expansion of the city boundaries<sup>5</sup>.



There are an estimated 78 informal settlements (or villages) in Nairobi district's 7 divisions. In total, approximately 40-60% of Nairobi's population of 2 million is housed in these informal settlements. By the year 2000, the city's population is projected to grow to 4 million, of which up to 60% are expected to occupy informal settlements. Today, these informal settlements range in size from 100 to 3,500 structures with an average of 4 rooms per structure and 4 persons per room. The population range for informal settlements is as low as 9,000 in Westlands division to a high population estimate of about 450,000 in Kibera.<sup>6</sup>

Conditions and characteristics vary from one informal area to another. For example Kibera has a lower density than Mathare in terms of the number of structures per hectare and the size of the rooms (sq ft), and has structures of a more solid nature (wattle and mud as opposed to plastic sheeting, metal and wood scraps, cardboard and miscellaneous materials). Land tenure also varies: settlements have developed on Government land, municipal land, private land or some combination of the above. These differences arise from a number of factors including the history and evolution of the settlements, location, ethnic composition and tenure. A number of characteristics are, however, common to all informal settlements, these include: low socio-economic status, poverty, overcrowding, lack of privacy, sharing of common facilities, poor sanitary and environmental health conditions, poor transport networks and deficient basic services.

### **KIBERA - AN INFORMAL SETTLEMENT**

Kibera sub-location is located south-east of Nairobi City Centre within the city boundaries seven kilometres from the central business district. It is largely an informal settlement although part of the original north western portion has been redeveloped and is now largely a middle income area.\* The informal settlement area is now comprised of 9 villages covering 110 hectares.

History<sup>7</sup> - Kibera was originally traditional Masaai grazing land. It thereafter became a KAR military reserve and between 1912 and 1928 was allocated as an area of temporary residency for (Sudanese) Nubian soldiers who had served the KAR for a period of over 12 years. Initially, permits were issued by the KAR allowing the Nubians to live and farm the area until such time as the Government required the land for other purposes. These temporary permits specified that the houses constructed should be semi-permanent, located not closer than 500 yards from the Ngong road, and since the land belonged to the Government, the residents should be prepared to move if the land was required by the Government for other purposes.

In 1928, the settlement was transferred to the civil authorities. Existing permits were recalled and new standard permits were issued. New settlers in the area were thereafter required to prove their relation to original Nubian servicemen before

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\* In this report references to Kibera refer solely to the informal settlement unless specified otherwise.

they could receive a permit for residency. In 1933, the Carter Land Commission recommended immediate demolition, partial compensation and gradual eviction of unauthorized settlers. Original permit holders were allowed to remain in the hope that by restricting the population accordingly, the settlement would disappear by attrition. Unfortunately, this did not occur: the recommendations of this proposal were only partially implemented and unauthorized settlers continued to move into the area.<sup>8</sup>

This was the beginning of a long period of uncertainty for Kibera residents. In the years after 1933, various proposals regarding the future of Kibera were put forth by the Government. Few were ever implemented although the realization that the settlement was growing rapidly and that those originally permitted to live in the area had nowhere else to go made it all the more important to find solutions to the problem. In the 1950's, the decision was again made to allow the Nubians to remain in Kibera and a plan prepared by the Working Party for the Development of Kibera was presented to the Council of Ministers for approval. The plan, which was approved in 1959, allocated a 500 acre area gazetted as the Kibera African Settlement in 1948, to be developed as an urban settlement for about 15,000 residents. Waterborne sewerage and water connections were recommended for the area because of poor soil conditions and proximity to the water and sewer mains. Based on this plan, initial redevelopment activities took place in the north-western area of Kibera. All redevelopment activities have been confined to the fringes of the settlement. Most recently, high rise middle income housing is being constructed on the eastern side of Kibera. The intention is that this housing will be made available to Kibera residents.<sup>9</sup> However given the high (and rising) costs of construction, the Government would have to provide a substantial subsidy in order to make this housing affordable to Kibera residents. The smallest structure (2 rooms) currently costs over Ksh 100,000.

Today, uncertainty about the future of the settlement is still present among residents who are now primarily non-Nubian. However, despite uncertainties, the population has continued to grow.

Population and Ethnic Composition. The population of Kibera is divided among ten villages with population ranging from 20,000 to 50,000 in each village. Population density is highest in Kisumu Ndogo, Laini Saba and Gatuikira while Makina, Mashimoni and Lindi, some of the original areas occupied by Nubians, have lower densities.

The distribution of population by gender is biased toward males (64%)<sup>10</sup>, probably because of the high percentage of single men who are seasonal laborers in the Nairobi Industrial Area, and are tenants in Kibera. The majority of residents are aged between 20-29 years. There are also large numbers of young children of school age many of whom are not enrolled in school. Some of these are street children and many from female headed families.

Kibera has two resident social groups with different interests and objectives. The first group consists of **temporary** residents: those who come to look for a job in the city but keep ties with the rural areas where they own land. Most are tenants and sub-tenants and their stay is characterized by expectations of moving out of Kibera should their situation improve, however, they often remain for over 6 years.<sup>11</sup> The majority of residents in this social grouping are Luos, Luhyas and Kambas.

The second group consists of **permanent** residents including the Nubians and rural-landless who have no rural home to go to. They are mainly landlords (the Nubians and Kikuyus) but include some tenants (rural landless). Most have lived in the area for over 15 years, many throughout their lifetime. This group has closer ties with the community. They are often involved in community groups and participate in activities to better the community.

A third **non-resident** group do not live in Kibera but have property interests that tie them to Kibera. These are landlords and business owners who are often full time professionals and are therefore absent from the daily activities in the area. Their participation in community activities is minimal and often limited to promotion and protection of their investments.

Housing and Tenure. Despite insecure tenure, large scale development of rental rooms in Kibera has gone on since the 1950s. Typically, developers (landlords) construct rental units with the expectation of recouping their investments within one year. For example, the cost of building an eight room structure in Kibera in 1988 was estimated at Ksh 17,665. At a monthly rental rate of Ksh. 200 per room per month, investment costs could be recovered within two years<sup>12</sup>. Current costs of building a room range from 4300 to 5,400 depending on materials used. The number of rooms owned by landlords is often between 50-200. At the going rents which range from 150-300 in densely populated areas and from 300 - 400 in less populated areas in 1990, rental rooms are a lucrative investment. In effect the profit motive has provided an incentive for landlords to put up cheap temporary rental rooms despite the threat of demolition, while the lack of tenure has discouraged the improvement of facilities by landlords who fear the loss of their investment through demolition.

Density varies from one village to the next. Makina and Mashimoni are quite spacious while Kisumu Ndogo and Laini Shaba are densely populated with smaller rooms. Room sizes vary, although average room size is 12 x 12½ ft. square. Most rooms are grouped together in a structure of typically more than two rooms with an average of 3 to 4 persons per room, but as many as 6-10 in bachelor occupied rooms. This kind of overcrowding is caused by tenants renting out space within their rooms to other single persons (sub-tenants) usually of the same gender. Many landlords are only interested in collecting rent for the room and do not monitor the number of people occupying it. In the case of absentee landlords an agent (usually one of the tenants) is appointed to collect rents and to manage the rooms. Relations between

tenant and landlord are often poor, especially with those landlords who do not live in Kibera and depend on agents collecting rents for them. Landlords blame the tenants for the poor state of facilities while tenants blame landlords for poor housing and services. The result is continued deterioration of facilities and conditions in the area and increased overcrowding and congestion of rental rooms.

**Cost of Building Rental Room (12 x 12½ ft.)<sup>1</sup>**

Wattle (Walls) <sup>2</sup>	300.00
Timber(Structure/Beam)	500.00
Cement (Floor)	500.00
Corrugated Iron Roof)	1,600.00
Artisan/Supervisor	1,500.00
Community Labour <sup>2</sup>	300.00

<sup>1</sup> A fee of 1,000 is paid prior to erecting the building.

<sup>2</sup> Women assist in building/finishing the walls (with mud).

**Transportation.** There is one main unpaved road in Kibera with many feeder paths some of which are negotiable by vehicles. As a result of poor drainage and lack of maintenance, the main road is in poor condition and is almost impassable during the rainy season. The width of this road varies from one village to the next and in some of the more densely populated sections houses have been constructed within 1 metre of the roadside. Poor road conditions limit access to the area. Therefore delivery of goods from the main road into the villages is often carried out using wheel barrows and handcarts. Most residents walk to the nearest main roads -Karanja Road and Mbagathi Way - for public transportation. NCC notes that inaccessibility hinders the provision of public services such as latrine emptying and garbage collection.

**Education.** There are four Government schools within proximity of the informal settlement area of Kibera, although there are none within the informal settlement. There is one private primary school (Mashimoni Primary school) but no secondary schools. Private facilities include numerous nurseries/day care centres and some special schools for disabled children, street kids, adult education and technical skills. Many children enroll in schools in the surrounding area, however, this number is limited by the large number of

applicants, the high costs of uniforms and books, and the mandatory building fee paid annually as a contribution to the maintenance of the school. Some school aged children are out of school. Some work or assist their mothers with day to day chores.

Health Services are provided by a number of NGOs since there are no government health services provided in Kibera. The closest government facilities are a Maternal, Child Health and Family Planning Center, Kenyatta Hospital, Ngong Road Dispensary and Woodley Clinic among others. Most NGO health services in Kibera are clinics or dispensaries operated by western trained professionals, but there are also several traditional medicine men/women and traditional birth attendants. Services offered by NGOs are often more expensive than public services. Residents who cannot afford these services must travel long distances to free public facilities such as Kenyatta Hospital. Through the Public Health Department (PHD), teams of health professionals are organized to conduct training in health education and mobile clinics.

Recreation. There are few recreational facilities in Kibera. Through self-help efforts the community has built a social hall. Undugu Society, an NGO, provides a playground, sports facilities, and a hall for community use. The private sector also provide entertainment including a cinema and numerous bars and nightclubs which cater to adults. There is a serious shortage of open space, and lack of ground cover (grass) in the area. Children are often seen playing near garbage dumps, open drains and in other environmentally hazardous areas.

Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste. Because of the informal nature of the area, services are provided on an ad-hoc basis. Water connections are provided by the Water and Sewerage Department (WSD) of NCC on payment by the community or vendors, however because of lack of planning in the area, water is in short supply and this leads to inflated prices, sometimes five to ten times the rate paid by middle and high income households. As a result, residents are often forced to use polluted water from the nearby river. During epidemics NCC usually steps in to provide preventive and curative treatment. Many of the initial standpipes in the area were provided in response to a threat of the spread of cholera in the early 1970s.

Pit latrines are the predominant excreta disposal facility. Many are crudely constructed from odd scrap pieces of building material. Due to the high water table in low lying areas, latrines are often elevated. There is no formal collection of solid waste, although there are community efforts to collect waste materials from communal areas including drains and along paths. This

is either burned or transported to the nearest formal pickup point at the edge of the settlement.

## 2. POLICY FRAMEWORK

The situation described in section 1. has been very largely shaped by Government policies toward informal settlements.

National framework - The central Government's position on informal settlements is that squatters should be offered an alternative resettlement site before being evicted. Beyond that there seem to be no Government policies dealing specifically with informal settlements. In their absence, the full range of legislative measures such as the Public Health Act apply to informal settlements; some pre-date independence and were designed to support the colonial Government's policy of limiting the number of Africans living in urban areas.

These include the Grade I Building Codes which were initially designed with the "white" settler class in mind. Grade I codes effectively rule out the construction of affordable low income housing. An International Labour Organization (ILO) study notes that the local authorities' interpretation of the Building Codes and Public Health Act led to the following standards for urban housing: 2 rooms, a kitchen and toilet, constructed of "suitable materials" (not semi-permanent) and occupied by a maximum of 5 persons.<sup>13</sup> The study further notes that given the low income level of many urban households and in the absence of heavy subsidies these standards force low income families to seek affordable housing in informal areas.

Grade II Building Codes were subsequently formulated in 1968 to set out more realistic building standards for low income housing. These codes allow for the construction of semi-permanent dwellings and pit latrines in urban areas, but they have only been adopted in a few secondary cities (including Nyeri and Eldoret through the World Bank Second Urban Project). The main argument made by the authorities against adopting Grade II Building Codes in Nairobi is that they would lower standards throughout the city. Although lower standards, recommended in a review of Low-income Housing, were approved by Cabinet in 1985 they have yet to be implemented and the cost of compliance with Grade I codes remains outside the reach of most low income households. The review of by-laws concluded that it was necessary to lower minimum standards to "make legal accommodation affordable to the low income majority" and argued that despite lower minimum standards, middle and high income groups would demand housing above a certain standard. A committee has recently been set up in the Ministry of Lands and Housing to draw up

an action plan for the implementation of the 1985 By-law Review. The committee will also review and revise the National Building Code.

Kenya's official housing policy established in the late 1960's (Sessional Paper no. 5 of 1966/67) emphasized capital shortage as the main reason for the housing problem. Thus the Housing Finance Company of Kenya (HFCK) and the National Housing Corporation (NHC) became the principal agencies through which the public sector would assist in the provision of low and middle income housing. However, high costs of financing housing and the by-law standards set in the building codes, mean that much of the housing built by these agencies middle income housing.

A secondary aim of the policy was to restrict the growth of informal areas in and around the city. This led to demolition of many settlements in the 1970s. Demolition of informal settlements was initially supported on the grounds that rural-urban migrants should "return to the land", (in reality many of those who migrated to urban areas were actually the rural landless)<sup>14</sup>. Demolition activities were also carried out in line with the Public Health Act which mandates that the local authority "maintain sanitary conditions" and keep the city free from "nuisances" including poorly constructed dwellings, overcrowding, unsanitary environmental conditions, etc.

There has been little change in legislation or formal policy since independence, but in practice the approach to unauthorized settlements became more favorable during the 1970s. Many settlements benefitted from sites and services and upgrading schemes. This was partly a result of the interest of international agencies in such schemes, combined with the realization on the part of officials that the housing problem was out of hand. In the 1990's, however, demolition activities still continue from time to time, without the designation of alternative sites to resettle displaced families. The Government is now making some efforts to establish the extent of the housing problem. In the wake of recent opposition to the demolition of informal settlements, a committee was set up within the Office of the President to look into the issue. More recently, Members of Parliament passed a motion asking the Government to speed up the process of resettling squatters<sup>15</sup>. The National Housing Policy (1966/67) is also being revised to provide clear objectives to all actors involved in housing delivery and to create an "enabling environment" within which this can be accomplished<sup>16</sup>.

Local framework - As the primary agency, within Nairobi, involved in urban development, management and the provision of services, NCC should play an important role in regulating the growth of, and upgrading informal settlements. As the most visible Government agency in Nairobi, the NCC often has to bear the brunt of accusations and criticisms leveled against the Government for their failure to improve conditions in informal settlements. As an arm of the Government, the NCC's role is to enforce the Local Government, Public Health and other relevant acts. NCC maintains that they are however, legally restrained from operating in unplanned or unauthorized areas and are therefore often unable to enforce relevant



legislation. The argument is that resources should only be invested in planning and developing those areas of the city for which future land use has been identified.

Within the Commission there are varying points of view about Kibera. The Architecture and Planning Department (APD) views the area as land planned for middle income housing for which the area is zoned. Officials note that the informal settlement is in conflict with the land use plans for the area and with existing building codes and standards. In addition, Kibera is situated within the city boundaries on prime land, in close proximity to water and sewerage mains. Economics therefore dictate that the area would be most suitably developed for medium to high density development such as that which is being constructed on the eastern side of Kibera.

During the 60's, the NCC Water and Sewerage Department's (WSD) view was that the provision of water to unauthorized settlements would legitimize an illegal situation. NCC therefore declined to connect Mathare residents to the water system, despite the willingness of residents to pay for the service. An outbreak of cholera in 1971 subsequently led to the connection of water points in Mathare and Kibera, and by 1978 licenses for operating water kiosks in informal areas were issued by WSD. Since then the number of connections in Kibera has increased to about 500, the only restriction being the general water shortage in the area<sup>17</sup>. WSD's current view is that as long as there are people living in the area, they must be provided with basic services such as water. Water connections are therefore provided as long as they are requested and paid for in advance. Some work is ongoing with various ESAs to provide assistance in the water and sanitation sector. Despite this recognition, WSD does not include the population of the informal settlement in Kibera in estimates for future water requirements and in developing plans for increasing water supply to Nairobi. WSD notes that this would suggest infrastructure investments in an area for which future land use has not been specified. The result of this lack of planning is that the demand for water in the Kibera area is currently several times higher than supply since tens of thousands of extra people are drawing water from the system. Major water shortages have been experienced in the general area around Kibera over the past few years, which WSD attributes to overuse by residents in Kibera.

Although Kibera lies along the sewer line, due to the informal nature of the settlement, no connections are allowed. Most residents use pit latrines and these are either filled up and abandoned or, with the introduction of a latrine emptying machine, periodically emptied. WSD has allowed the emptying of wastes collected by the machine into the sewer for a fee.

PHD, though mandated to provide certain health services, has had limited formal involvement in Kibera. There are currently no government health clinics in the informal settlement area and residents are therefore forced to use NGO facilities or nearby government clinics. Through its 2 officers assigned to Kibera PHD currently conducts mobile clinics and periodically mobilizes teams of health professionals to carry out health education and other activities. Very little in the way

of enforcement of the Public Health Act is carried out although through the Chief, PHD ensures that there is some control over the building of latrines and periodically inspects commercial establishments such as food vendors, restaurants and bars. The Act stipulates that local authorities should take necessary measures to maintain "sanitary conditions" and prevent "public nuisances", however, a quick tour of Kibera reveals that many of these nuisances exist and in most cases housing and infrastructure are below even the Grade II building standards. Despite the low level of formal involvement, the PHD department has shown an interest in improving the health conditions in informal settlements particularly through NGO supported ventures.

### 3. NGOs IN KIBERA

With this background, this section provides an overview of NGOs and a description of the activities and objectives of the two NGOs focussed on in this report. Details on specific NGO activities are covered in the following section (4) on Lessons Learned. The NGOs were chosen because they are well established within the community and are involved in water and sanitation activities.

Several NGOs have shown concern for the situation in Kibera, and are now involved in various community activities; over sixteen NGOs operate in Kibera, as detailed in annex 1. NGOs such as Crescent Medical Aid, CPK Church, Kibera Catholic Mission, KWAHO, and Family Planning Association are active in the promotion of health oriented programmes, while Undugu Society of Kenya, Young Mens Christian Association, Don Bosco and World Vision focus their attention on youth programmes. Action Aid, Missionaries of Charity and World Missionaries concentrate their attention on the improvement of community social services. Most NGOs have areas of concentration, but are involved in a broad variety of activities.

There is currently no formal procedure for NGOs wishing to establish themselves in the community. Some have simply established facilities and commenced activities without the knowledge or acceptance of the community and its administrators. Many start up and disappear within a short period of time, thus contributing to the general feeling of distrust and skepticism towards outside assistance felt by the community.

Coordination of NGO activities has been identified as one of the primary missing links between the NGOs engaged in development work in Kibera. Some NGOs involve themselves in a variety of activities which often overlap and sometimes bear conflicting messages to the community. Coordination with local authorities is also weak. Often NGOs seek help from local government for authority or assistance before implementing a project but thereafter do not inform local government of their progress.

In order to coordinate activities among themselves, NGOs have formed a coordinating committee which aims to resolve some of these problems. The committee is comprised of various actors from NGOs, the local Kibera administration, the city Government, and village leaders. The committee has initiated joint activities at the community level, for example in the area of environmental sanitation, Village Health Committees are active in clearing refuse despite the lack of assistance, in disposing these wastes, from NCC. However, not much has been done on a wider scale to reduce overlap between NGO programs of a similar nature. A second coordinating committee has recently been formed under the Chairmanship of the Sub-district Officer whose function is to represent the NGOs operating in Kibera at the sub-District Development Committee (DDC). Several Health related NGOs are collaborating to offer various services such as free clinics.

## **KENYA WATER FOR HEALTH ORGANIZATION (KWAHO)**

KWAHO was founded as an independent NGO in 1983 with full support and assistance from the Ministry of Water Development which initially provided it with office space, transport, materials and staffing assistance. With its focus on social mobilization, KWAHO was one of the pioneers of community based approaches in the water and sanitation sector. Working with various ESAs and NGOs over the years, KWAHO has built up a solid reputation for success in community mobilization.

KWAHO has been involved in Kibera since 1976 (when it was associated with the UNICEF/NGO Water for Health Project). This was a follow up to the Mexico Conference in 1975 where NGOs were requested to start pilot water and sanitation projects, in order to improve the lives of both rural and urban women.

KWAHO's goal is the improvement of water and sanitation in rural and urban communities through community mobilization. Community participation and ownership are important objectives of their strategy which aims to ensure that the community is involved in the planning, implementation and management of projects. A further objective of this strategy is to ensure sustainability of development activities.

KWAHO has had notable success in the use of community participation techniques. The majority of their involvement in development activities has been in the rural areas where they have focussed on involving rural women in the repair, maintenance and management of handpumps.

The main objective of setting up a pilot project in Kibera was to alleviate poverty and suffering among disadvantaged people. The pilot project in Kibera was designed to assist the population increase their access to water and thus improve hygiene. Women, as a disadvantaged group, were to be both the main actors and the beneficiaries of the project. The overall objectives were: firstly, to increase accessibility to clean and sufficient water; and secondly, to improve sanitation through construction of ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines. These objectives were to be achieved through participation of local women's groups.

Specifically, KWAHO's aims were:

- to provide water kiosks in all the 9 villages;
- to encourage income generating activities related to water;
- to assist Kibera residents in constructing VIP latrines to serve all the villages;
- to expand water kiosks and VIP latrines so that eventually there would be adequate coverage;
- to provide training in construction and maintenance of water kiosks and VIP latrines; and

- to monitor the progress being made towards the achievement of these goals.

Fourteen women's groups were selected for the water kiosk project. KWAHO assisted the women's groups in setting up fourteen 4000 gallon water tanks and getting water connected by the City Commission. The women's groups collected funds and organized labour for initial construction and management of these facilities. Besides increasing access to water, the project also lowered prices for water - water is sold at 30 cents per 20 litre container, which is lower than the 50 to 60 cents common at other kiosks. Income generated from this project (about Ksh 850 per month) is used for other community related activities such as charcoal distribution.

KWAHO has also assisted in the construction of public VIP latrines, in addition to providing training in their construction. With KWAHO's assistance, the community obtained a latrine emptying vehicle funded by the Norwegian Aid Program which can access difficult areas and service pits with dense wastes. The emptying vehicle is managed by a team of community members who cover all villages on a weekly basis. Residents pay Ksh 150.00 in advance for a full load. This fee is designed to cover operation and maintenance of the vehicle as well as its depreciation.

Finally, KWAHO has also provided social facilities through the Health and Craft Centre. Activities such as maternal and child care clinics are carried out on Mondays when mothers bring children for immunization. Health education and cooking demonstrations are also held on Mondays, while the elderly use the centre on Thursdays. In order to ensure sustainability of this programme, FINNIDA funded renovating of a 16 room semi-permanent residential structure. Income realized from rents (3,800 monthly) assists in running a day care project for the elderly.

#### KWAHO LATRINE EMPTYING SERVICE

*With funding from NORAD, KWAHO has established a latrine emptying service in Kibera. The service is provided to each of the 10 villages on a rotational basis each week. Although the machine is operated by a community based crew, access to the latrine must be ensured by landlords who sometimes have to knock down housing to facilitate access by the machine. The landlord is also required to ensure that the sludge is prepared in advance to facilitate emptying.*

*The vehicle is managed by a 13 member community management team and operated by crew consisting of loader, driver and supervisor. Working 5½ days per week for 8 hours per day the crew empties between 3-10 loads per day depending on distance, accessibility and the nature of sludge to be emptied. Requests for the service are paid for in advance. One to three loads is the normal request, however this may run as high as six. The charge per load is Ksh 150. This covers running and maintenance costs of the vehicle which accounted for about 89% of gross monthly income in the first 6 months of 1991. As a result, the fee was recently raised to Ksh 150.00 to increase the revenue base.*

*Maintenance and repairs are carried out by a community based mechanic. Few major repairs have been undertaken so far. The majority of repairs were punctures caused by rough roads and sharp materials such as nails left behind by builders.*

*About 6,000 people were served in the first 5 months of 1991 however there is usually a backlog of 30 to 60 requests. The management committee would like to obtain a second vehicle to provide better service to community members.*

## UNDUGU SOCIETY OF KENYA

Undugu Society of Kenya is a non-Government organization engaged in community development activities in Nairobi's informal settlements. Undugu was established in 1973 with the main objective of assisting street children. First registered in 1975 as the Undugu Youth Centres, the present name Undugu Society dates back to 1978 when the organization was registered as a non-Governmental body under the Societies Act.

The overall objectives of the organization are:

- to enhance the socio-economic status of people in low income areas through an integrated approach to community and small scale business development;
- to enhance the sense of responsibility of people in low income areas for their own development; and
- to provide non-financial assistance to other organizations that are involved in similar activities;

Since 1986 Undugu has operated 22 different activities with it's staff of 119 employees spread over 5 different low income settlements in Nairobi which include: Pumwani, Kibera, Mathare, Eastleigh, Kariobangi; and Katangi settlement in Machakos District.

Undugu's main strategy is the participatory approach which aims to ensure that: development activities have a sustainable impact on the lives of the people; activities undertaken have reasonable financial input and can be repeated by the community, other agencies or the Government; projects undertaken can influence policy makers to change unfavourable policies; and activities are cost-effective.

Undugu's involvement in Kibera dates back to 1986 when the local Member of Parliament, together with the local administration invited Undugu to establish their base in Kibera. Undugu responded positively and in return the District Officer allocated the society some land on which they constructed an office block, workshops, classrooms and a recreation hall. There is also an open field used by children as a playground. Undugu's activities in Kibera were initially focussed on basic education for children in line with their initial objective of rehabilitating street children. As their objectives grew to encompass the improvement of the socio-economic status of low income households, the range of activities in which they are involved expanded to include housing, water and sanitation, and business development, among others.

Having operated in various low income settlements within Nairobi, Undugu has gained experience with various development approaches. Out of this experience, the integrated approach - which entails integration of multiple elements (e.g., housing, education) within a single programme - has evolved. The idea is that these elements are interdependent and should therefore be tackled simultaneously to achieve

sustainability. An integrated development plan detailing necessary actions in the water, housing, sanitation, education and business sectors was therefore formulated for one village - Lindi.<sup>18</sup> The criteria for selecting Lindi were i) a manageable population of about 40,000; and ii) active and well organized community organizations. Overall, the findings of the development plan indicate that there is a good chance of achieving sustainability in Lindi. Following this initial project the integrated approach could be replicated in other villages.

To implement the proposed plan, 3 teams of Undugu staff were dispatched to Kibera in mid 1990. The most important is the **Community Organization Team** which facilitates the process of community mobilization and participation. The key person is the social worker who organizes, mobilizes and trains groups, communities and leaders in various skills. The main activities undertaken by this team include women's programmes; income generating activities; youth programmes; programmes for the handicapped; the street children programme; and the community health programme which trains Community Health Workers and Traditional Birth Attendants.

The **Employment Creation Team** facilitates employment creation and business development in the community through provision of credit, training and business advice. Participants discuss business proposals and are assisted in developing a sound framework for their businesses. They may eventually undergo some business training and if interested later qualify for loans ranging from Ksh 2,000 - 20,000. So far 21 clients have received credit through this programme. So far 21 clients have been provided with loans totalling Ksh 90,000.

The Employment Creation team also focuses on basic education which is considered the most important element of the employment creation thrust. The **Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP)**, which is the only one of its kind in Kenya, is tailored towards the needs of street children who cannot afford to go to a formal school. The aim of the school is to provide the children with the necessary skills to improve their socio-economic status. The UBEP school in Kibera has 150 children and 6 trained teachers posted by the Teachers Service Commission. The programme has been endorsed by the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) who assisted Undugu in preparing and approving the syllabus. The programme is divided into three phases. The first three year phase is spent acquiring basic skills of literacy and numeracy: for children between 12 and 19 years of age. The second phase (minimum of 1 year) is spent gaining exposure to various trades and skills such as carpentry, tailoring and metal work. During the final phase the UBEP graduates undergo on-the-job training (apprenticeship) in their chosen occupation at a Jua Kali shed or Undugu Workshop.

Undugu is further committed to the education of children within Kibera. The school sponsorship programme, allows children to attend schools in nearby areas. Undugu buys the children uniforms and school fees are shared between Undugu and the parents. To date, 250 children have completed the programme

### UNDUGU'S BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

At NORAD's request Undugu organized a workshop for the Kibera Handicrafts Self-help (KHS) Women's Group in which they carried out business diagnosis and looked at group structure and organization.

The KHS group, comprised of 31 members was initially formed with assistance from Norwegian Volunteer Services (NVS) in 1980 who provided training in basket making. Later, further assistance was provided through the Womens Bureau by NORAD. Through NVS and NORAD, the group received funding and training in handicrafts and were thereafter offered employment in the centre. The main activities of the KHS group are basket making, spinning, knitting and weaving. Other spinoff activities include traditional dancing and water projects. Most products are sold to retail outlets within Nairobi.

Through the workshop run by Undugu, the following problems were identified: lack of knowledge of executive committee members none of whom were members of the group; lack of proper recruitment and accounting procedures; lack of objectives and plan of action; dissatisfaction with pay (piece-rates); lack of knowledge of their ownership role in project; poor or inadequate management of finances and of the project in general. A key problem identified by the group was that since all management committee members were not members of the Kibera community it often took several days to make any decisions and have simple actions such as signing a cheque taken.

Through the workshop assistance was provided to the womens group to improve business practices. Key areas included: marketing advice; product pricing; business management skills; purchasing procedures, stock taking and stock keeping. Through the workshop, recommendations for re-organization of the group were also made including establishing proper recruitment practices; informing members of their ownership roles; short and medium planning; and improving group dynamics.

Key recommendations of the workshop included 1) forming a committee based on members of the group; 2) increasing the participatory role of group members in operating and managing the centre; 3) improving recruitment procedures; 4) increasing product marketing; and 5) improving administration and maintenance procedures.

Based on these recommendations the group developed a short term plan of action regarding immediate improvements in management of the group and product marketing. Long term goals were to be discussed after formation of the community management group.

Undugu's activities in Kibera also focus on improved shelter provision, including long term physical planning, water and sanitation, energy, infrastructure and incremental changes in the standard of living. Undugu has prepared detailed plans for low cost housing which are based on the use of cheap building materials and techniques, and take into account the problems facing Kibera which include the land tenure system, the hostile relationship between tenants and landlords, and the regulatory framework which only allows the construction of temporary housing. The Community Development Team assists in creating awareness among the community of the need for better housing and proper environmental sanitation, and the Business Development and UBEP teams involve the community, through skill building, in the construction of experimental low cost building materials and techniques.

Overall, Undugu considers the problems in Kibera long term, and therefore requiring thorough and well thought out solutions. These it hopes to achieve through the integrated approach.



#### **4. LESSONS LEARNED FROM NGO ACTIVITIES IN KIBERA**

The previous sections have sketched the background to the present day problems of Kibera, and the activities of two of the most prominent NGOs working in the area. This section highlights the lessons of their experience.

- **Low income households are willing and able to pay for services. They can and do repay loans.**

Low income households in Kibera have illustrated their willingness and ability to pay for services. In the case of water, due to poor distribution and water shortages, they pay more per cubic metre than middle and high income households although they consume a considerably smaller amount per capita. Water services are provided through kiosks connected to the water system by the City Commission on request and payment by the customer. There are currently an estimated 500 plus kiosk water connections<sup>19</sup> in Kibera, but on inspection, no more than 100-200 of these are actually water vendors<sup>20</sup>. Because of lower tariffs for kiosks, many commercial (bars and restaurants) and domestic users register their water connections as kiosks. The official tariff for water purchased at a kiosk is 10 cents per 20 litre container (jerrican). However, charges range from 30-60 cents and are often higher (1 to 5 shillings) during the dry season. For comparison, a consumer with a house connection would pay 12 cents for the same 20 litre amount. A study conducted by UNICEF and Ministry of National Planning and Development (MNP) estimates that profits earned by kiosk owners range from 350% to 600%. The study notes that this represents a loss of income to the City Commission who could in fact raise tariffs and use the added income to improve the supply of water to the area<sup>21</sup>. Kibera residents have demonstrated that they are not only willing to pay for water but in fact currently pay several times the price paid by regular customers with house connections.

Willingness to pay for services depends partly on household income. Although most Kibera residents fall into the low-income category, many have employment in the formal wage sector and therefore have a reliable source of income. The majority of Kibera residents are tenants and sub-tenants, many of whom are casual laborers employed in Nairobi's industrial area. Compared to other squatter settlements, a larger portion (40%)<sup>22</sup> of Kibera residents work in the formal sector, although there are a significant number of informal sector establishments (jua kali). Resident landlords (24% of all landlords)<sup>23</sup> usually fall into the middle to high income category (earnings are as high as 25,000 per month). The average income in Kibera is about 1,000 Ksh per month (the range for tenants and sub-tenants is Ksh 500-1,467)<sup>24</sup>, although income for males is often higher than that for females. Majority of resident landlords earn from 5,000 Ksh to 10,000 Ksh per month. Many women

supplement the family income by running a small business such as a vegetable stand or kiosk and children often contribute to the household income. Small businesses such as those run by women are often given loans by NGOs such as Undugu Society. Women's groups are also given loans to start income generating projects (such as water Kiosks). Most NGOs aim to improve household income and thus the overall standard of living in the area through these loans. Loans range from Ksh 2,000 to 20,000 and are provided to businesses after proprietors attend courses offered by the Undugu business development advisors. Advisers note that there has been a high rate of success in the loan program. Rates of repayment are often better than among middle and high income groups and most loans are repaid on time and in full.

The financial capacity of Kibera residents is further illustrated by the high demand for the pit latrine emptying vehicle. Pit latrines are the predominant excreta disposal facility in the area. Most are constructed by landlords for their rental rooms. Various types of latrines are used including, more recently, VIP latrines although these are the minority. Latrine pits vary in depth because of poor soil conditions and shallow depth to bedrock, and many enclosures are poorly constructed of scrap metal and wood. Due to overcrowding they often serve a large number of people, as many as 50-100 per latrine.<sup>25</sup> The high number of users per latrine makes it difficult to hold individuals responsible for maintaining cleanliness, and in some cases latrines double as showers which in local conditions causes the latrine to fill up much faster. In the past, full latrines were often covered up and a structure built on top.

A latrine emptying vehicle is now being used in a pilot project initiated by KWAHO, to extend the life of latrines. This service was not previously available since the City Commissions emptying vehicles are much larger and therefore unable to access the area. KWAHO selected the Micravac latrine emptying vehicle designed by Manus Coffey Associates<sup>26</sup>. Its advantages are that it can service pits with dense wastes which cannot be serviced by conventional equipment, and it can reach areas inaccessible to other vehicles. On acquiring the vehicle with funding assistance provided by NORAD, KWAHO registered it with the community and set up a committee to manage its operation and maintenance. The charge for latrine emptying services in 1990 was Kshs 150 per load, and of this Ksh 40 per load is paid to Nairobi City Commission (NCC) for use of the sewer into which the waste is discharged. These charges are based on full cost recovery (wages, operation and maintenance and capital cost of the vehicle). Results so far indicate that there is high demand for the service. The vehicle works 6 days a week in order to cover all the villages within the settlement. Each village is served on a given day and beneficiaries are required to make payments to the management office at least one day before they are served. Because of the growing demand for the vehicle, plans are being made to acquire additional vehicles.

- **Appropriate technology can have a dramatic impact, however it needs to be continuously adapted to suit changing local needs.**

As explained in the previous section, lack of space for building new latrines led to the suggestion that a latrine emptying vehicle be obtained to empty full ones. Despite the overall success of the vehicle a few technical problems have been experienced. Numerous punctures occur weekly due to the difficult terrain, reducing the efficiency of the vehicle and slowing down operations considerably. Having identified this problem, the vehicles management team in Kibera (with assistance from KWAHO) contacted Manus Coffey - the manufacturer of the Micravac - to request tyres that are more suitable to the terrain.

Due to poor planning and layout of houses in Kibera, many latrines remain inaccessible to the emptying vehicle. In this case the solution would be to extend the length of the hose pipe so that it could reach those latrines that are situated far from the nearest road or footpath. This has also been suggested by the vehicles management team. Alternatively the local administrators and/or health committees could encourage landlords to provide access to all latrines. Some latrines were completely surrounded by housing with narrow paths of about 1 metre (between buildings) leading to them.

With continued and expanded use of the latrine emptying vehicle, the basic latrine design could be adapted to increase the durability and lifespan of the latrine. Due to the instability of the soils in the area, it has been suggested that shallow latrines, about four metres deep, with reinforced walls would be more appropriate. Shallow latrines would, however, require regular use of the emptying vehicle because they fill up faster and the rate of leaching would be reduced if the pit sides were reinforced with cement or a similar material. Construction of shallow emptyable pits with suitable reinforcement that facilitates emptying would eliminate the need for continuously rebuilding new latrines thus saving valuable land space for more useful purposes.

Finally, technology can dramatically improve conditions but in order to have a lasting impact it must be affordable, appropriate and sustainable to local needs. VIP latrines have been accepted as superior in terms of hygiene and reduced odour. The few that have been constructed are therefore used more intensively than conventional latrines, but the cost of building VIPs is prohibitive to most landlords (developers) who are often not willing to invest substantial funds in the construction of more permanent and durable latrines because of insecurity of tenure. Thus, though they may be more appropriate in terms of improved sanitation, insecure tenure and the high cost of VIPs (estimated at Ksh 8 - 10,000) makes this technology unaffordable to most low-income households in Kibera. Most VIPs in Kibera have been constructed by NGOs.

- **Despite insecure tenure, a long term planning perspective is possible and necessary to ensure sustainability**

Due to the temporary, and often illegal, nature of informal settlements, NGOs and Government are often reluctant to carry out any long term planning and even more reluctant to commit significant investments in substantial improvements. Most projects are therefore carried out on a piecemeal basis. Many NGO's simply respond to individual requests from the community and carry out activities as and when needed. Others are either reluctant to invest in infrastructure or do not have the financial capacity to do so.

Despite the impression of being temporary many informal settlements have existed for decades. Repeat interviews conducted by Undugu over a number of years indicated that many residents in informal settlements were still there 6 or more years later, although they had initially indicated that they would be leaving within 3 years.

Based on experience gained working in various informal settlements, Undugu has reached the conclusion that a long term perspective is necessary if sustainability is to be achieved. It has therefore adopted an integrated approach that aims at tackling all inter-related aspects of a problem simultaneously over several years. The long term integrated approach takes into consideration the probable length of stay of residents in the area and aims to provide people with the knowledge and skills and income earning potential so that they might elevate their families to a higher standard of living in this or a more secure environment. Where possible, it emphasizes shifts in security of tenure over time as a guarantee to motivate residents to improve their housing and ties security of tenure to improvements in building and living standards made by residents. This approach, elements of which are common within other NGOs, therefore aims to provide the community with long term "survival" skills, rather than providing them with short term temporary solutions to long term problems.

- **Women have a special role because they are more present, are organized and more receptive to community development initiatives.**

Although about 60% of the population in Kibera are males, many of them are migrant workers<sup>27</sup> with strong ties to rural areas where their families live. Many work outside Kibera and are therefore not present on a day to day basis. Women on the other hand are often present in the community as they manage rental rooms and small businesses in the area, while others are unemployed and manage their households full time<sup>28</sup>. Because of their presence in the community, women are more receptive to involvement in community activities.

Women's groups form the largest number of community organizations in Kibera. They are well organized and involved in various activities ranging from social activities to income generating projects. They are therefore a natural target group for NGOs that are interested in initiating community managed projects. The participation of women in the construction, maintenance and management of water kiosks and water tanks is a goal of KWAHO's project. KWAHO therefore involved 14 women's groups in the construction and management of community water kiosks. At the planning stage, participation was in form of requests for a water facility, followed by discussions to ascertain the kind of facility required. This was followed by the group's participation in selecting the site. During the construction stage, the group contributed money and dug trenches for pipe laying. Finally, the women are involved in the sale of water and management of the funds generated from this activity.

Women are an easy entry point to development because they are generally more available and receptive to involvement in community activities. Women are also more seriously affected by the lack of services such as water because they are responsible for collecting water for their households. They are therefore willing to participate in community efforts to alleviate water problems. Sale of water is an attractive starting point for women's income generating activities. KWAHO's water kiosk project involved women in a project which had the dual benefit of increasing access to a necessary commodity, and providing a source of income. Even if income generation is not an initial objective of women's group, it often strengthens and broadens their activities and improves their socio-economic status. In Kibera one women's group has built a nursery school with funds realized from water sales, others have started charcoal and vegetable vending businesses and constructed rental rooms. Through KWAHO and Undugu's intervention, several women's groups within the settlement are engaged in other income generating activities, some of which are a spin-off of training and other skill building activities. These activities include handicraft training such as sewing, knitting, tie-dye and block making; marketing of finished handicraft products;

and skill and management training including training in subjects such as accounting, book keeping and report writing.

- **NGOs have a special role because they are able to operate outside channels open to public agencies, they are flexible and therefore able to use various approaches to serve the community's needs.**

The unofficial/non-governmental status of NGOs permits them to involve the authorities and public sector without committing them to "extra-legal" activities. The implication is that NGOs should set themselves explicitly as intermediaries and actively coordinate activities with authorities as well as among themselves and with the community. KWAHO played an important intermediary role between the community and the City Commission in obtaining approval to discharge sludge from the latrine emptying vehicle into the sewer. This interaction also created awareness among City Commission officials, of alternative technology for emptying latrines in areas otherwise inaccessible to their vehicles.

Through their role as intermediaries, NGOs have also played an important role in breaking monopolies to the benefit of the community. For example, in KWAHO's water kiosk project, the rationale for establishing community managed water kiosks was that in addition to increasing access to water, they help to introduce competition through lower prices. Before the introduction of the programme, the average cost of water bought from water vendors was 45 to 60 cents per jerrican. The women's groups now sell water at 30 cents per jerrican. This saving enables residents of Kibera to purchase more water with the same amount of resources. More water means improved hygiene and cleanliness in the home. Based on initial results it is expected that the savings from the price reduction have resulted in increased water consumption when water is available.

Since most NGOs are not geared toward profit making they are often able to obtain funds from various sources with which to experiment on new tools and techniques. These can thereafter be expanded on through further NGO action, or the knowledge and knowhow can be passed on to the authorities for implementation on a wider scale. Successful experiments with the latrine emptying vehicle introduced through KWAHO have led to the City Commission's interest in purchasing between 2 and 6 similar vehicles. Undugu has also experimented with new educational methods for "street children". The UBEP program has since been endorsed by Government. Its use within public schools is being encouraged. NGOs therefore serve an important role (similar to that of research institutes) in testing new tools and techniques and setting up pilot or demonstration projects.

Given the complexities and scale of the problems, many different approaches can be effective and should be encouraged. The variety of styles and methods characteristic of NGOs, although often confusing to the authorities and sometimes also to the community, may be well suited to the diversity of problems in the community. KWAHO and Undugu have quite different agendas in terms of the scale of their projects, the time span to be covered and the methods of implementing them. Both are successful in achieving their objectives despite these differences. This may be because they both recognize the need for involving the community in their programmes. Both view their effectiveness as being a result of working *through* and *with* the community rather than for it. NGOs have therefore proved an important catalyst in the process of development in informal settlements.

## **5. SCOPE FOR INTERVENTIONS**

The future of Kibera lies in the hands of the authorities, since they ultimately determine whether the area will be upgraded to a formal low income settlement or be redeveloped as a middle income residential area. There are certainly strong tendencies toward the latter, but regardless of the eventual result, the informal settlement in Kibera is likely to remain for a considerable amount of time and given continuing high population growth rates, rural-urban migration and poverty, low income informal settlements will remain a facet of urban life for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, various things can and should be done to improve the situation (even temporarily) for current residents of Kibera and other informal settlements.

Barring resolution of the tenure issue, future activities could be facilitated by improved community cohesion, and co-operation among NGOs. In order for meaningful development to occur within Kibera, the community should be well organized. A fragmented community made up of different groups with different interests will not be able to carry out development activities effectively. Tenants are a particularly important group since they often have less attachment to, and interest in, development of the community. More emphasis should therefore be laid on long term planning, in which tenants and other residents are made aware of the probable "real" length of their stay in the settlement and encouraged to do something to improve their living conditions during their stay. Undugu has successfully managed to improve standards of living even among tenants using this approach in other informal settlements. Investments in improvements could be encouraged much further by various proven mechanisms, such as the authorities granting tenure for a period such as 5 years. This mechanism has proven useful in other countries where it has been demonstrated that it can significantly lowers rents.

To facilitate community development efforts, the existing NGO coordinating body should be strengthened, in order to build on the successes they have already gained. Participation of the informal leaders of the community, and Government representation from the NCC, District Office (DO), Public Health Office (PHO), and Ministry of Lands and Housing should be encouraged. The coordinating body should become the first entry point for NGOs and other outside agencies interested in undertaking development activities in Kibera in order to reduce duplication of effort and ensure a certain level of sustainability of projects/programs initiated by NGOs.

Finally, the Government should provide more support in the form of policy, resources and technical expertise to assist NGOs to carry out their programmes. From experiences highlighted in this report, NGOs have been successful in getting the assistance and cooperation of the Government in the various development activities in which they have been involved. But this has been despite rather than because of the authorities' position on informal settlements. Further collaboration



between NGOs and the Government would serve to strengthen the activities being undertaken by them.

Based on the lessons learned from NGO experiences in Kibera, the Government should:

- Recognize that low-income households have the financial capability to pay for services and therefore provide increased service coverage and extend credit to allow them to improve their situation on a self-help basis. As in previous projects, community groups will be involved in management of water points with the likely result that the price of water will be lowered and local conditions will be improved through income generating projects.
- Encourage experiments in promising appropriate technology to improve conditions in low income areas and adapt these to suit changing local needs. The use of the latrine emptying vehicle is one example of this. The WSD plans to provide a fleet of latrine emptying vehicles which would service latrines in areas otherwise inaccessible to its full sized vehicles. Experiences gained through KWAHO's pilot latrine emptying project could assist in guiding the department in preparing their project. Further investigation of alternative low cost technologies should be made taking into account the social factors, system costs and the community's ability to pay.
- Recognize that regardless of tenure, a long term planning perspective is possible and necessary to ensure sustainability of development efforts, especially taking into account the lengthy existence of the settlement. A better understanding of future plans for the area would make it easier for those involved in development efforts to serve both immediate and long term needs of residents. It would also allow those affected -landlords and residents - to plan for their future. An emphasis should be made on provision of infrastructure and services. The long term planning perspective is also important for providing services such as water to the area, especially since water consumption in the area will grow whether it is for existing low-income housing or for middle-income housing such as that being built on the eastern side of Kibera. Lack of action will result in problems on a wider scale.
- Promote the involvement of women's and other interest groups that are more present, organized and receptive to community development activities to assist in the provision of services. The Government is currently promoting the establishment of women's groups as a means to development. Further assistance, particularly funding and credit, should be made available to women's groups in order to assist them in their efforts to improve the socio-economic status and well-being of their communities. Income generating projects have been shown to improve socio-economic well-being of the community as a whole.

- Use NGOs as intermediaries by working with them, for and with the community, and giving them the necessary leeway to carry out their programs. Also by promoting and assisting them, both financially and technically, in their efforts to serve the community's needs.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTION**

There is a need to create awareness about the problems facing the residents within informal settlements such as Kibera and to encourage discussion and consensus building among decision makers and implementers of the types of actions needed to alleviate poverty in the short and long term. Workshops should be organized at two levels<sup>29</sup>;

1. The first level could be an action oriented sector specific workshop for policy makers, NGOs and External Support Agencies (ESA). The objectives of the workshop would be: to sensitize policy makers and implementers about problems facing the occupants of informal settlements; to create awareness of the achievements of NGOs; and to suggest better approaches to involving Government and ESAs in ongoing and future activities. Such a workshop could address itself to obstacles to development of informal settlements such as problems associated with land tenure in informal settlements, the housing standards and by-laws with a view to bringing the officials in close contact with the problems facing the low income groups to some consensus on what should be done. Lessons learned from experiences in other countries which have successfully dealt with similar problems could also be shared with the aim of adapting those solutions to the local situation. The key emphasis of this workshop would be on follow-up activities. Participants of the workshop could be drawn from Government Agencies such as the Ministry of Lands and Settlement, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture and Social Services, Office of the President, Ministry of Water Development and Nairobi City Commission. The NGOs operating in informal settlements and slum areas could also be invited to share their work experiences in those settlements. ESAs such as World Bank, HABITAT, WHO and UNICEF could give presentations on how these problems have been tackled elsewhere in the world.

2. The second level of workshops for NGOs operating in Kibera, to be held jointly with the communities so as to create awareness of the need for improved community cohesion, would be action oriented and sector specific. The involvement of the community in planning and implementing programmes for their own benefit should be emphasized. In addition, the workshop could create awareness of the need to tap the communities' own resources, both financial and labour so as to develop Kibera. These workshop could be organized by NGOs and community based organizations with assistance from NCC and ESAs. Emphasis would be laid on coordination, and community mobilization. ESAs including the World Bank, WHO, UNICEF and Habitat could take a lead in funding the workshops, and organizing mechanisms for follow up action, which could include regular meetings with the authorities concerned.

## END NOTES

1. National Cooperative Housing Union (NACHU), A Survey of Informal Settlements in Nairobi, 1990
2. Some estimates have placed growth rates as high as 22% per annum during the years shortly after independence.
3. It was expected that areas that were informally occupied by Africans would be cleared for settlement by "whites" as the need arose.
4. In the late 1950s an emergency was declared by the colonial government due to the "mau mau" uprising which was staged by indigenous Kenyans in order to gain independence.
5. A Survey of Informal Settlements in Nairobi, National Cooperative Housing Union, 1990.
6. Ibid.
7. The historical data on Kibera has been derived from several sources including two unpublished sources (P. Amis, M. Ladu) - thesis - from the University of Nairobi.
8. Historical data was derived from unpublished doctoral and masters theses obtained from the University of Nairobi.
9. Daily Nation, Monday October 17, 1988
10. Metropolitan Housing Survey - 1989, in Socio-Economic Profiles, UNICEF/MNPD, June 1990.
11. Data obtained through informal interviews and repeat visits to informal settlements undertaken by UNDUGU society.
12. Low Income Housing in Nairobi, an Alternative Approach. Moses Bulli Ladu, Research Paper. 178, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Nairobi, 1989
13. IBID and Planning for Basic needs in Kenya, Geneva, ILO, 1979
14. The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi, 1960-1980. P. Amis, 1988
15. "Motion on Squatters Passed". Daily Nation, Thursday, October 25, 1990.

16. **"Mbela We'll Overcome the Problems."** Kenya Times, Monday October 1, 1990.
17. **The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi - 1960-1980.,** P. Amis, 1983.
18. **Other villages are not excluded from assistance, and are assisted on request from the community.**
19. **Discussion with WSD staff at NCC (Deputy Director)**
20. **Socio-Economic Profiles, UNICEF/MNPD, Ed. J. Odada and J. Otieno, June 1990**
21. **Ibid**
22. **Ibid**
23. **P. Amis notes that most non-resident landlords are professionals with full time occupations. Residents interviewed during various surveys include lawyers, professors, teachers, business persons.**
24. **The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi - 1960-1980,** P. Amis, 1983.
25. **NACHU places the upper limit at 500 persons per latrine.**
26. **Manus Coffey Associates is a liquid and solid waste handling consulting firm based in Dublin, Ireland. The Micra Vac is one of a number of solid waste handling machines designed by the firm.**
27. **The term "migrant worker" is used here to indicate that they may have families in rural areas but live as single males in Kibera. They are often casual laborers who seek employment in Nairobi's industrial area but still have strong social and economic ties to the rural area.**
28. **There are many single males in Kibera some of whom are migrant workers who leave their families in the rural areas while they seek employment in the urban areas.**
29. **A Workshop on Environmental Sanitation in Informal Settlements was held by Nairobi City Commission in September 1991. A report on the proceedings is available upon request.**

ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING IN KIBERA

<u>Name of Organization</u>	<u>Project Undertaken</u>	<u>Type of Activities</u>
1. Undugu Society of Kenya	School for Life	Youth programmes income generation youth education skill training counselling
2. Kenya Water for Health Organization	Kibera Health and Craft Centre, VIPs, Pilot Latrine Emptying Vehicle	Water kiosks income generation latrine emptying activities for elderly latrine building
3. Danish Volunteers	Kibera Health and Craft Centre	Maternal and child care immunization
4. Action Aid	Nairobi Family Support Service	Assistance to disabled
5. C.P.K.	Kibera Human Development Project	Nursery school adult education curative health care
6. Family Planning Association of Kenya	Outreach Clinic (mobile)	Family planning
7. Kibera Catholic Mission	Kibera Catholic Dispensary	Primary health care health education training of health workers
8. Y.M.C.A., Kibera	Nursery School	Nursery school assistance to youth
9. Don Bosco	Satellite Project	Women's group vocational training

10.	Crescent Aid	Mekima Clinic	Maternal child care & nutrition health education sanitation immunization
11.	World Vision	Utuwema	Income generating activities support to primary and secondary school children
12.	National Council for Population Development	Urban Slum Development Project	Training of community leaders health education
13.	Missionaries of Charity	Support to poor families	Informal school children's home school assistance
14.	UNICEF	Child Survival	Coordination of NGO work Support water, sanitation, training for health workers Rehabilitation of prisoners
15.	World Missionaries	Riziki Women Project	Handicrafts
16.	Ministry of Health	Kibera Nutrition Project	Rehabilitation of malnourished children family planning education immunization community education

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