

OVERVIEW OF KENYAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN SLUM UPGRADING: THE CASE OF KENSUP AND KISIP PROJECTS

DÁNIEL SOLYMÁRI, JANET MANGERA, RÁHEL CZIRJÁK AND ISTVÁN TARRÓSY

DANIEL SOLYMÁRI

DANIEL SOLYMÁRI MA, THEOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS; ADVANCED STUDIES IN HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY AT ICRC. PHD STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS, POLITICAL SCIENCE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME, FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

JANET MANGERA

JANET MANGERA MA IN SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI. PHD FROM THE ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY IN APPLIED AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. TEACHING SOCIOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AT THE MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY OF KENYA.

RÁHEL CZIRJÁK

MSC IN SPATIAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISATION, EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY. PHD CANDIDATE AT THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF EARTH SCIENCES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS, GEOPOLITICAL DOCTORAL PROGRAMME.

ISTVÁN TARRÓSY

PHD IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND AFRICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS. FULL PROFESSOR AT THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICA RESEARCH CENTRE.

SOLYMARI.DANIEL@MALTAI.HU

TARROSY.ISTVAN@PTE.HU

Abstract

The goal of this paper is to explore the slum upgrading processes: the implementation of the Kenyan KENSUP project, associated successes and failures, and to draw possible lessons that can be learned from the initiative. The study utilized field work desk reviews to gather relevant information regarding slum upgrade processes in Kenya. The criteria used in the review process entailed exploring the context in which the KENSUP upgrading project was implemented, focusing on the legal frameworks, process of implementation, achievements, results, setbacks and failures in the processes in order to draw lessons for future programmes.

Keywords

urbanization in Africa, Kibera, slum upgrade, Kenyan government initiatives

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Introduction

Increasing population and degrading agricultural land coupled with shrinking land sizes are likely factors contributing to rural-urban migration. Since the 1950s and after numerous colonial territories got independent urbanization has accelerated across the African continent, leading to – among others – “new migration systems centred around fast-growing urban clusters, often located in or close to urban areas, capital cities or mining regions” (Castles et al., 2014: 177). The soaring numbers of city residents are thus putting pressure on governments especially in developing countries to review existing plans. The lack of employment in most cities and the high cost of living contributing to high poverty indices leave residents with little chance of living in standard houses or accessing better social services. Various cities in Kenya, particularly Nairobi and Mombasa, have distinct informal settlements – otherwise known as slums. For decades, Kenyan governments have been attempting to introduce various measures and projects to address both physical infrastructure and social services in these settlements through slum upgrading projects. While there have been notable successes, many challenges have threatened the initiatives as will be discussed in this paper.

In particular, this research article will investigate two main projects undertaken by the government of Kenya through the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development, while the specific unit responsible for the coordination is the State Department of Housing and Urban Development. The two major projects considered in this study are the *Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme* (KENSUP) and the *Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project* (KISIP). The projects were jointly fostered with other partners, which will be elaborated on in the following sections. The analysis will explore various policy and legal frameworks under which the two projects were implemented, as well as review implementation processes, achievements, failures, and possible lessons learned.

Methodology and approaches

The study mainly used desk reviews to gather relevant information regarding slum upgrade processes in Kenya. The criteria used in the review process entailed exploring the context in which the KENSUP and KISIP upgrading projects were implemented, focusing on the legal frameworks, process of implementation, achievements, results, setbacks and failures in the processes in order to draw lessons for future programmes. The analysis focused on evaluating coordination aspects, participation (inclusion) approaches applied, mechanisms of handling grievances from affected communities, and intermediate results vis-à-vis project targets. The study did not focus on the long-term changes because one of the projects (KENSUP) is yet to be concluded whereas the other (KISIP) was concluded a few months prior to the analysis.

According to Arimah (2011), people residing in informal settlements experience the most deplorable living and environmental conditions. These are mainly characterized by insufficient water supply, poor environmental sanitation, lack of

proper waste disposal arrangements, overcrowding, insecurity of tenure, and vulnerability to serious health risks. In addition, among the “key problems generated by overcrowding in slum conditions are disease and crime” (Collier, 2017: 430). In certain cases, such conditions drive people into easy recruitment for radicalism (Marsai, 2016: 110). Unless urgent measures by governments across the continent and the world at large input timely measures and resources, the conditions will only worsen rather than improve. A study by the United Nations a decade ago established that in the year 1950, 14.5 percent of the population of African countries lived in urban areas, and by 2007 the level of urbanization had increased to 38.7 percent (United Nations, 2008). Report from the OECD and other multilateral organizations predict that between 2020 and 2050 the population of the continent will double and “two-thirds of this population increase will be absorbed by urban areas” (Kanos and Heitzig, 2020). UN-HABITAT (2016) confirms these statistics by establishing that the number of people living in slums in Kenya increased from approximately 1.5 million in 1990 to 6.4 million in 2014, representing 56 percent of the urban population. This implies that pressure to access essential services will soon lead to the collapse of available structures in these areas in terms of governance needs, economic demand, and social unrest unless appropriate measures are taken. The study by UN-HABITAT further implies that planning strategies of more than a decade ago must be revised with financial allocation and policies adjusted to address the deteriorating conditions among slum dwellers who are largely disregarded in urban service delivery planning.

Historical background of slum upgrading in Kenya

Informal settlements began to appear in Kenya many decades ago during the colonial era as natives could not live in proximity to white settlers and administrators due to racial differences (Wangari & Makau, n.d.). After Nairobi was declared a capital of the East Africa Protectorate in 1901, the British developed a master plan for the growth of Nairobi in 1948. This plan focused on the “building of new administrative buildings set in landscaped public spaces, a modern commercial centre, a greatly enlarged industrial area to attract investment, a vastly improved transport system, and the construction of new African housing estates” meant only for African servants working for the British (Anderson, 2010: 138). This plan excluded African-inhabited parts of the city while Asian communities, due to their involvement in railway development, would also be allocated separate locations for residence (Anderson & Mwelu, 2013). Natives would require a pass to gain access into white settlers’ residences (Wangari & Makau).

The Africans who settled in Nairobi therefore chose new habitats for themselves by cutting down wooded areas. The once green, informal settlements were also noticed by the Kenyan administration: they filled them up, carved out more parts of the forest, and donated land to Nubian soldiers recruited from northern Sudan in recognition of their service to the crown. It is no coincidence that in Nubian, the word Kibera means forest. Together with their families, they formed the first more

homogeneous community of the district, which had almost become a new quarter. Estimates put hundreds of thousands to half a million Nubians settled in Kibera.

When Kenya gained independence, the status quo exacerbated by autocracy and corruption served to further entrench class segregation and social exclusion of the poor (Huchzermeyer, 2011). The repeal of the native restriction law after independence, poor agriculture in rural land, and a lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas forced people, especially the youth, to move to urban areas in large numbers (K'Akumu and Olima, 2007).

According to Amnesty International (2009), slum residents around Nairobi have existed since the city's formation at the turn of the 20th century, and it asserts that government responses have consistently failed to ensure the state's obligation to realize the critical human right to adequate shelter. Mutisya and Yarime (2011) allude to this by stating that failure of the Kenyan government to improve informal settlements and provide the minimum support for basic requirements and services has led to unimaginable suffering among slum residents. Irrespective of various sessional papers developed by the government, the authors argue that this approach coupled with failure to strategically address growth and proliferation of informal settlements has led to their social exclusion within the city's development plan. Although around the millennium the government began investing in strategies that would lighten the plight of slum dwellers – notably the UN-HABITAT and Government of Kenya memorandum of 2004, which began in 1999 – Amnesty International and other civil organizations demanded an immediate end to all forced evictions, and for the government to legislate and enforce a clear prohibition on forced evictions in 2009 (Amnesty International, 2009).

According to Anderson and Mwelu, (2013) global concerns and a call for slum-free cities in the 1970's prompted the Kenyan government to devise ways to respond to mushrooming slums. To combat the upsurge of slums, the government of Kenya tried various strategies such as forced eviction, resettlement, site and services schemes and upgrading (UN-HABITAT, 2008). However, until 2000, when the UN member countries developed and adopted the Millennium Development Goals, forced eviction was the dominant form of slum eradication in Kenya (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). After the adoption of the MDGs, Kenya, a signatory to the UN goals, began shifting its approach to slum upgrading, and in 2000 the head of state and UN-HABITAT Executive Director launched discussions on how the Government of Kenya (GoK) and UN- HABITAT could engage in slum upgrading (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). On 15 February 2003, the government and UN-HABITAT entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under which UN-HABITAT would oversee the Kenya Slum Upgrading Project (KENSUP), which would cover the three largest Kenyan cities, starting with Nairobi's largest slum, Kibera (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). Later, in 2005, the GoK developed specific KENSUP Implementation and Financing Strategies covering the period 2005-2020 in line with the MDGs' time frame. Figure 1 and 2 show Kibera and its territorial divisions, together with its water and sanitation points.

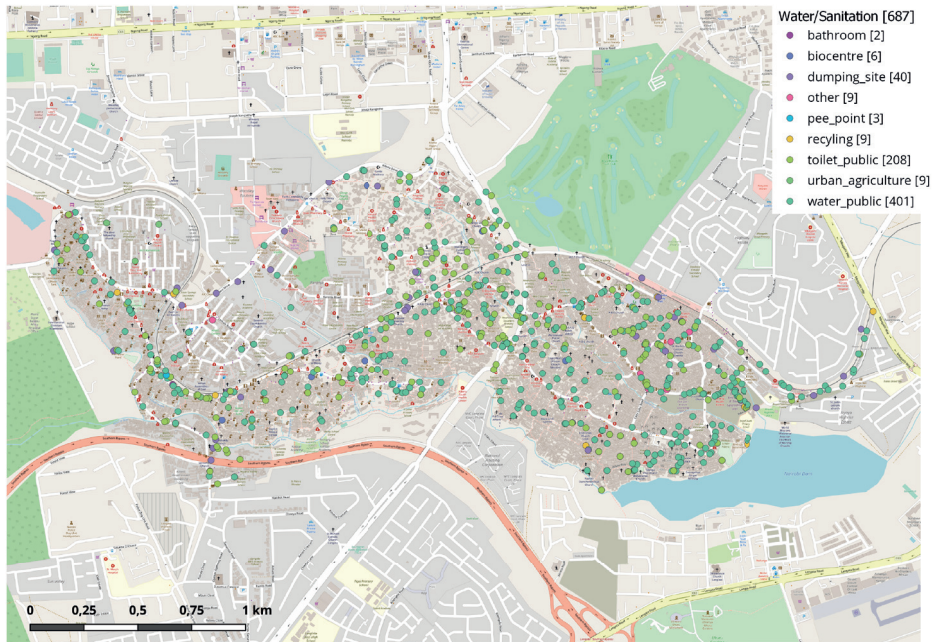


Figure 1. Detailed street map of Kibera and its territorial divisions. Water and sanitation service points on the site. Own editing of the authors.

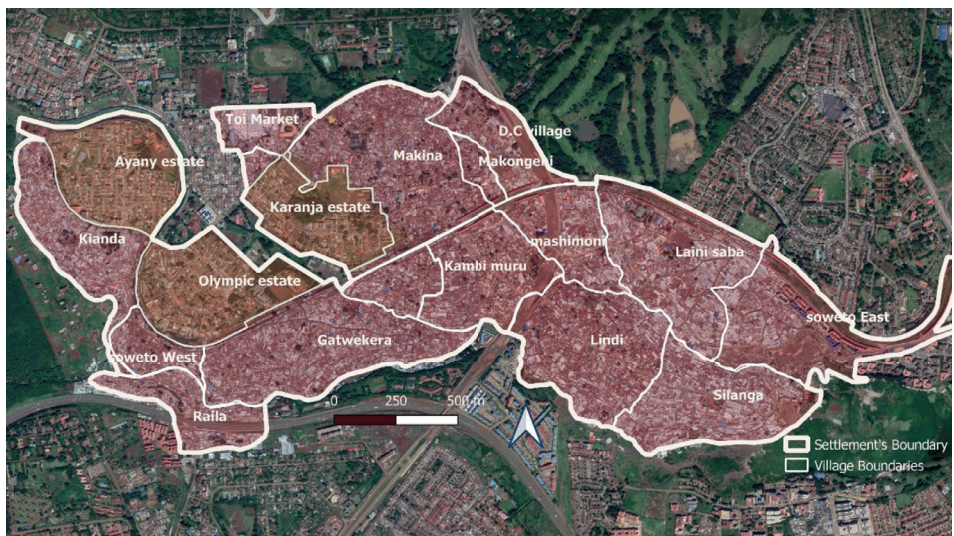


Figure 2. A map of Kibera Settlement, its villages and settlement densities. Source: UN Habitat: Informal settlements' vulnerability mapping in Kenya, June 2020: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2021/08/the_case_of_kibera_edited.pdf?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com (9.11.2021)

While recognizing the fact that there have been the briefly mentioned initiatives to upgrade informal settlements in the country, in the next sections this study focuses on (KENSUP and KISIP).

Legal and policy provisions concerning slum upgrades

Although Kenya is a signatory to various regional and international treaties on habitat, initiatives to upgrade informal settlements were hampered by the lack of an appropriate policy framework to guide the process of upgrading informal settlements (MTIHUD, 2013). In 1987 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on an international year of shelter for the homeless. In 1996 the UN-HABITAT held a conference in Istanbul to re-evaluate declining living conditions. In 1999 the UN-HABITAT and the World Bank formed a new organization called *Cities Without Slums* to persuade governments of the need to upgrade their informal settlements and integrate them in their development plans (World Bank and UN-HABITAT, 1999).

Notable laws and policies have been enacted over the last decade and a few of them are outlined below:

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010

Article 43 of the constitution of Kenya 2010 recognizes lawful ownership of property and land acquired legally. It explicitly states that the State shall not deprive a person of property of any description and requires prompt payment in full with compensa-



△ Photo 1. Kibera street view in the Kambi muru village. Own photo.

tion to any person so deprived (Government of Kenya, 2010). Article 43 also allows for a right of access to a court of law in the event of injustice, which is particularly important when legal owners of parcels of land are required by the government to vacate in the event of settlement expansion or establishment (Government of Kenya, 2010).

National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Policy, 2013

In 2013, the government realized that besides having engaged in activities to upgrade the status of informal settlements in the country, there was a gap in terms of a clear framework that would allow for an inclusive approach to the whole process (KENSUP, 2013). Thus, the National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Policy was established to strengthen the capacity of urban community groups and enable them to participate meaningfully in upgrading processes. The policy helps with enforcing laws and creating accountable and transparent institutions to coordinate slum upgrading and prevention programs. It also includes the establishment of sustainable income generating sources for slum dwellers, known as SACCOs, to enhance provision of financial services, and an effective slum upgrading and prevention information and communication strategy (KENSUP, 2013).

The National Land Policy, 2007-2009

The National Land Policy defines informal settlements as the occupation of land without formal recognition, if they do not comply with the physical and land use planning due to the absence of security of tenure (Juma, 2011). Such settlements host many Kenyans and present a challenge to land planning and development. This policy has been behind various interventions developed in this act to address problems related to slums: taking inventory of genuine squatters and people who inhabit informal settlements, determining whether the land is suitable for human settlements, establishing an appropriate mechanism for removal and resettlement, enhancing sustainability in handling subjects of land in informal settlements, establishing measures to prevent slum development, and creating an appropriate legal framework for eviction based on internationally acceptable guideline. Juma (2011) also notes the ineffectiveness of this policy to remedy the situation due to poor implementation strategies, especially the failure to prevent the increase of more slums. The legal framework on informal settlements has not yet been in place due to long-standing bureaucratic procedures involved in making

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the draft bill into law as set out in reports from the Department of Slum Upgrading. Section 3.6 of the Lands Policy recognizes land redistribution to provide the disadvantaged and the poor with access to land for residential and productive purposes. It further articulates the need to resettle or enable access to land by historically dispossessed persons, and to provide them with infrastructure and basic services such as shelter, water, and sanitation facilities (Ministry of Lands, 2007).

The Land Laws (Amendment) Act, 2016

The amended Act prohibits unlawful occupation of private, community, or public land and provides a procedure for eviction. It further eliminates the retrospective application of the Land Law Act in respect to charges – with the exception of the requirement to serve notice to spouses and other persons who were not required to be served under the repealed Acts of Parliament (Government of Kenya, 2016).

The Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP)

Although several slum upgrading initiatives have been carried out in Kenya (private or governmental, NGO, or faith-based organizations), this paper focuses on two main projects – KENSUP and KISIP. Anderson and Mwelu (2013) made distinctions between these two projects, stating that the central difference is that *KISIP had a short-term (5 years, 2011-2016) scope focused on informal settlements' infrastructure and land tenure in 14 Kenyan counties, while KENSUP is a country-wide, long-term strategy (2005-2025) focusing on housing and related issues.* However, during implementation of KISIP, additional funding was sought, which resulted in project being extended to December 2019 (Kamunyori, 2019).



△ Photo 2. The sewage system in Kibera. The area fills with water after a heavy rain. Own photo.

The Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP) has partnered with various partners, though the Government of Kenya and UN-HABITAT are its main partners (UN-HABITAT, 2016). The project came about as a result of the Cities Alliance. Based on the Cities Alliance's objectives, the initiative for upgrading slum conditions was established in 1999. Obare (2020) recounts that in 1999 UN-HABITAT and the World Bank formed a new organization known as Cities Alliance with the aim of pressuring governments to upgrade their informal settlements and integrate upgrading strategies in their development plans. In 2000, the World Bank came up with an urban policy and a subsequent shift to more directly embrace the urban poor by upgrading informal settlement. This was known as Cities Without Slums program. The utility to cities aesthetics was championed by the urban competitiveness agenda (Marrie, 2011; Obare, 2020). The two ideologies emerged to form a single idea known as Cities Alliance for cities without slums, which aimed at transforming the livelihoods of slum dwellers by 2020 (ibid). The idea was adapted by the UN General Assembly in 2000, which became MDG target 7.10 and spread the vision in many states' development polices (Obare 2020). Under the MDG, seven targets were set and the United Nations launched a project that aimed to improve the lives of more than 100 million people living in urban slums by 2020 (UN, 2000). In Kenya, the concept gained momentum in 2000 following a meeting between the head of state, President Moi, and executive director of UN-HABITAT. In January 2003, a memorandum was signed between the Government of Kenya and UN-HABITAT. However, the initial focus was on Soweto in Kibra.

In 2005, UN-HABITAT funded a situational analysis of the informal settlements in Nairobi and this led to the formation of KENSUP (UN-HABITAT, 2007b). UN-HABITAT (2007a) presents the objectives of KENSUP as follows:

KENSUP's primary objective –

- To improve the livelihoods of people living and working in slums and informal settlements in the urban areas of Kenya through housing improvement, income generation, and the provision of security of tenure and physical and social infrastructure.

KENSUP's specific objectives –

- Promote and facilitate broad-based partnerships utilizing consensus building and consultation among all stakeholders.
- Build institutional and human resource capacities at local and national levels for the sustainability of slum upgrading interventions.
- Facilitate the implementation of innovative and replicable pro-poor slum-upgrading models through pilot projects, delivery strategies, and approaches.
- Assist the Government of Kenya in the development of financial strategies and the mobilization of funds for slum upgrading.
- Undertake collection and dissemination of information for the promotion of sustainable slum upgrading practices and provision of linkages to global best practices.

Implementation of KENSUP

KENSUP was launched during the global observance of World Habitat Day on 4 October 2004. It was designed to demonstrate that the objectives set out in the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals, which aimed to improve the lives of slum dwellers, could be achieved in Kenyan towns and cities through interventions promoting a multidisciplinary and integrated approach to slum upgrading (UN-HABITAT, 2007). KENSUP was envisioned to deliver the mandate of upgrading the slum conditions in the target settlements through participatory planning, and it placed communication at its core. However, the extent to which this has been realized will be discussed later in this study (KENSUP, 2016). The project had three levels of coordination and implementation: national, municipality/county, and community (KENSUP, 2016). The national level was comprised of the project secretariat; the municipality/county level was tasked with programme implementation with the community to achieve the intended results; the community level was comprised of a committee known as Settlement Executive Committee (SEC) (KENSUP, 2016). According to Amnesty International (2009), the SEC was comprised of two representatives of community-based organizations – one Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) representative; two representatives of faith-based organizations; five tenants; two property owners; representatives for people with disabilities; widows; and the local Chief and District Officers.



▲ *Photo 3. In Kibera illegal cartel-type water vendors get water illegally by cutting through municipal piped networks. Own photo.*

The implementation process had three phases. The first phase targeted upgrading informal settlements in Nairobi, Mavoko, Mombasa and Kisumu, whereas the pilot project was implemented in Kibera (Corburn J, 2013). This phase was designed to make physical infrastructure (water and sanitation, access roads, housing) improvements within the selected project areas, linked to income generation and integrating pro-poor governance. The second phase entailed refining the developed governance structure and stimulating investment. The third phase aimed to replicate and scale up project interventions (UN-HABITAT, 2008).

According to UN-Habitat 2007, the implementation was guided by key pillars: (1) inclusive participation of the community, (2) capacity building of the local community, authorities and central government to perform their duties, (3) subsidiarity, (4) partnership with all stakeholders, (5) communication and good governance, (6) provision of basic infrastructure as an entry point to slum upgrading, (7) sustainability, (8) affordable house financing, and (9) gender awareness.

The implementation process involved a series of steps:

Undertaking Situation Analysis and Mapping of Target Communities: The purpose was to analyse the situation in slums with effects of past interventions, which informed the groundwork for implementation. It entailed systematic social mapping including enumeration of slums, assessment of basic services, land, shelter, and employment, and physical mapping (UN-HABITAT, 2007: KENSUP, 2016).

Establishment of Project Management Committees: This approach empowered local organizations to organize themselves to take charge of their own needs related to housing, services, and infrastructure. Besides tackling sustainability demands, these committees would monitor and coordinate the implementation of project activities at the local level. As such, trainings were prioritized. Ideally, each participating neighbourhood was expected to establish its own project management committee, building association, water management committee, or solid waste management committee (UN-HABITAT, 2007: KENSUP, 2016).

Promoting and Facilitating Broad-Based Partnerships: In order to leverage the limited resources, the project operated through UN-HABITAT facilitated partnerships by bridging the gap between the different stakeholders, bringing them to the same negotiating table and supporting their collaboration (UN-HABITAT, 2007).

Formation of Housing Cooperatives: This component was informed by the fact that forming cooperatives with participatory processes and management would enable participants to collectively address related issues, including sanitation and waste management, and collective land acquisition.

The Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP)

The Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP) had a budget of 883 billion Kenya Shilling (KES), and it was established in 2003 with a scheduled completion date in 2020. Struggling to raise capital to execute the KENSUP agenda, the government reviewed its action plan and introduced the Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement Project (KISIP) that sought to partner with donors as opposed to the original plan where it intended to finance the entire project budget. However, the new implementation plan under the KISIP programme is ongoing and has since been implemented in Nairobi's Kibera slums. Phase one cost a total of 2.9 billion KES (Mwangi, 2019).

The Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP) began in 2011. Initially, the project was supposed to be implemented over a period of five years between 2011-2016 (Kamunyori, 2019). However, after adjustments 2019 became the project end date. Fourteen out of 47 counties in Kenya were expected to benefit from the initiative, which was jointly funded by the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA), French Agency for Development, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and the government of Kenya (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). The main objective of the project was to improve living conditions of people in informal settlements in 14 counties in Kenya, with the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development implementing the program (ICT, 2019).

According to Muraguri (2011) and Jooyato Surveys Limited (2019), KISIP is comprised of the following primary components:

- Institutional development and programme management
Aimed at assisting in strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Lands, and the participating counties, as well as financing programme management activities
- Enhancing tenure security
Aimed at supporting growth and process systematization of ongoing efforts to secure regular tenure for urban slums to finance the following activities: community organization and mobilization, identification and demarcation of settlement boundaries, preparation of Part Development Plans, and issuance of letters of offer and allotment to individuals and groups.
- Investing in settlement restructuring and infrastructure
Aimed at supporting implementation of settlement upgrading plans developed at the community level
- Planning for growth and supporting delivery of affordable housing and serviced land
Aimed at supporting proactive planning to reduce the growth of new slums and mechanisms for delivery of land and housing to increase affordability for middle- and low-income households.

Implementation of KISIP

ICT (2019) outlines that prior to rollout of the resettlement process, information was published in the mainstream media including top-selling newspapers and bulletin boards. Planning of resettlements in various counties was done through a continuous participatory process involving the community, the national and county KISIP teams, the World Bank, and a project consultant. The process included undertaking a social-economic survey, community planning, presentation of base maps, public *baraza* meetings, verification of beneficiaries, community validation, and land surveying. Jooyato Surveys Limited (2019) indicates that tasks were implemented by various committees, including the Settlement Executive Committee (SEC), the Resettlement Implementation Committee, and the Settlement Grievance Redress Committee. The composition and mandates of the committees varied based on the roles and stage of involvement. The Settlement Executive Committee (SEC) was the main link between community, project team, and government. The resettlement processes were guided by a project specific resettlement framework intended to guide resolution of any displacement anticipated from project activities (ICT, 2019). Provisions within the framework enabled prompt and effective compensation at full replacement cost for loss of assets attributable directly to the project and provided support during the transitional period to enable the affected persons to improve their living standards.



△ Photo 4. Kibera street view in the Kambi muru village. Own photo.

Stakeholder consultations

Stakeholder participation seems to have been considered a key element in all the settlement areas in the project based on the frameworks devised by the project team. An important component was the significance attributed to people affected by the project. Evidence of reports submitted to the donor depicted scanned copies of attendance of affected community members, thus increasing the credibility of the stakeholder engagement process (Jooyato Surveys Limited, 2019). According to EMS Associates Limited (2019), key stakeholders consulted in the resettlement processes included the National Land Commission, slum chief(s), the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, the Social Safeguard Specialist, County government representatives, the Assistant County Commissioner, the Community Development Officer, the County Surveyor, a representative from enforcement department, the Town Administrator, People Affected by the Project (PAPs), and the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development.

Assessing the Kenya Slum Upgrading Projects' Achievements

According to Adebayo and Iweka (2014), infrastructure is understood to mean the physical and social framework of facilities through which goods and services are made available to the neighbourhood dwellers by the government, at highly subsidized or zero cost. The government has the duty to maintain the infrastructure necessary for sustaining the wellbeing of urban inhabitants. Infrastructure can be classified into two parts: social infrastructure and technical infrastructure (economic infrastructure). Malthaeus (1997) explains that social infrastructure is associated with education, health, and social services, while economic infrastructure produces services to facilitate economic production or serve as inputs to production related to electricity, roads, ports, telecommunication, railways, water, sanitation, and sewage. Adebayo and Iweka, (2014) also state that the gradual upgrading of both the environment and infrastructure in urban slums is seen as a measure to promote economic recovery that will benefit about 72% of the urban population living in Africa. The World Bank (2005) emphasizes that slum upgrading involves the elimination of slum conditions over the next thirty years and requires a sustained effort on a global scale. This is challenging considering that it will require substantial financial resources that the central and local governments may be lacking. Participation or involvement of other actors is therefore crucial for such development to be realized. The process is multidisciplinary, cutting across technical and financial lines among other sectors in the environment (ibid). Such an initiative would have to involve the national governments, international organizations, local governments, local residents, private investors, NGOs, media, civil societies, and international developers (ibid). In the next section we discuss achievements related to improving slums in Kenya.

Anderson and Mwelu (2013) state that both KISIP and KENSUP have had great government support in terms of financing and human resources. KENSUP was institutionalized through creating a slum development department under the Ministry of Housing, and a slum upgrading fund was put in place for its implementation. The

Kenya Slum Upgrading Low-Cost Housing and Infrastructure Fund (KENSUF) and also receives allocations from the national budget. The KISIP project also had financial resources of about \$165 million through a repayable grant from the World Bank. KENSUF involves Government of Kenya and UN-HABITAT, while KISIP was developed through the World Bank and implemented by GoK.

As stated by Muraguri (2011) and the Department for Housing (2019), the achievements of the slum upgrading project can also be viewed in regard to specific implementation priorities. KISIP is perceived to have achieved the main development objective based on the results approved by the World Bank. Project reports estimate that over 1.3 million people have benefited from tenure security or improved access to basic services, surpassing the original target of 1 million at the start of the project. Some of the outcomes were improved roads and stormwater drainage, as well as the erection of high mast floodlights and footpaths. Approximately 262,780 people have benefited from improved water supply. To understand problems in the slums, mapping was a top priority. In Nairobi and an informal settlement in Kibera (the Soweto East village), various preparatory activities took place including socio-economic and physical mapping, enumeration of residents, preparation of a physical land use plan, and the construction of an access road. Muraguri (2011) also recounts that the GoK was able to set up a decanting site across the slum where residents were temporarily settled for construction to take place. Thereafter, 1800 households were resettled in 600 improved units in Soweto and an additional 1700 households were resettled in Langata.



▲ Photo 5. Kibera street view in the Kambi muru village. Own photo.

In line with the priority to assist in setting up and developing institutional programme structures within the target areas, a number of projects have been established in many towns in Kenya – Nairobi, Mombasa, Nyeri, Kakamega, Nakuru, Lamu and Malindi – including the construction of classrooms, health centres, early childhood development centres, renovated social halls and market stalls, and upgraded roads. Some examples follow: in Kisumu, construction of market stalls in Manyatta Bandani, Magadi, and Nyalenda; in Nairobi, construction of 822 housing units and 245 stalls in Soweto, and an access road to the Kibera slums; construction of classrooms in Huruma-Eldoret, Mukhaveri in Bungoma, and Amalemba in Kakamega; construction of a social hall and a nursery school in Malindi; protection and improvement of shallow wells in Lamu; construction of a social hall and a dispensary in Nakuru; in Makueni, construction of the Mavoko sustainable neighborhood project comprising 462 residential units, *jua kali* sheds, a commercial centre, a primary school, nursery schools and a police station; and installation of high mast flood lights in the following counties: Kisumu, Kakamega, Nakuru, Machakos, Homabay, Nyeri, Embu, Meru, Uasin Gishu, Kilifi, Bungoma, Nyandarua, Trans Nzoia, Laikipia, Isiolo, Lamu, Kajiado, Tharaka-Nithi, Kwale, Taita-Taveta, and Kiambu (Muraguri, 2011).

In line with the partnership priority, a broad-based partnership of the main stakeholders has been formed with an effective project structure bringing together multiple stakeholders. Both KENSUP and KISIP were built on collaboration. KENSUP was established with collaboration between the government and UN-HABITAT, while KISIP was based on a partnership between the government and the World Bank (Andersen and Mwelu, 2013).



^ Photo 6. New residential buildings, apartments in Kibera were erected in the frame of the KENSUP project. Own photo.

The slum upgrading programme in Kenya has also facilitated the formation of Housing Cooperatives Societies, SECs, community groups, and capacity building in slums (Muraguri, 2011). This is in the priority area for building community capacity. Although not strongly adopted in practice, community participation was also integrated into the project policy. Andersen and Mwelu (2013) argue that KENSUP envisioned the use of housing cooperatives as a means to mobilize communities, define ownership, and create tenure contracts. The formation of cooperatives in both Mavoko and Kibera by the Ministry of Cooperative Development and Management has been in progress with five housing cooperatives registered in Mavoko and four in Soweto, Kibera.

Housing cooperative societies have been identified as the best mechanism for participation and transfer of ownership of KENSUP projects to the settlement community. Over twenty housing cooperatives were formed and registered in Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega and Mombasa (Muraguri, 2011). Muraguri argues that SEC is one of the key institutions in the implementation process formed in towns where KENSUP has projects. Through SEC, the programme assists in capacity building of the communities in order to prepare them to be part of the project implementation. Furthermore, the communities are involved at all stages of the programme, from identifying the projects to commissioning.

Challenges facing the slum upgrading programmes and lessons learned

Beneficiaries expressed fears about their lack of security of tenure and absence of official guarantees against forcible evictions during the project's implementation. This compromised community participatory processes and ownership of the initiative (Amnesty International, 2009). Secondly, although the entire process was intended to be participatory during the implementation phase, residents in the Kibra decanting site claimed that the government did not involve them in setting up the rental rates (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). Both programmes were designed with community participation as a key element. However, the process of community participation was flawed in that communities targeted by the project did not seem to have been fully engaged. Obare (2020) asserted that the Government of Kenya (2006) and KENSUP identified a communication gap as a serious drawback to their operation and a cause of key stakeholders delaying the implementation of programmes. This posed risks to the initiative volatility of the programme sites and resulted in misleading information by residents. For instance, previous attempts to upgrade slums by other partners created fear and mistrust of KENSUP initiatives, landlords and tenants. One of the lessons emerging from community indifference due to a top-down decision-making strategy employed by the government in the beginning is that community-led planning and development was essential for addressing the basic need for infrastructure, housing, and livelihoods in order to avoid takeover of programs meant for the urban poor (UoN, 2012). Sufficient involvement of local residents in slum upgrades can boost ownership and maintenance of infrastructural facilities.

It is critical that the government invests more in the slum upgrading fund through sufficient budgetary allocation. Arimah (2011) affirms this by stating that infrastructure spending has the effect of reducing the incidence of slums: the higher the spending on infrastructure, the lower the incidence of slums. The programmes' funding was donor-sourced with little direct investment by the Kenyan government, resulting in a lack of sustainability (KISIP 2011, Andersen & Mwelu, 2013). This weakness could be averted if the government increases budgetary allocations towards slum upgrade initiatives.

Anderson and Mwelu (2013) cite irregularities in the implementation process by discussing specific faulty bidding and contracting processes. In effect, this could have caused delays in implementation, especially when parties in the bidding process felt compromised, or when court cases arose and created more expenses for the project.

Analysis from Muchira (2017) shows that although KISIP may have achieved project developmental targets as reported by Kamunyori (2019), there are still many houses lacking access to clean water. The majority of residents have to obtain the commodity from vendors who overcharge at Ksh 25 per 20-liters. This amount is too high for an informal settlement dweller given that most of them have no jobs and survive from hand to mouth (Muchira, 2017). Furthermore, houses with connections do not have a reliable supply. The project did not consider other amenities needed to support residents in the upgraded settlements. Luiz (2012) outlines the lack of a sufficient supply of piped water and inaccessibility for residents to many essential services in Kibera, such as nursing homes, schools, health clinics, pharmacies, water, and transportation. In fact, it has been argued that it is more likely that KISIP may have created the water infrastructure plan without proper coordination with Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company (Muchira 2017). In addition to water-related challenges after the project ended, there are possibilities that residents are not fully aware of alternatives to piped water such as boreholes and wells. Although KISIP managed to establish 35,000 shared sanitation facilities, most of them require constant supply of water, which is already limited (Muchira, 2017). In some locations, storm waterways were not covered, posing the risk of accidents as well as exposure to diseases when water stagnates.

Muraguri (2011) said that in counties where leaders strictly followed the KISIP policy framework on resettlement, delays were not reported as most of the issues were predicted in advance. Thus appropriate measures had already been proposed, such as having committees handle grievances to save time and promote dialogue. Slum upgrade projects should invest in capacity building of settlement executive committees beyond project targets in order to efficiently manage and scale-up projects once the implementation cycle by key partners elapses. Obare (2020) notes that there is need for community mobilization to form community-based organizations that manage some of the infrastructure and other environmental issues affecting them, especially solid waste management, cleaning of rivers and streams, and drainage within the settlement. This will help educate residents on the importance of clean

and healthy environments. The community will also be responsible for managing the resources in their surroundings.

Another challenge is a coordination problem between partners. For instance, the Ministry of Housing is supposed to implement KENSUP projects in partnership with UN-HABITAT, but the latter is not involved or aware of this initiative (UN-HABITAT staff, January 15, 2013). Similarly, KISIP and KENSUP are poorly linked. Although the two projects are run by the same ministry and target related issues, they rarely seem to feed into each other. There is no clear plan for how the projects should complement each other except for remarks not backed by evidence from ministry officials. An example is the assumption that KENSUP will provide housing after KISIP sorts out land tenure and infrastructure in the 15 municipalities (Andersen and Mwelu, 2013). Moreover, there were conflict resolution and transparency issues in the selection of municipalities and the bidding and contracting processes, as well as problems related to insufficient evaluations and a lack of ownership within the community. In a special response to Kenya's Embassy in Geneva, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kenya noted that planning and survey phases in select project areas took longer than anticipated, delaying infrastructure installations. This led to too much time being spent on assessing how to compensate beneficiaries and provide relocation assistance after delays in finalization of resettlement action plans (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). It can be inferred from the coordination issues mentioned above that it would have been important to apply a holistic approach in



▲ Photo 7. New residential buildings, apartments in Kibera were erected in the frame of the KENSUP project. Own photo.

the slum upgrade process. For instance, had Nairobi County Water and Sewerage Company been involved in the planning process of KISIP from the beginning, some of the challenges experienced by households after project completion would not have resulted.

According to Obare (2020), policy and legal frameworks have been identified as major drawbacks to the slum upgrading initiatives. The Department of Slum Upgrading admitted that there is no legal framework on slum upgrading, and the draft bill is still awaiting approval by the National Assembly because of the long procedure required for turning a bill into law. Therefore, regulating the activities of various stakeholders has been an uphill battle for the Ministry of Housing. It is important to have all the required policies and frameworks for upgrading slums in place instead of waiting for specific demands to arise. For instance, the government should prioritize situational analysis and mapping of informal settlements if such inventories have not been conducted (UN-HABITAT, 2014)

Another challenge is the appearance of a new slum while upgrading another, which occurs when the public does not realize the true impact of slum upgrading in Kenya (Obare, 2020). This negates the progress of upgrading and could have been addressed through concurrent measures to curb further slum proliferation.

The land tenure systems in Kibera are very complex. The Department of Slum Upgrading admits that many court cases filed by property owners regarding tenure have hindered their activities, especially in the Soweto East village in Kibera. Such cases take a long time to solve and sometimes bring slum upgrading initiatives to a standstill (Obare, 2020). ☀



^ Photo 8. New residential buildings, apartments in Kibera were erected in the frame of the KEN-SUP project and the old ones in the foreground of the picture. Own photo.

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