

REGIONAL PLANNING SEMINAR

ORGANIZED BY THE TOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT OF
THE MINISTRY OF LANDS AND SETTLEMENT AND THE
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE NAIROBI KENYA.
23rd - 24th November, 1966.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC AND DISCUSSIONS //

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The Town Planning Department,
Ministry of Lands & Settlement,
N a i r o b i. December, 1966.

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Bullock R.A.	Lecturer in Geography, University College, Nairobi.
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Howe J.D.G.E.	Officer i/c. E.A. Transport Planning Reserve Unit (B.R.R.L.)
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Mutiso D.M.	Chief Architect, Ministry of Works.
Norbye O.D.K.	Economic Adviser, Ministry of Economic Planning & Development.
Oakley Prof. D.	Faculty of Architectural Design & Development, University College.
Odingo Dr. R.S.	Lecturer, Dept. of Geography, University College.
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Ominde Prof. S.H.	Dean Faculty of Arts, University College.
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INTRODUCTION:

Professor Ominde on behalf of the University welcomed the participants of the Seminar. He expressed the hope that it would usher in a period of more co-operation between the University and the Government of Kenya. He noted that the purpose of the Seminar was to give all those concerned in Regional Planning a clearer idea of the order of priorities which would enable work being done in this field to be directed in the most appropriate and fruitful manner. He mentioned the importance of such an order of priorities in guiding the work of those undertaking Post Graduate training at the University and suggested that the Seminar should inspire all the participants of the tasks which lie ahead.

Mr. Lock as chairman of the first session then stated that because planning is becoming increasingly complex all disciplines represented at the Seminar had a correspondingly increased role to play in the process of forward planning.

The aim of the Topic leaders should be to present a brief picture of the work they were currently engaged in with particular emphasis on its application in the physical planning field.

TOPIC I.

REGIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING. - MR. CARVALHO.

The chairman introduced the first topic speaker by providing a background to the work of the Planning Department

of the Ministry of Lands & Settlement. The duties of the Department were to : -

- i) Advise the Kenya Government on all matters of policy and legislation concerning physical development.
- ii) Through the Department of Lands to advise on the use of Government land and private development.
- iii) The preparation of town plans.
- iv) To act as Town Planning Officer to Local Authorities.
- v) The siting and designing of Urban Centres in Settlement Schemes.
- vi) In co-operation with the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development to prepare integrated Physical Regional Development Plans.

In summary the role of the Physical Planner was to bring together the land requirements of various agencies, drawing to their notice factors affecting land use such as demographic distribution, education, health, and un-employment and to assess proper future land requirements.

Mr. Carvalho of the Government Planning Department then introduced the Seminar to the current work of the Regional Planning section.

Any regional study must consider a variety of equally important and complimentary aspects involving the study of physical characteristics, population distribution and movement, general service infrastructure, analysis and location of current income levels, proposed capital investment, future employment policies and the spatial distribution of existing service centres.

While the last aspect was being presented in most detail it was emphasised that considerable work had also been carried out on demography and infrastructure and it should be fully appreciated that only when all the previous mentioned aspects could be inter-related that any real value would accrue from the research.

Mr. Carvalho then continued to explain briefly a numerical system which the Regional Planning team had used to evaluate service centres so that a preliminary hierarchy could be established according to function and scale.

Information and statistics were obtained from National, Provincial and field sources in sufficient detail to eliminate 90 minor centres, from the original 250, as not materially effecting the future growth pattern of the province.

Theoretical spheres of influence were drawn for each of the remaining centres based on field survey and personal interview and it was hoped that once overlay maps were superimposed on this pattern showing detailed population concentration, communication network and topography, it should be possible to note graphically where service deficiency or over provision occurs.

The aim of the study in its present limited form was to provide a measure which could rationalize the future siting of major services such as hospitals and schools and direct both Government and private investments by advising on the physical implementation of development plans.

This detailed background knowledge should greatly assist the location of new growth centres for future economic activities in accordance with the Government's policy to encourage rural development where possible.

DISCUSSION.

An active discussion ensued following the presentation of the first topic.

While the seminar was very interested in the study as far as it had been carried it questioned whether the combination of all services to give an accumulative value was in fact an appropriate system of classification. The fact that function and the relative importance of individual services was lost in this 'blanket' classification was regretted and doubt was voiced as to the validity of equating such uses as a Hospital to a High Court.

The general concensus of opinion was that the study did not go far enough to help determine the location of development proposals but that this could well be the result of attempting to provide a simplified graphic portrayal of the mass of survey data already tabulated.

It was hoped that the analysis would be continued and that a more detailed study be carried out on the location of industrial development in the province.

The Chairman concluded the discussions by noting that it was evident that the original objective of the team should be re-considered in the light of the comments raised, that more

testing of theory should be carried out in the field, and that a close co-operation should be maintained between ministries to ensure that all aspects of the study could be correlated into a unified development plan.

TOPIC 2.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS - PROFESSOR OMINDE.

Professor Ominde launched the second topic by presenting the seminar with details of his study of population movement against a national background. A comprehensive series of maps illustrated graphically the scale and direction of population movement both between major urban centres and on an interprovincial scale.

The statistical basis of the study was extracted from the 1962 Census of Kenya and indicated that the main movements were from the Western Lake Basin and the Central Province into the Rift Valley, and from Nyanza and Central Provinces to the Coast.

Comparing this with a population density map of Kenya it was clear that the movement represented a flow from traditionally over-crowded areas of Kenya to areas of new settlement. Professor Ominde then showed, through a series of population age structure pyramids for major urban areas, that rural emigration was creating a deficiency in working age groups outside urban centres in addition to providing an imbalance in sex ratio. Both these factors were of particular relevance to the economic aspects of

regional planning as the urban areas are becoming rich in terms of labour force at the cost of largely depriving the rural areas of necessary wage income.

In terms of housing and employment this movement had in the speaker's opinion obvious serious implications for urban planning.

DISCUSSION.

The first point to emerge from the open discussion was that relevance for planning purposes largely depends on the possibility of comparing such a study with similar figures taken over a known, and preferably recent period.

Once the next census is held in Kenya the true value of this study would become apparent in planning terms but until that time it was possibly of more academic interest.

The seminar finally concluded that the study had brought out the importance of having adequate census material in undertaking demographic researches of this nature and that the statistical demands of planning are increasing more rapidly than the capacity of the Statistical Department to supply them.

TOPIC 3.

LAND USE ASPECTS - DR. ODINGO.

In introducing the third topic entitled 'Land Use Aspects' Dr. Odingo presented the thesis that Regional Planning and Agricultural development in Kenya are largely synonymous.

The problem, he added, was not as in Europe where available land was the subject of fierce competition between agricultural, industrial and general urban pressures.

In contrast to the over-crowding of land in such areas as Nyanza and Kiambu he felt that there was a considerable land resource still undeveloped.

While it would be impossible to provide everyone with land it was important to determine what land is available now for future agricultural expansion.

The use of aerial photography would be of particular value in surveying existing land uses and Dr. Odingo concluded that the preparation of a Land Classification survey after the manner of Dudley Stamp in England could be easily organised with the assistance of senior classes from local schools.

DISCUSSION.

The feeling of the seminar was generally that Dr. Odingo was over simplifying the situation in considering land as a panacea in terms of national livelihood.

'Rural development' means much more than solely 'agricultural development' and alternative means of livelihood for the rapidly increasing population should therefore be looked for; particularly as income standards may be expected to change during the next 10 years. The importance of creating other employment opportunities in the present rural areas should therefore not be underemphasised.

Members felt that it was certainly important to determine what land is necessary to support the national population but thereafter emphasis might vary between the production of cash crops for export, the utilization of land for other cash returns in terms of tourist receipts or the development of rural industrial employment centres.

The value of aerial photography as the basis of land classification on such a scale was considered suspect, and the chairman closed the topic by noting that the problem resolved into the basic question of whether there would be ever increasing urbanization not withstanding the provision of increased development in the rural areas brought about by the provision of Government incentives.

TOPIC 4.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS OF POPULATION GEOGRAPHY - MR. BULLOCK.

In addressing the seminar Mr. Bullock reiterated the problems of trying to use techniques which were in advance of available data.

One should be sceptical of the validity of any 'Projection' when the relationship between man and the land was changing rapidly with increased mechanization and improved dietary habits.

Accepting that the need was to plan all available resources, Mr. Bullock posed the question as how best can

the carrying capacity of available land be determined.

An inventory of the existing situation was of more value at this stage than making theoretical projections for the future. To this end the speaker was attempting to define the minimum amount of land needed to satisfy a variety of dietary essentials and had carried out a study in Central Nyanza.

While the problem was complicated by the fact that food consumption is variable in terms of body size, employment and climate, preliminary results suggested that a deficiency of several vitamins existed in the study area once one restricted research to the dietary content of 'local' foods only.

The rising standard of living emphasised in earlier topics however, raised the problem of changing dietary needs and poor marketing facilities; factors which further complicated the Topic study.

DISCUSSION.

Serious doubts were expressed in the following discussion as to the validity of applying a dietary study to a small area.

As a national study it might indicate what essential foodstuffs would require to be marketed in alternative areas but the intention of making small areas wholly self supporting appeared irrational when viewed against the national economy.

As earlier discussions had also viewed it might prove economically more viable for the country to purchase certain food-stuffs from overseas in order to obtain a greater capital return off potentially good agricultural land by adopting an alternative use.

The first session of the Seminar was then closed by the Chairman at 18.05 hours.

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The second and final session: Professor Ominde in the Chair.

TOPIC 1.

TRANSPORTATION - MR. HOWE.

In order to plan future road construction and upgrading the speaker pointed out that it was necessary to forecast the prescribed traffic that would have to be accommodated.

As traffic generation is closely related to land use it was essential to know what future development or changes in land use might be expected and how much traffic each particular type of use generates.

To develop standards applicable to Kenya Mr. Howe had inaugurated a pilot study in an area bounded by the Aberdares, Mt. Kenya and the Tana River. The area has a wide variation in topography, rainfall and cultivation and is easily studied, there being only 7 major roads providing access to the adjoining countryside.

The traffic zones which are being used in the study were based on major agricultural land uses and it was hoped that the survey will produce an accurated guide to the amount of traffic generated by these different uses.

Mr. Howe emphasised that his objective was merely to produce a pattern of desire lines in terms of both humans and

goods and that it would then rest with the planners to develop the cost benefit aspects of any subsequent proposals.

The fact that 1/5 of the planned expenditure in the current development plan will be on roadworks appeared to the speaker strangely unrelated to what little knowledge exists of traffic patterns in the country, let alone what traffic patterns may be anticipated in the future.

DISCUSSION.

There followed an exchange of views as to how Mr. Howe's studies could best be applied to development planning.

It was regretted by the seminar that the study would make no final proposals as to implementation of a future transportation network.

The view was also expressed that while Mr. Howe had confined his remarks to Road planning many of the demands emerging from such a desire line study might be equally well accommodated by more modern methods. At the other extreme was the question of the existing and future pattern of pedestrian traffic.

Many physical planners feel that to superimpose the medieval 'spiders web' form of road network on the contemporary land-scape is both unnecessary and uneconomic, since modern technology has produced more efficient and direct systems of communication.

Some scepticism was expressed on mention of tube grain conveyors, hovercraft and inter regional mono-rail links but it was generally appreciated that all these systems have been in regular use throughout the world for some years. It may prove that developing countries will best adapt to and benefit from these current advances which are revolutionizing forward planning in Europe.

TOPIC 2.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS AND KENYA DEVELOPMENT PLAN - MR. NORBYE.

Mr. Norbye introduced the topic by saying that the 1966/67 development plan contained only a few elements of regional planning and that there were no details in the development plan as to how district output targets should be specifically implemented. Projects designed to achieve these targets must be initiated locally by County Councils. Mr. Norbye then explained the work of the new Provincial Planning Officers to be engaged by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. They would become, he said, contact men between what is going on in the field and the Ministry and they would also become the Provincial Commissioner's right-hand men in development matters. It was hoped that the problem of planning at a provincial level would be assisted by the posting of Provincial Planning teams in different provinces on a technical assistance basis. Planning

must be sighted at least 25 years ahead, in order that people may be trained for the requirements of the economy at that time and this entails the close co-ordination of education planning with economic planning. Manpower and land were according to the speaker the two most important resources on the national level although various other factors such as fishing and tourism may possess local importance. While the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development wished to accelerate the increase in employment opportunities, it was felt that urbanisation at a rate of more than 5 to 6% per annum would be unhealthy for the economy and would give rise to large scale urban unemployment, slums and social misery. The solution perhaps lies in the development of rural industries and the provision of a better economic infrastructure in the rural areas.

DISCUSSION.

While this Topic proved of considerable general interest to the Seminar it differed from the other topics in that it was in itself analytical and as such lent itself more to additional comments rather than a close discussion on methodology and resultant values.

An example quoted showed that the speaker considered urbanisation at a rate of more than 5 to 6% per annum would prove 'unhealthy' unless the growth rate of the national income could be rapidly increased. While not disagreeing on this point the urban planners present considered that

increased urbanisation in a country like Kenya would be inevitable whether the economy suited the situation or not and were therefore concerned with planning for the 'worst situation'.

The opinion was expressed that a great need existed for more integrated team work between those engaged in different aspects of national planning and a close examination of economic potential was required to get the full value out of the land.

It was proposed that a central organisation might be established to receive policies from all ministries and to co-ordinate them into an overall plan.

The seminar agreed that urban life should be taken to the rural areas in an attempt to control 'drift' and it was suggested that further transportation studies should be integrated into regional planning to create a new form of Rural-Urban City.

STATISTICS: MR. BROUGH.

As many of the previous Topic leaders and participants had complained about the shortage of statistical data, Mr. Brough, the Director of Statistics then gave a short account of the working of the statistics department which employed two hundred people including 13 professional officers with a vote of £125,000 to 150,000. The statistics collected range from farm economics through demography employment in industries,

mining, distribution of goods and services, overseas trade, forestry, tourism, etc., finance and national accounts.

It was evident that the shortage of statistical data was a serious obstacle to proper planning and every effort was being made to counter the deficiencies of past years. It was hoped the next census would be geared more closely to planning requirements.

TOPIC 3.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT - MR. R. OGENDO.

Mr. Ogendo then introduced the final topic of the Seminar by presenting a series of maps illustrating a study which he had recently carried out on the location of industrial development in Kenya.

Commencing with a broad definition of Agricultural land the study led into the location of existing industrial towns and centres and the structure of manufacturing and agricultural processing industries.

A series of graphs indicated the degree of industrial diversification at provincial level and changes in the growth of manufacturing industries were also highlighted.

Finally, Mr. Ogendo had interpreted his research in terms of a proposal map showing future industrial development zones taking into consideration other physical factors such as rainfall, demography, transportation and power supply.

DISCUSSION.

As in some of the earlier topics it was felt by the seminar that the broadness of scale of the study rendered it of little practical use to detailed forward planning. The speaker pointed out, however, that the maps shown were only a summary of many extremely detailed statistical studies. In summary therefore the study proposals were limited by the impossibility of anticipating political economic injection into what might on the surface appear to be undevelopable areas. On the other hand the background survey work could prove of considerable value once the detailed research is released.

CONCLUSION.

Mr. Lock then addressed the meeting on the request of the Chairman. He said that the object of the seminar had been to create a forum for the exchange of ideas on Regional Planning and he felt this object had been achieved. The discussions had proved lively, good humoured and frank and it was hoped that the participants had all benefited.

Mr. Lock then thanked the University for their hospitality and said that one of the major values of the University was the way in which it could stimulate ideas and this had been well demonstrated in the present Seminar.

The Chairman then formally closed the Seminar.