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Housing Research and Development Unit University of Nairobi



1.00 INTRODUCTION

The Housing Research and Development Unit (HRDU) was established in 1967 as a result of recommendations of a United Nations report on Housing in Kenya prepared by C. Abrahams and Bloomberg in 1965 followed by an agreement between the University of Nairobi, the Ministry of Works and Housing (MOW&H) and the National Housing Corporation (NHC). The HRDU is a multi-disciplinary research and development unit within the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Development (FADD), focussing on various aspects of housing and community planning for human settlements development programmes in both urban and rural areas of Kenya. The attached Organisation Chart shows the structure of the HRDU.

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Research and development of low cost housing standards; building systems; construction materials and techniques; transfer of technology; training; dissemination of information; and demonstration projects are among the HRDU's main areas of involvement which are important activities in the housing development process at the local and national level. The HRDU has made considerable progress since its conception and has covered several research projects within the above mentioned areas with a wide range of specific issues on housing, community development and human settlements. Further details are contained in the HRDU Brochure and List of Publications issued regularly.

2.00 OBJECTIVES OF THE H.R.D.U.

The following are the main objectives of the H.R.D.U. in its overall broad scope of operation.

- 2.1 To identify policies and solutions that lead to significant improvements in physical and socio-economic environments of impoverished housing and human settlements in urban and rural areas in Kenya.
- 2.2 To explore social, technical and economic problems of housing and community development within the overall context of human settlements and to help establish appropriate housing standards for the low income groups in the country.
- 2.3 To identify natural resource supplies and develop local materials, and appropriate technology for the low cost housing programmes in Kenya.
- 2.4 To develop and produce prototype designs, to test building systems and construction materials and to assist in the promotion and construction of demonstration housing projects including community facilities in co-operation with public and semi-public bodies charged with the provision of housing.
- 2.5 ✓ To build up a body of knowledge in the fields of housing, community development and human settlements planning and to establish extension courses and post-graduate diploma courses related to these fields.
- 2.6 To adequately respond to the national goals for research, development and training in the fields of housing, community development and human settlements.
- 2.7 ✓ To continue to participate in the service teaching of subjects concerned with housing, community development and human settlements at the University and to disseminate similar information to other organisations and bodies dealing with housing within and outside Kenya.
- 2.8 To establish research activities based on priorities for housing, community development and human settlements with emphasis on practical solutions to problems, in real life situations, in conjunction with relevant Ministries, Para-statal bodies, and various Faculties and Institutes at the University, and international organizations.
- 2.9 To continue to assist the Government of Kenya by advising on social, technical and economic aspects of housing, community development and human settlements based on the findings of relevant research projects.