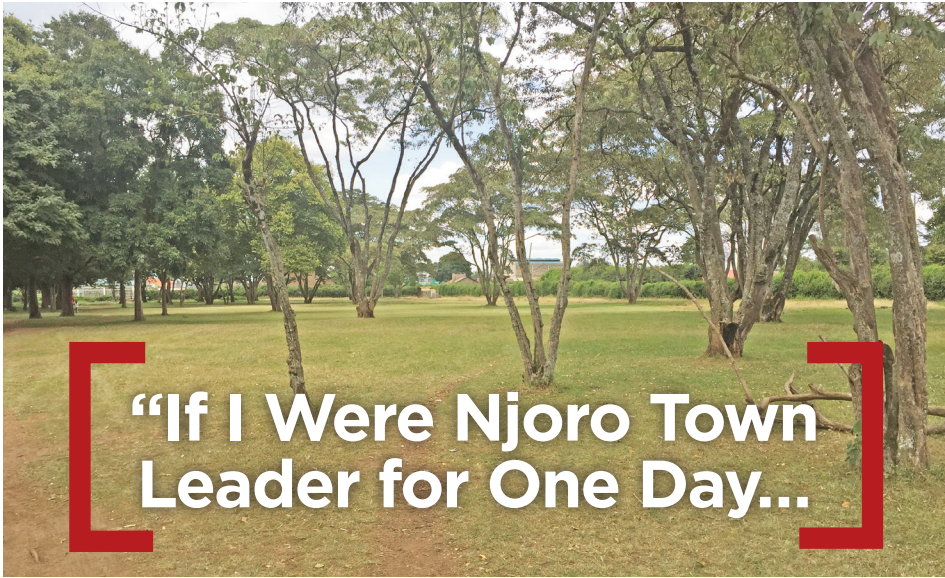


Urban THE NEW

March 2017

NAKURU COUNTY



“If I Were Njoro Town Leader for One Day...”

A beautiful view of Njoro park. This is one of the underutilised public spaces in the town

Residents of Njoro Town, Nakuru County, recently had a chance to envision the community challenges that their leaders are confronted with daily. “If it was up to me, this is what I would address in Njoro...” went the open-ended statement. In three small clusters, the working group of the Nakuru County SymbioCity Kenya Programme took the chance to tell their leader for the day their

problems. They listed insecurity, poor waste management, water shortage, unemployment, inadequate public transport and housing, as their priorities. One of the groups even shared their dream to transform Njoro in to a “green town”.

The exercise also brought out their community participation and cooperation skills in driving common beliefs and achieving shared interests. SymbioCity plans to conduct a follow-up community

workshop to create awareness on the dangers of poor waste management.

Located about 20 kilometres from Nakuru Town, Njoro Town has arched out its identity as an important agricultural research and educational town. It is home to Egerton University and the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation.

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THE SYMBIOCITY KENYA PROGRAMME

What?

SymbioCity is an approach to sustainable development with emphasis on improving living conditions for the people living in urban areas. It doesn't provide ready-made solutions to all urban challenges. Instead it offers committed local elected representatives, officials and activists a chance to develop properly planned and managed cities where people work, access services and thrive! Urban areas with health, safety, comfort and quality of life for the people who live there. With efficiently managed urban services like waste management, mobility and water. And where the economic potential that urbanization brings is captured, while protecting the urban environment.

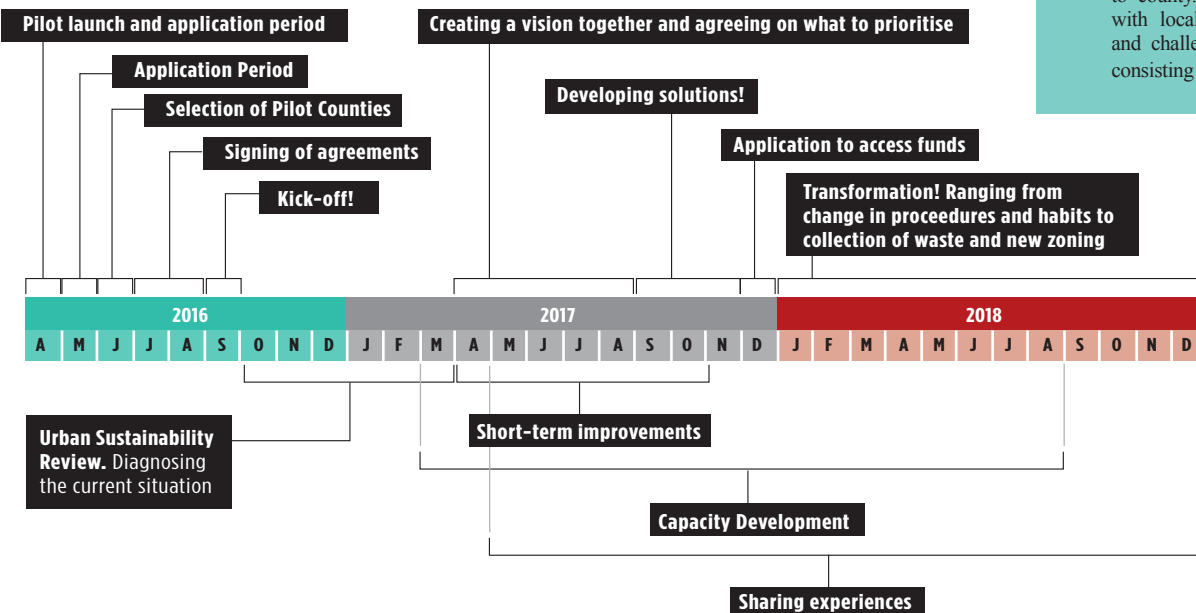
Who?

SymbioCity Kenya is a cooperation between Council of Governors and its sister organization, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Seven counties have been selected, after a competitive application process, to become so called SymbioCity Pilots. Each county has selected a secondary town to be in focus for the piloting activities.

How?

Project activities are delivered by the Council of Governors, Urban Support Team, under the Land, Planning and Urban Development Committee. We are a team of mixed backgrounds and nationalities, with emphasis on Kenyan and Swedish urban specialists. In the respective pilot counties, a Working Group has been established, to guide the work in the county. The composition of the Working Group varies from county to county. The Working Group in its turn engages with local stakeholders when consulting on needs and challenges and report to a Steering Committee consisting mainly of County Government officials.

Timeline for SymbioCity Kenya Programme in Nakuru County



THE SYMBIOCITY PILOTS!

Pilot	County
Mbita	Homabay
Butere	Kakamega
Ahero	Kisumu
Kwa Vonza	Kitui
Makutano	Meru
Njoro	Nakuru
Kiminiini	Trans Nzoia



Njoro Town Bodaboda operators meet SymbioCity Pilot Co-ordinator, Justine Mayaka (in a blue shirt), to discuss development of the town

11 to Reorganise Nakuru

Njoro Town is rapidly urbanising, with the former agricultural hinterland quickly transitioning in to residential and commercial centres. The town is a low-cost economy where half the urban population works in the informal business sector. The town's major economic activities include open-air market trading; street hawking; and public transport, mainly motorcycle (*boda boda*) taxis.

In its efforts to swiftly manage the effects of this rapid growth, the Nakuru County Government has

recently employed eleven youthful professional planners to coordinate and manage urban development activities in its various sub-counties. There is however need to give the eleven officers practical exposure on urban and rural planning. To fill the gap, the SymbioCity Kenya Programme has organised for local and international planning practitioners to train the planning coordinators. This is in line with the programme's vision to improve the living standards of citizens in urban environments.

What's Next ?

Community Initiative

According to Njoro Town residents, improper waste management is at crisis level, harming their health, destroying the environment and generally lowering the residents' quality of life. The waste is mainly domestic, and contains nylon paper; used tins and cans; plastic bottles; old clothes; and human waste, among others.

Two members of the working group of Nakuru County SymbioCity Programme, Gilbert Ndungu and Alice Kwamboka point to a hopeful future. Gilbert, a private garbage collector in

the town remarks that, "Due to limited resources, I have not been able to reach the entire community with my services. But I believe that the awareness that the programme has created on environmental conservation will cause a positive change in the people."

Alice, a trader at the Njoro Open-air Market, draws her hope from the open working relationships the programme has with the community. "I have lived in Njoro Town for 30 years. This project is transformative. I hope that it will change Njoro Town for better."

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Njoro is also one of the seven pilot towns for the SymbioCity Kenya Programme. The programme aims at transforming urban centres to achieve environmental, economic and social excellence.

SymbioCity enhances community participation through a steering committee, a stakeholders group and a working group. The Nakuru County Pilot Coordinator heads the 20-member working group, which has county staff drawn from the departments of Physical Planning, Water, Environment, Agriculture and Public Health, as well as the local business community, women and youth.

The group is developing a breakdown of issues affecting their town, otherwise known as the Urban Sustainability Review, through monthly meetings - workshops and other community events. George Kungu, who is a member of the working group hopes that the programme will implement sustainable solutions to the environmental challenges in the town. "Indeed there has been community participation in handling issues such as waste management," he states.



Timber milling also known as lumbering is one of the economic activities of Njoro Town



The busy and dusty Njoro Road



Open air market contributing to almost half of the local economy



A garbage dump right next to Njoro Market

To manage solid waste better, the steering committee of the programme has planned for an environmental education day that will end with a community cleanup. According to Alice and Gilbert the residents hope to maintain the town's cleanliness thereafter.

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This newsletter has been put together by the SymbioCity Kenya team. The purpose is to share information with stakeholders on the process and progress of SymbioCity in Nakuru County.