

Urban THE NEW

March 2017

TRANSNZOIA COUNTY



Women in Kiminini Market

Engaging with Kiminini Community

Working with communities towards a public course can be tiresome, as personal interest tends to overwhelm common interest. A close look at the way the people of Western Kenya socialise and manage their households gives the impression of a socialist lifestyle. While that may be true to the extent of the immediate family, it doesn't encompass other

aspects of their lives, such as their participation in development projects. Their approach to communal development projects points to the worrying trend that the bigger good is overshadowed by individual interest.

Having noticed this worrying trend early enough, continued to page 2

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.

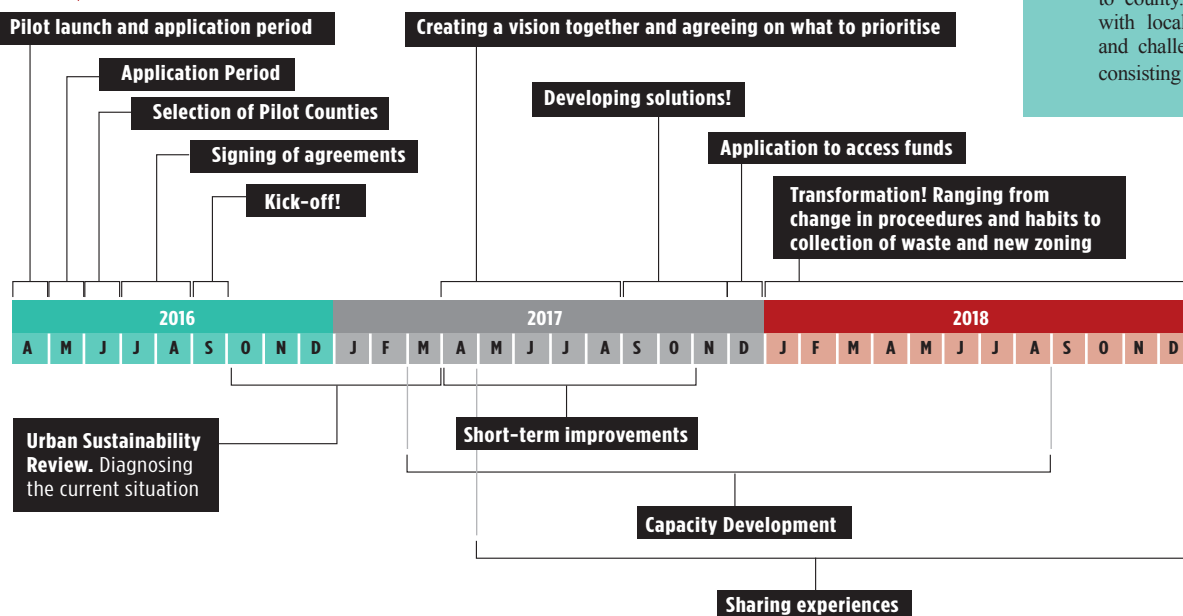
Who?

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 Transzoia County



THE SYMBIOCITY PILOTS!

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

A Chat with Planner Linekar Nabwire



Planner Linekar Nabwire

Linekar Nabwire is a physical planner with extensive experience working in the national and county governments. After graduating from Maseno University in 2006, she obtained double Master's Degrees in urban planning from Dortmund University, Germany, and Kwame Nkrumah University, Ghana. She is the chief officer, public administration, in Trans Nzoia County. She chats with SymbioCity Kenya Programme on the challenges of urbanisation in the county.

Q: How has your career in planning been?

I started off my career under the guidance of a licenced planner, before joining the Ministry of Lands, where my role was not very clear. Soon I got transferred to Kuria as the district planner. That was the ultimate test of my ability. I consulted senior planners on various issues. I've since resolved that nothing is difficult when you have the right attitude.

Q: Why does Trans Nzoia County need planning?

It is a unique county where people own huge tracts of land. The cosmopolitan nature of the population makes it a peaceful town, and as a result, it attracts more people, hence its urbanisation rate is at about 3.9% per annum.

Planning is crucial to ensure that the increasing residents get sufficient infrastructural and socio-economic services. Trans Nzoia is famous for maize growing, but we have recently been confronted with high land subdivision and fragmentations



A QGIS training session in Kiminini Town

as farmers opt for more profitable ventures such as real estate development. The resultant looming food insecurity has meant that the county government embarks on a plan to protect agricultural land.

Q: How has urbanisation impacted Trans Nzoia?

Urbanisation is inevitable; the challenge is how to leverage on the growing population and develop our towns. Currently we are reeling under its negative impacts, such as uncoordinated and irregular subdivisions, urban sprawl and increased pressure on the available infrastructure.

Nevertheless, the county government is developing an integrated county spatial plan that combines spatial, environmental and socio-economic issues. The plan is intended to conserve agricultural areas and control sprawl.

What Next ?

Mind Your Gap

About 15 planning department staff of Trans Nzoia County were trained on GIS between February 23rd and 24th 2017. The training acquaints the participants with the knowledge on QGIS software to produce maps, contours and other spatial presentations for communication purposes.

GIS is an information system tool designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse manage and present all types of geographical data. The County Government Act 2012 underscores the importance of a GIS based spatial planning. Although it recommends that each county generate 10-year County GIS database spatial plans, most counties lack the adequate capacity and personnel to establish a proper and functional GIS unit. Additionally, the GIS software (ArcGIS) is expensive and the license limited to few users.

Because of the foregoing, the SymbioCity Kenya Programme plans to replicate the two-day pilot training in other counties.

Tip!

QGIS is a free downloadable software and simpler to use than ArcGIS. To download please go to <http://www.qgis.org/>

3.9%

Trans Nzoia's urbanisation rate per annum

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the SymbioCity Kenya Programme initiated strategies to correct it. Through continuous community engagements, information was shared adequately, and the people engaged in a transparent way. Great improvements have been noticed, such as meaningful community engagements.

For instance, the Kiminini Town residents usefully participated in a recent photo exhibition through which they were to point out what they liked and didn't like about their town. Some residents went a step further by suggesting solutions to the identified challenges. The information received has greatly informed the Kiminini Town Urban Sustainability Review. Additionally, SymbioCity and the county working group are developing detailed proposals to implement quick win solutions.



Aspirations of Kiminini Town Residents

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| <p><i>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 Transzoia County.</i></p> | | |