INDUSTRIAL LOCATION IN THE NAIROBI AREA

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Abstract: The paper opens with a brief examination of the Nairobi City pattern of industrial location (especially in terms of industrial areas), including the enumeration of some of the industries involved (a number of them located outside the city boundary). Industrial structure (cum-location) aspects, both in the city and in the neighbouring districts of Kiambu, Machakos and Kajiado (which together constitute the Nairobi Area), are next discussed in detail. The data used are those from the 1965 and 1975 research surveys, and are presented on a national basis so as to demonstrate the significance or otherwise of the Nairobi Area as the industrial core of Kenya. The discussion of the location factors in the Nairobi Area brings the paper to a close. Incorporated are seven tables and four maps.

Pattern of Nairobi's Industrial Areas

The city of Nairobi has one main industrial area, which is located to the south-east of the city's central business district (Fig 1-4). However, prior to 1948 when the Nairobi main industrial area was as yet so allocated, many of the industries located there today were to be found mainly within the central business district (CBD). Even today, a number of light manufacturing and service industries are located in parts of the CBD. Good examples are coffee processing, especially, along Haile Selassie Avenue near the railway yard; small-scale footwear fabrication and repair; manufacture of clothing, furniture and fixtures; printing and publishing; maintenance of electrical and other machinery; the railway industries; motor vehicle repair and several other manufacturing and service industries. Generally speaking, out of the 39 manufacturing and service industries of Kenya, nearly all of which are found in Nairobi city, only seven are not found in the non-industrial area section of the city. The four maps referred to above (Fig 1-4) indicate the pattern of industrial areas within the city except for the other industrial areas located in Kahawa, Kassarani, Ruaraka and Dandora, mainly to the north-east. Kahawa is noted for chemicals processing and the Kamiti Prison’s industrial products, Kassarani is known for its clay products such as tiles, bricks, etc., Ruaraka is famous for its two breweries, soft drinks, etc., whereas Dandora houses the city's only steel mill. There is considerable coffee pulping and processing, sisal decortication and other agricultural processing industries located in the more rural parts of the city, although most of these industries are mainly outside the city boundary (Fig 1-4).

Although these are outside the city boundary, the manufacturing and service industries of Kiambu, Machakos and Kajiado districts are discussed below along with those located in the city of Nairobi for purposes of comparing the industrial significance of Nairobi area with the rest of Kenya. The patterns of agricultural and non-agricultural manufacturing industries in the rural areas and that of industrial towns and centres, all of which are located in the Nairobi area, are given elsewhere (Fig 2).

Structure and Location of the Manufacturing and Service Industries in the Nairobi Area:

The industrial employment data presented below refer to the year 1975, although the corresponding industrial
data for 1965 are also introduced for comparative purposes. Only establishments employing 5 or more operatives are considered for the two years discussed.

As in the case of the 1965 industrial research survey, the 39 individual groups of processing, fabricating and service industries are considered in presenting the 1975 industrial research survey data.

According to the International Standard Industrial Classification of all economic activities (ISIC), the number of establishments, their corresponding operatives and the