Challenges of urban environmental governance. Participation and partnership in Nakuru Municipality, Kenya

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This chapter gives an analysis of the Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) process and the way partnerships were created and utilised in Nakuru. We have singled out the LA 21 process as it aimed at developing partnerships between different actors involved in urban development. Partnerships were formed in the areas that are of focus to this study and we discuss them to find out how operational they are and the specific challenges that they face. The partnerships formed within the LA 21 process are well documented and this made it possible to examine their structure and other aspects that are central to this study. We will first introduce what is meant by a Local Agenda 21 and the criteria used to select Nakuru as one of the three cities involved in the Localising Agenda 21 programme, the arrangements within the process, focusing on the partners, their inputs and who is excluded, the nature of the relationships and the organisational structure. The next section presents the mandate of the LA 21 including the aims, activities undertaken and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. Finally an assessment of LA 21 outcomes is done, followed by a discussion.

7.1 Introducing the 'Localising Agenda 21' process

As seen in Chapter 1, the global action programme for achieving sustainable development was outlined during the Rio Conference in a document entitled 'Agenda 21' in 1992. Over two thirds of the recommendations in the forty chapters of the Agenda referred to actions that should be taken at the local level. This appeal was most explicit in Chapter 28, where local authorities were called upon to undertake consultative processes and engage social organisations, companies and individual citizens in working towards their own programme for a sustainable future. The drafting of this chapter was done by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) a year earlier and included a mandate for all local authorities to prepare a Local Agenda 21. This approach recognised the importance of a local agency in harmonising urban development in environmental protection. LA 21 became a conceptual framework for urban development programmes worldwide.

ICLEI outlined the key elements to the process as: full community participation, assessment of current conditions, target setting for achieving specific goals, moni-
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toring and reporting. The call to engage in LA 21 processes on the part of the local authorities and communities has, arguably, been the most successful line of implementing Agenda 21. Church (2000), however, notes that the call for such processes to be undertaken brings together three policy areas in which concepts are all contested – community, sustainable development and participation. Each of these words and the ideas behind them are the focus of debate: it is therefore not surprising that development of LA 21 plans has been a process with many different approaches.

We note from the onset that a fashionable view of a LA 21 is that it is largely about process. According to Selman (1999), it is a process where partnerships are formed between various actors and a consultative process started whereby problems are identified, action prioritised, and joint actions are started. However, the LA 21 process is also involved in the implementation of these action plans leading to substantive outcomes. The importance of this process is widely considered to lie in the ways in which it extends genuine participation among stakeholders and the general public, both in setting priorities and taking decisions. Most of our key informants noted that the process of conducting an LA 21 was on a pilot basis and a coordinating unit had been established.

The Localising Agenda 21 programme\textsuperscript{110} of the UNCHS is a specific initiative, sponsored by BADC/DGIC and run by UN-Habitat, which started in 1995 to offer a multi-year support system for sustainable urban development in three selected secondary towns: Nakuru (Kenya) Essaouira (Morocco) and Vihn (Vietnam). This programme aims at disseminating lessons learnt from these towns to other cities in the region, to further help building the capacities of the local authorities (Tuts and Cody, 2000). The preference of medium-size towns, according to UNCHS, was based on the observation that a good number of large cities in developing countries were already benefiting from assistance of multi-lateral programmes such as the Sustainable Cities and the Urban Management Programmes. The way the LA 21 process was undertaken in Nakuru was through building partnerships between different actors.

7.1.1 Selection criteria used for Nakuru

There are a number of reasons explaining why Nakuru was selected to be one of the three cities involved in the Localising Agenda 21 programme, apart from the one mentioned above. The first criterion was one inherent to the town, the region

\textsuperscript{110} This is a programme within UN-HABITAT aimed at providing multi-year support in three selected towns (Nakuru, Essaouira and Vihn city) to come up with respective Local Agendas 21. Note that UN-Habitat chose to use the word ‘Localising’ to indicate the ongoing programme termed as “Action Planning for Sustainable Development”.

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and the province. Nakuru is situated on the axis between Nairobi and Kisumu and is the headquarters of the expansive Rift Valley Province. As a medium-sized town expanding rapidly, it has all problems that come with accelerated urban growth. These include shortage of housing and failing provision of urban services such as road infrastructure, electricity supply, supply of drinking water, sanitation and waste management.

The other criteria focused on the current government policies towards urban development. The provincial planning officer indicated he was prepared to conduct the LA 21 approach to urban planning in Nakuru as a test case for decentralisation policies in Kenya. Nakuru had a municipal council with progressive-minded councillors and well-trained council officers. Several CBOs had been active in the city for a number of years and could support the participatory approach of LA 21.

The final criteria had to do with the programme design. The town offers distinct problems of urban expansion constrained by natural or man-made boundaries (the Menengai Crater to the north, fault lines to the west and the National Park to the south). It also offers a combination of spatial elements that make an urban planning study particularly interesting, such as an east-west axis of transportation and a mountain and lake on a transversal axis. The relative proximity of Nairobi made it particularly feasible as a demonstration site within easy reach for visitors to the UNCHS headquarters. The relative proximity of Nairobi made it possible to involve the University of Nairobi in the sectoral studies required for the elaboration of the strategic structure plan (SSP) (Wanderer, et al., 2002).

In the following sections, we analyse the LA 21 partnerships using the framework utilised in Chapter 6, highlighting the arrangements, mandate, outcomes and a discussion on problems.

7.2 Arrangements

When analysing partnerships under the LA 21 programme we need to examine the partners (who are they; what do they bring into a partnership; who are excluded), the nature of relationships (which may range from formal legally binding contracts to commitment documents) and the organisational structure.

7.2.1 Partners in the LA 21 process

Partners involved in the LA 21 process in Nakuru are many and they come from the public sector, civil society, private sector and external agencies. The key partners actively involved in LA 21 are government departments, including the MCN, the Physical Planning Department (at provincial and district level) of the Ministry
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of Lands and Settlements, the Urban Development Department of the Ministry of Local Authorities and parastatals with interest in infrastructure; institutions and research organisations such as the Departments of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP), the Housing and Building Research Institute (HABRI) and the Department of Architecture all of the University of Nairobi, the Catholic University Leuven (KLU) through its Post Graduate Centre in Human Settlements (PGCHS); NGOs such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) through its Lake Nakuru Conservation Project and the Shelter Forum of Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG); development agencies like UNDP, UNCHS, the Belgium Administration for Development Corporation (BADC/DGIC) and more than 10 CBOs. There is a problem of coordinating the activities of CBOs and they also tend to have too high expectations on the process. The Zonal Development Committees (ZDCs) are supposed to coordinate the CBO activities within the municipality. The LA 21 process has facilitated the development of partnerships between these actors. It supports the mutual consultation process, encourages brainstorming and clarifies expectations. The initial stages of this process have been difficult, because of the complexity of translating general urban sustainable development principles into actions, which make sense to different partners.

7.2.2 Inputs of different actors

The BADC provided the core funding of the LA 21 project in Nakuru though the UNCHS. The partnership between the MCN, the universities and the national government officials in the strategic structure planning contributed to the collection of information and testing of ideas by the participating research institutions. It also exposed future planners to innovative planning methodologies and gave the council a tool to guide urban design and development. The research institutions PGCHS, DURP and HABRI undertook the sectoral studies that elaborated the existing spatial structure and identified the major issues that needed intervention.

The PGCHS plays a prominent role in the entire LA 21 process. Besides the organisational support it lends to the LA 21, it coordinates the Belgian Consortium (BC) of Belgian Universities, municipalities, consultancy firms and NGOs, providing support to programme activities and providing specific competence as well as supporting tools and techniques. The Training and Capacity-building Section of UNCHS plays a similar role within the centre. Local teams complement the existing institutional framework for urban planning and management. They consist of members of the municipality, the central government and NGOs. The MCN offered office space, vehicle and logistics and all the chief officers and heads of departments were involved in all stages of the LA 21 process.
The City of Leuven in Belgium and Nakuru formed a partnership and they have been collaborating since 1996. Through the exchange, people of Nakuru have learned how to manage a housing project for it to become viable for the municipality in terms of income generation. The Leuven municipality, having realised the shortage of proper houses in low-income areas of Nakuru, have raised funds to build some houses to be used as a showcase. Already, a down payment for this purpose has recently been advanced to the MCN. The partnership between Nakuru and Leuven has enabled exchange of information between councillors and the community at both ends. Leuven has encouraged Nakuru council to enable civil society involvement in the Localising Agenda 21 activities. Leuven children, working together with their counterparts in Nakuru on greening projects, have helped promoting their understanding of sustainable development issues. It is indeed out of this friendship that Leuven students have decided to raise funds to help build a school for their poor counterparts in Nakuru.

7.2.3 Excluded actors

The Nakuru County Council (NCC), which was in charge of the entire Nakuru district including the rural areas, was not involved in the entire LA 21. This has serious implications as the council is in charge of the larger Nakuru District in which the hinterland affects the growth of the town. Lack of involvement of the NCC definitely will hinder the implementation of the strategic structure plan and other LA 21 activities, especially in the peri-urban areas. The reasons advanced for the exclusion of the Nakuru County council was that its areas of jurisdiction are outside the municipality. Given the fact that the LA 21 programme aims at achieving sustainable development in Nakuru, it is worrying to have proposals for development interventions and environmental protection disregarding the linkages between the town and its hinterland. Some of the officers involved in the preparation of the strategic structure plan for Nakuru acknowledged that this was a serious oversight.

Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS) was initially involved in the process, but dropped later on. KWS manages the Lake Nakuru National Park, which that covers over 64% of the entire municipality and there are conservation measures included in the strategic structure plan. There were efforts by the DURP and MCN to persuade KWS to be an active partner through the Nakuru strategic structure plan. DURP made its first contact with KWS during Phase I in the form of a letter, informing KWS on DURP scheduled fieldwork in Nakuru. KWS, however, did not participate in phase I. The organisation was only marginally involved through the Nakuru stra-

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111 KWS has traditionally over-relied on external funding and initially there was a misconception that LA 21 project involved a lot of funds to support some of their initiatives. On realisation that this was not the case, the KWS headquarters did not take the project seriously.
The nature of relationships

The parties implementing the LA 21 in Nakuru and the organisational set-up have been formalised through a memorandum of understanding and urban pacts between all the actors involved. The urban pacts outline the functions and responsibilities of
key actors and stakeholders. These are dynamic, result-oriented negotiated agreements between all responsible parties. The pacts form a guideline for monitoring the progress of implementation of local agenda activities in the town. The pacts, however, lack legal status that would make them binding and sanctions for non-compliance were not outlined. There is also a commitment package detailing the specific commitments that various partners have made for the implementation of actions and measures derived from the strategic structure plan. To date, there are some partners who have not honoured their commitments. For instance, the MCN has not been emptying the refuse chambers as committed in the pact, the WWF were closing their offices by 2001, while KWS also failed to honour initial financial obligations.

7.2.5 The organisational structure in the LA 21 process

The Belgium Administration for Development Corporation entrusted the UNCHS with the management of all the funds that it provided for the entire LA 21 process in Nakuru. The organisational structure of this process is presented in Figure 1. The programme manager position for the LA 21 was created at UNCHS and administratively, UNCHS initiated a decentralisation strategy right from the beginning in locating the project coordinator at the MCN. Representatives of the PGCHS participated in most meetings and discussions in all stages of the strategic structure plan preparation. A secretariat was set up linking directly with MCN activities, with the coordinator becoming a member of the MCN at senior level and fully paid by the project. To facilitate the activities and to strengthen capacity at the MCN, UNCHS posted a junior project officer to assist day-to-day programme work, while an assistant physical planner from DURP was specifically seconded to the strategic structure plan, in order to keep track of the research activities being undertaken by the partners. The Physical Planning Department of the MOL&S, which was charged with the responsibilities of the legal approval processes of the strategic structure plan, is represented in the project by four assistant planners from the district neighbouring Nakuru, while an assistant director of Physical Planning from the Nairobi Headquarters forms key input to the process. The rest of the partners are called upon to undertake specific components of the terms of reference.

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112 The urban pacts followed this format: preamble (background, preceding events); mandates (international, national, local); fundamental principles (potentials, constraints, ongoing initiatives and future vision); commitment package (specific measures, communication mechanisms and institutional set-up); resources (human, technical, information and financial); monitoring and evaluation (timing and modalities); approval (date and signature of key partners).

113 The junior project officer was seconded from the PGCHS.
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The Local LA 21 project set-up therefore takes the following format:

*The core team:* consists of a medium-level officer of the council. The team is responsible for project planning, implementation of day-to-day project activities, monitoring project progress and preparation of monthly project reports. The team has grassroots links with the community through representatives of CBOs.

*The management team:* this team is made up of all the chairmen/heads of departments of the MCN. The team resolves project management procedures, information flow, public awareness and ways of integrating other activities within the LA 21 initiatives. The purpose of this committee is to make policy decisions regarding LA 21 project in Nakuru. Other functions include the evaluation of projects progress reports and advising on alternative solutions in enhancing the goals of the project emanating from the lower committees and teams. The members include the MCN town clerk, two private sector representatives, chair persons of ZDCs, the LA 21 coordinator, the chairperson of the DDC and the provincial physical planning officer, lands officer, two representatives from NGOs and CBOs, donor agencies and local advisors. Other key partners co-opted in the team include the provincial physical planning officer and the project executant of WWF. The chairperson convenes meetings every two months and representatives of all stakeholders attend.

*The Local Advisory Committee:* this committee comprises representatives from the above three teams, the Ministry of Local Government, UNCHS, DURP, additional local advisers and opinion leaders and other stakeholders. The committee provides policy advice regarding the project and evaluates progress in addition to advising on alternative solutions in enhancing the goals of the project.

*The planning team:* this team is made up of the Director of Social Services of the MCN, the Municipal Architect, the LA21 coordinator, an assistant professional officer from UNCHS, an assistant planner from DURP, a WWF programme officer, and the provincial and district physical planning officers. The team is responsible for the preparation of the strategic structure plan.

Finally, there is the formation of the Zonal Development Committees that are meant to coordinate all the activities of the CBOs in all the zones of the municipality.

These teams have so far led the project quite successfully, although within the council not all members can fully understand the initiative, making the exercise quite a challenge. There is the overrepresentation of the MCN in all these teams and committees. The strong representation of the MCN can be considered both as strength (increasing the likelihood of LA 21 initiatives to get the official support
Partnerships within Local Agenda 21 Process

and backing) and a weakness (overlooking the major principles of LA 21 and good urban governance). Currently, the newly established Department of the Environment coordinates LA 21 activities. The town clerk has mandated this department to be in charge of all the LA 21 and related activities. As noted above, all other departments participate in the committees and this shows the multi-sectoral approach is still being utilised.

Figure 7.1 The organisational structure of LA21

7.3 Mandate

The aims of LA 21 involve a range of activities and programmes that are intended to influence a range of factors affecting the 'quality of life' of residents within Nakuru municipality. Below, we will first address such issues as how and what activities are to be undertaken. Next, we will discuss the monitoring and evaluation of these activities.

7.3.1 Aims and goals of the LA 21

As part of the process of building consensus towards a plan of action commonly agreed upon, several consultative workshops were held in Nakuru. These work-
shops brought together a wide range of stakeholders in Nakuru including elected councillors, officers of the MCN, and representatives of the district and provincial administration, research and training institutions, parastatal agencies, NGOs and CBOs, industrialists and other project partners. The objectives of the workshops were: (a) to review the urban planning and management practices in Nakuru, leading to a common understanding of factors promoting and/or hindering urban sustainable development; (b) to work towards an integrated view of urban development of Nakuru; (c) to reach consensus of all stakeholders through consultative processes and (d) to refine organisational structure of the local team in order to facilitate effective support to the planning process in Nakuru. Among the objectives of the LA 21 programme was the strengthening of North-South local-to-local partnership arrangements.

### 7.3.2 Partnership activities

The major components of LA 21 activities in Nakuru were a series of workshops organised by the MCN and UNCHS (Habitat) with support of the Belgian Consortium. This brought together a wide range of stakeholders in Nakuru, including councillors, officers of the council, the district and provincial administration, research and training institutions, parastatals, NGOs, CBOs, industrialists and other partners. These workshops not only acted as forums for exchange and discussions, but also as work sessions in smaller thematic groups to delve into the key planning and development issues.

The workshops resolved to carry out many actions that would lead towards urban sustainable development. Some key decisions were setting up a town planning unit to enhance municipal planning capacity and improve planning methods and practices; the preparation of the strategic structure plan to evolve the long term vision for Nakuru; the identification of priority zones for interventions like the bus park area, council housing estates, Nakuru east side and geologically sensitive areas; refining a range of activities for streamlining urban development and upgrading urban and national environment and finally, outlining actions for strengthening local institutions and stimulating innovative partnerships.

#### 7.3.2.1 The development of the strategic structure plan

The consultative workshops adopted the strategic structure plan as the approach for achieving urban sustainable development in Nakuru. The LA 21 process interprets urban planning as a ‘strategic structure planning’ process, which mobilises all interested actors in a dynamic, continuous and consensual vision-building and poli-

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114 The twinning of cities in the North with those in the South has been encouraged and is now an ongoing process.
cy making process. A clear understanding of the spatial structure of the town helps to identify strategic actions. The strategic structure plan deals with the sustainability of spatial, ecological, social, economic, technical and institutional factors of urban development. The strategic structure plan approach mobilises key actors in a dynamic, continuous and consensual vision-building and policy-making process. As Figure 7.2 illustrates, the strategic structure plan approach proceeds on three tracks, dealing with the long-term visions, daily actions and communication with the stakeholders.

**Figure 7.2 Three tracks of the strategic structure planning**

- **First**
  - **Long term Vision:** Working towards a desired spatial structure. This was formulated during the consultative workshops

- **Second**
  - **Daily problems solving:** removing bottlenecks; **actions**

- **Third**
  - **Engaging different actors and populations in the planning and decision-making process; dispute resolutions through communication**


This conceptual approach was proposed and adopted as a methodology for preparing the strategic structure plan based on the philosophy that visions without action do not yield tangible results. Similarly, action without vision does not address strategic long-term conditions that ensure that essential resources for a good quality urban life are available to future generations. Visions and actions without communication are deemed to fail as they do not take into consideration the aspirations of the civil society as a whole (Tuts, 1998). The three tracks must be continuously interrelated. At the meeting points of the tracks, policy decisions are integrated into the process. These policy decisions are formalised through ‘urban pacts’. Incrementally, the activities along the three tracks result in a strategic structure plan. This product consists of a vision on the urban development, a spatial concept as a basis for the desired structure and a programme of actions and specific measures. The prevailing planning  

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115 As will be seen later, these are dynamic, result-oriented negotiated agreements between all responsible parties though they may not be legally binding, they are integrated in the existing institutional framework of the local authority.
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and management practices in diverse institutional contexts show that there is often a lack of balance between the three lines of strategic structure planning.

1. The Urban Planning Studio of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP)

DURP of the University of Nairobi conducted the preliminary phase of the strategic structure plan preparation as an academic exercise carried out under the curriculum of Urban Planning Studio for the first year post-graduate students. LA 21 sponsored this academic exercise. The six-month exercise, guided intensively by the members of staff of DURP, including two-week fieldwork in Nakuru assisted by a member of the Belgian Consortium, was conducted as the first phase of the Plan and formed the preliminary data collected and built upon in the subsequent phase. The final output of the studio was presented to the MCN and members of the BC for critical appraisals in July 1997.

Box 7.1 Key dates in the LA 21 process

Nov. 1995 – Consultative workshop to reach consensus on priority areas of action and to define the vision for the town
Sept 1996 – Planning workshop for technical officers and mobilisation of stakeholders to forge consensus on the future administration of the bus station and the market area
Nov. 1996 – Training of Councillors as Guardians of the Environment; environmental problem identification and action planning
March 1998 – Partnership with the town of Leuven, Belgium; exhibition on Nakuru in Leuven; technical exchange on planning and housing between the Municipalities of Leuven and Nakuru
May 1998 – Technical workshop
Nov. 1998 – Stakeholders workshop
June 1999 – Setting up of a Town Planning Unit to enhance municipal planning capacity.
July 1999 – Strategic structure plan finalised and advertised
Dec. 1999 – Negotiations on financial support for investments in solid waste and water are under way between the council and (AFD) Agence Française de Développement
April 2000 – Completion of a strategic structure plan for Nakuru town and its environs and evolve a long-term vision for the town

2. Technical work sessions on the preparation of the SSP

Several technical sessions were organised and attended by the planning team to discuss and work on the strategic structure plan document. Some of these weeklong sessions were also attended by members of the BC and took place in January 1998, August 1998 and September 1998. The session of September 1998 was organised as a retreat at Lake Bogoria, where the final shaping of the draft strategic structure plan document took place, before presenting it to the final workshop in November 1998. The planning team also organised similar sessions in 1999 for the finalisation
of the draft document. These intensive work sessions were crucial in progressively defining the structure and content of the strategic structure plan. Other members of the participating institutions like DURP, HABRI and the Department of Architecture also attended some of these sessions. There are good indications that in its initial stages the strategic structure plan process in Nakuru has benefited from the partnerships between UNCHS, BC, DURP and the local Planning Team (the predecessor of the Municipal Planning Unit). Local stakeholders were invited to all the workshops and their comments on the strategic structure plan process and its outputs were duly recorded and incorporated. Other activities contributing to the preparation of the strategic structure plan document are discussed below. Box 7.1 (see page 254) shows the key dates in the Localising Agenda 21 process in Nakuru.

Box 7.2 Contents of the strategic structure plan for Nakuru the strategic structure plan

*Introduction: Key issues of urban development, general methodology of the strategic structure plan, urban development issues in Nakuru; LA 21 process in Nakuru and the scope and contents of the report.*

*Planning and institutional context:* This chapter contains the analysis and interprets the institutional context within which the strategic structure plan has been prepared. Some of the issues covered include the policy-making environment, the legal scope of planning and enforcement, the role of different actors in planning and the strengths and weaknesses of the current systems of urban planning and management. It also covers the existing planning frameworks and instruments operating in Nakuru.

*Existing spatial structure:* This key section focuses on existing realities, problems and assets of Nakuru. A good knowledge of entities (elements), linkages, functions and the relationships of activities within the town are pertinent. A preliminary analysis of the existing spatial structure is necessary, which defines areas for further research and action. The existing spatial structure contains an analysis of the geographical, natural and historical structure, the structure of land tenure, the settlement, economic and transportation structure, the structure of services and infrastructure.

*Key planning issues:* The sectoral studies are detailed and work on those elements that are not clear enough at the completion of the preliminary existing spatial structure. They include such areas as demography, land, the housing situation and needs, economic, development, transportation and services. Potentials and problems arising from this interpretation, as well as possible strategies to follow are described.

*Detailed spatial and design studies:* The objective of these studies is to come up with a detailed analysis and interpretation of specific areas or sites so as to define the structure, fabric and typology on the intended development of the area. Specific studies include the peripheries of the town, the edges, fabrics, nodes and strips. The chapter also explores proposals and strategies for specific locations in the town.

*Intended spatial structure:* This section brings together all the proposals realised from the analysis of the existing spatial structure (together with the sectoral and design studies, planning and institutional context), based on the vision. The intended spatial structure includes the following elements: visions and development perspectives, spatial concepts and proposals.

*Source: MCN/Rep of Kenya/UNCHS/ABOS (1999)*
3. Realisation and approval of the strategic structure plan

As a result of the partnerships discussed earlier, the LA 21 accomplished what had been the main focus of its activities in Nakuru: a final structure plan was approved in April 2000 (Box 7.2, see page 255). It is the first and so far the only plan to be approved under the New Planning Act of Kenya.

This is together with the regional plan for Nakuru District, which was developed during the same period in a partnership between the Ministry of Physical Planning and the University of Nairobi. This is a major achievement for all project partners and local stakeholders involved and is being recognised as such by observers at a national and international level. It creates a momentum that could greatly benefit the LA 21 programme. LA 21 did not actually create the legal and administrative framework for this approval, but it convinced national authorities to accept the experiment in Nakuru as a pilot project exploring ways to decentralise planning responsibilities.

An important aspect of the strategic structure plan is the commitment package of which each partner is expected to carry out certain activities and fulfil various expectations up to the year 2020. The plan carries out an analysis and interpretation of the existing problems and challenges as well as potentials of Nakuru. It does so by carrying out studies on selected key strategic elements of the town’s existing spatial structure. The synthesis of the elaborate studies form a basis for the formulation of the Intended Spatial Structure (ISS) for Nakuru’s desired future. The overall goal is to guide the future of Nakuru up to the year 2020. To achieve this, the plan aims at integrating social and economic developmental activities, together with investments in the support of infrastructural facilities and services, with environmental considerations - all these with the aim of achieving sustainable development. The plan area covers about 440 km², including areas within the existing municipal boundaries, and surrounding peri-urban areas that are rapidly undergoing transformation and acquiring an urban character. It is an instrument for guiding rather than dictating future development of Nakuru by making strategic choices. This plan document contains the components as outlined in Box 7.2. Table 7.1 presents the strategic structure plan proposals related to water supply, sanitation and solid waste management. There is, however, a wide range of proposals covering other sectors as well.

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Part of the strategic structure plan.
Table 7.1 Proposed actions in the to improve water supply, sanitation and solid waste management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water supply</th>
<th>Sanitation</th>
<th>Solid waste management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed actions</td>
<td>- Increase water supply by either existing sources or developing new ones. This includes the development of the Itare Dam in the Molo area, together with associated treatment and distribution works.</td>
<td>- Launch public education and awareness campaigns on safe waste handling and disposal methods at production points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Rehabilitate the existing sewer systems.</td>
<td>- Conduct regular public cleaning campaigns.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Expand the sewer reticulation to all areas of the town giving priority to densely populated residential areas and newly settled peri-urban areas to fully utilise the available capacity.</td>
<td>- Promote waste minimisation techniques such as recycling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop an improved storm water drainage system to reduce excessive loading of the sewer system.</td>
<td>- Adopt proper methods of waste disposal and treatment such as landfill and composting. This will include developing an appropriate waste disposal site and instituting effective monitoring and control measures to regulate the discharge of untreated toxic wastes into open dumps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To improve management systems by recruiting qualified personnel and through network mapping, improved billing and efficient revenue collection.</td>
<td>- Improve municipal waste collection systems by creating an autonomous waste management department, supplying it with appropriate easy to service equipment and recruiting qualified personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increase the number of public conveniences / sanitary facilities in the CBD and in public places.</td>
<td>- Initiate public education and awareness campaigns on safe methods of solid waste disposal.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encourage participation and partnerships between the MCN, private sector and other stakeholders, in the development operation of public conveniences.</td>
<td>- Privatise some aspects of the solid waste management process such as collection, disposal and billing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nakuru strategic structure plan Volume II p. 144-145
4. Creation of a Municipal Planning Unit
The creation of the position of town planner was a logical step after the planning team had developed the strategic structure plan on its way for approval. In mid-1999, a planning unit was established and the MCN appointed a municipal planner and agreed to recruit more personnel for the unit. LA 21 provided adequate equipment and strengthened the unit with capacity building activities. At the time of data collection, the MCN was acknowledging that the Planning Unit should be expanded into a Planning Department that would include a town planner, but also a municipal valuer, a municipal architect and a municipal surveyor. It was envisaged that this department would take over coordination of LA 21 in the future and that the office of the town clerk would head the core team so as to provide a sound legal framework for the project. Currently, the planning unit that is supposed to be coordinating the LA 21 activities is placed under the town Engineer’s Department and the deputy chief public health officer who is acting coordinator of LA 21 project is handling all the LA 21 activities. We need to indicate that the chief officers were opposed to the idea of having an independent planning department as they thought it could be too powerful and take over planning related issues that different departments were addressing. The first town planner resigned to join the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) as a programme officer in Nakuru.

7.3.2.2 Concrete actions
Water management
As seen in Chapter 4, the main source of water in Nakuru municipality is groundwater. There have been efforts to reduce the consumption of groundwater by increasing supply from other sources. LA 21 has initiated rainwater harvesting as a part of their tree nursery projects in primary schools. This action could possibly have been combined with systems for capturing and filtering rainwater for human consumption, being introduced by WWF. While these systems are developed for low-density settlements in the peri-urban areas around Nakuru, it might be interesting to explore the potential to use them in other locations.

In the upcoming peri-urban areas, there is an urgent need for the provision of more water sources and more boreholes are being dug. Due to the use of low quality materials or poor craftsmanship during the installation, existing boreholes could not function at optimum capacity. LA 21 has rehabilitated and facilitated the maintenance of several boreholes, and improved hygienic conditions of water storage by covering the storage tanks with roofs, and of water distribution by separating watering points for human and animal consumptions.

Current water supply falls short of the overall demand and at present, there are 19 boreholes in a radius of 9 km of the town centre, providing insufficient supply.
Within the Flamingo estate, there were also measures to improve water as the existing system is badly maintained and defective, resulting in massive losses of water. New water supply systems have been linked to the provision of sanitary blocks attached to every dwelling unit. These measures have not yet been implemented because they are unaffordable to the tenants.

Solid waste management
CBOs have been actively involved in the development of action plans aimed at reducing the problems of indiscriminate waste disposal in many low-income neighbourhoods. CBOs were already active in SWM, in particular in the Lakeview Estate, before LA 21 took off. With the LA 21 project and the awareness rising campaigns that have been initiated, there has been a multiplication of CBOs and their activities in many low-income settlements. This could well be among the most important achievements of LA 21 in Nakuru. One of the activities that LA 21 supported was the ongoing construction of refuse chambers in cooperation with WWF, the MCN and CBOs in low-income neighbourhoods. This initiative is aimed at improving the collection and reducing incidences of indiscriminate dumping of household waste. This initiative has served a triple purpose: (a) to provide collection points that would facilitate waste collections by the Municipality; (b) to contribute to cleaning up the living environment within the communities; and (c) to contribute to the clearance and maintenance of water drains, thereby reducing polluting effluents to Nakuru Lake.

Finally, there is the issue of contributions to the solid waste management plan, a proposal for which has been submitted to Agence Francaise de Développement (AFD). This issue is problematic, because the municipality does not have the necessary resources to organise waste collection on a regular basis because of lack of serviceable solid waste vehicles available. This also undermines the effectiveness of providing refuse chambers. According to recent developments, the demonstration project (refuse chambers) and the overall strategic structure plan framework were important factors for the MCN to start negotiations with AFD for a comprehensive solid waste project.

Tree nurseries and greening of residential neighbourhoods
One concern of the greening initiatives is to encourage tree planning and other related activities in the residential areas. The strategic structure plan has an emphasis on the planning and provision of green areas in appropriate locations, such as the green buffer area, proposed to be developed around the major storm water drain running from Menengai Crater to Lake Nakuru. In view of the dust pollution and drainage problems in many residential areas, this commitment could have been translated in several small-scale action-plans to be initiated by the CBOs them-
selves. However, the plan did not include an implementation plan that provides CBOs with resources to effectively implement the greening of their neighbourhoods. There have been campaigns to introduce tree nurseries in primary schools. This aims at raising awareness of school children by letting them grow trees in their neighbourhood school. It also intends to raise parents’ interest in urban environment issues through their children’s activities in school and has the advantage of having a strong ownership by the community. Schoolchildren take turns in tending the gardens under the supervision of one or more teachers. Beneficiaries of the project were satisfied with it. However, they acknowledged that its sustainability was problematic because the project largely depends on the personal initiative of a few teachers who have both the availability and the capacity to support and coach the project. The prospect of letting children take young trees back to their dwelling environments and plant them there proved unfeasible for several reasons (unaffordable, grazing domestic animals, no water reserves). The objective to offer young trees for sale on the market would require a more ‘market oriented’ and ‘management oriented’ approach than the persons/institutions involved can provide.

Promotion of low-cost housing technologies (in cooperation with Intermediate Technology Development Group, East African Office (ITDG-EA))

The partnership between LA 21 and the action of ITDG-EA in the low-income settlements in Nakuru is evident in low-income areas. ITDG-EA has made effective use of the LA 21 project infrastructure, the local team and its close linkage with the MCN to develop and implement several action plans related to housing in Nakuru. The municipal by-laws on low-cost housing are linked to a demonstration project set up by the urban livelihoods and shelter programme of ITDG-EA. They have proved a useful ‘test-case’ in a campaign to adjust the national legislation on building standards. This is an on-going campaign conducted by the national advisor to LA 21 and regional director of ITDG. ITDG-EA in partnership with the local team have been organising awareness-building workshops for low-income households and training on low-cost building technology for local artisans. It has also formed partnerships with key stakeholders to set up an integrated urban housing project in several of Nakuru’s informal settlements. The success of these interventions can be measured from the financial support from the National Cooperative Housing Union (NACHU) and the formation of Nakuru Housing and Environment Cooperative and savings Society (NAHECO), a local savings and credit cooperative.

7.3.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are key inputs of the implementation process. Project data and records are kept according to the actions implemented. The key activities in monitoring and evaluation include progress reports, liaison with all stakeholders and development of performance indicators. Currently, the beneficiaries have been moni-
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toring the progress of the project through review meetings and workshops. The indicators that have been used to assess impacts include cleaner neighbourhoods; availability of clean water and reduced distances to the water points; completion of the strategic structure plan and setting up the Municipal Planning Unit.

The monitoring mechanisms were built in since the inception of the programme both at the programme and project levels. At the programme level, interim reports were produced every six months containing detailed evaluation reports of all key activities, plus financial reports and meetings of the Steering Committee with representatives of BADC/DGIC, UNCHS and PGCHS. There have been eight meetings in six years. At the project level, advisory boards representing the principal partners and stakeholders involved in or affected by the project, meet at regular intervals to assess progress of the project (Wanderer et al., 2002).

Moreover, the mechanisms to monitor the implementation of LA 21 within the UNCHS include the UNCHS Inter-divisional Advisory Board Meetings held in Nairobi once or twice a year since the inception of the programme. The programme management developed and gradually refined a monitoring system on the basis of six-month progress reports. These reports present a breakdown of the number of outputs delivered globally and in the three cities according to seven headings. As with most programmes where the emphasis is on the change of qualitative conditions, quantitative monitoring of outputs alone cannot capture the multiple factors (including time) that need to be taken into account. We note, however, that there is lack of a well-defined system of communication between the partner institutions and the local communities. The Zonal Development Committees (mandated to coordinate the activities of CBOs and give feedback) are assumed to perform this role but their role is questionable as CBOs are only active in the low-income areas.

7.4 Assessment of LA 21 outcomes

The products of LA 21 exercises are, in the main, still to emerge and indeed, it was argued by many respondents that the long-term perspective of LA 21 made it very difficult to demonstrate value added in the conventional sense. The main outputs of the process to date were reckoned to be those of the LA 21 documents themselves and the mechanisms and networks that had been constructed to support them. Less tangible, but equally important, were the changes in attitudes taking place (perhaps most among individual officers and councillors) and the ways in which environmental and sustainable development issues are being accepted by the residents (through participation in clean-up exercises). Table 7.2 shows some changes that can be attributed to the LA 21 initiatives.
### Table 7.2 Some changes as a result of LA 21 in Nakuru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation before</th>
<th>Situation after (actual and proposed)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts over land use, uncoordinated planning and management practices, inadequate capacity of the</td>
<td>Stakeholders workshop to address conflicts of space use, preparation of the strategic structure plan and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCN; conflicts between human activities and the protection of the park</td>
<td>the formation of a planning team as a precursor to the creation of a town planning unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inaccessibility of most low-income areas resulting in inadequate municipal collection of solid waste and</td>
<td>Formulation of neighbourhood committees in charge of cleaning and linking up with the MCN; construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blocked drains causing environmental hazards</td>
<td>of refuse chambers to improve refuse collection; strengthened ties between communities and the MCN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate communication between officers and councillors; inadequate awareness on environmental issues</td>
<td>Councillors workshops: councillors as the guardian of the environment; elected leadership and increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate involvement of residents in planning issues and in the management of services</td>
<td>awareness of the role of the councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geological instability in the western part and sand quarrying as an income-generating activity</td>
<td>Stakeholders workshops on different issues: creation of CBOs as action groups to implement action plans;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>creation of ZDCs to coordinate and integrate CBO activities; contribution of community members in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>technical meetings and especially during the preparation of the strategic structure plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation of area-based environmental action plans; formation of the CBOs; sensitising children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>through environmental school clubs and tree nurseries</td>
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<td>Source: Fieldwork 2000</td>
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**Process outcomes and shortcomings**

In analysing the process outcomes of the LA 21 partnership, we will consider the involvement of many actors and those that are excluded, legitimacy and political will. First, regarding involvement of many actors, the consultative workshops brought together stakeholders and sectors from the whole municipality and beyond and yielded two urban pacts in which the vision of the town was articulated. This was successful because of the involvement of several interested groups and parties who have a stake in the development of the town and the future trends that it may take. According to the ICLEI survey globally, stakeholder groups are involved at some level in 73% of the municipalities surveyed while 27% have no stakeholder group (ICLEI, 2002). In Nakuru, the preparation of the strategic structure plan involved representatives from different stakeholders (though a number were not represented) and it is the first one to be approved by the Minister of Lands and Settlements under the 1996 Physical Planning Act. Several partnerships have been forged with NGOs and CBOs. A partnership exchange activity has been undertaken between the MCN and the City of Leuven, Belgium and it provided a major cultural exchange. This partnership has strengthened the interest of donors in the ongoing
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process with the Belgium team committing to revitalise the council housing exercise. We note, however, that important actors like the KWS, Nakuru County Council in charge of the entire Nakuru District, the church and the informal sector in general were not fully involved.

Second, the Physical Planning Act (1996) gives the legal recognition of partnership activities undertaken within the LA 21. Section 25 outlines the contents of the development plans, while section 26, 27 and 28 stipulate the preparation process, from consultation to approval. The Act calls for a comprehensive planning approach, stressing the need to involve stakeholders and the general public in the planning process. The partnerships within the LA 21 in Nakuru are also socially accepted as indicated by the large number of CBOs that are involved in LA 21 activities.

Regarding political will, we observe that its existence is very crucial for any intervention by any partnership arrangement. It is both a pre-condition for effective partnering and can also be an output of successful partnerships. Although the process of LA 21 received political support from both the central and local government, it is now becoming apparent that much more is required from the local politicians. The LA 21 process in Nakuru and elsewhere is of an inherently political nature. The three-tiered strategic structure plan approach followed in LA 21 engages in a political process. One of the ‘strategic’ goals of the vision and communication components should be to avoid direct collisions with local politics and facilitate the way for the action component, where proposals are checked for actual implementation. It is at this stage of implementation that personal gains, business interests or political opportunism most vehemently come to confront ‘the public good’. Unless supported by sufficient political goodwill, projected actions may be contested and may never be implemented. In a recent workshop held in Nakuru to get the views of stakeholders on the LA 21 process and initiatives, it was observed that some councillors did not fully understand the process and were not supportive. It is hoped that the recent developments that all LA 21 deliberations be discussed and approved by the full council will enable the councillors to fully understand the intentions and the aims of the entire LA 21 process.

Substantive outcomes and shortcomings
The indicators that we adopt to assess the substantive outcomes of the LA 21 activities include financial arrangements and viability, the development of the strategic structure plan and other action plans and effectiveness in terms of improvement of the service levels. Regarding financial arrangements and the viability of the LA 21 activities, we observe that since the start of the LA 21 in Nakuru in 1995, BADC (now DGIC) has been providing financial support for the pilot phase and the subsequent preparation of the strategic structure plan. It was very hard to obtain the actual
figures of the amounts used or contributed by various actors in the LA 21. However, the following contributions are known: UNCHS provided technical inputs and networking and BADC/DGIC provided the core funding of the project. The real project costs between 1999 and 2001 were US $902,165. The funds were channelled through UNCHS that charged overhead costs at 13% until 2000 and then reduced those to 10% at the request of DGIC. The government of the Republic of Kenya (GoK) provided technical corporation inputs by availing physical planners, surveyors, land officers during the mapping exercise and the preparation of the strategic structure plan. The MCN provided financial and technical support that could not be quantified plus logistics, office accommodation and a vehicle. Other actors like WWF provided Ksh. 1.4 million during the mapping exercise and also provided a planner for the exercise. The national coordinator of ITDG also participated throughout in the strategic structure plan process as a national expert.

Most of the proposed activities to ensure sustainable development in Nakuru are to be implemented using the partnership principle. However, even the commitment documents do not indicate the amount of the financial inputs and other resources that are expected from different partners. It has been suggested that there is need for financial estimates and sources for the proposed projects. In fact, one of the weaknesses of the strategic structure plan is that it does not include budgetary implications in the proposals. However, there are detailed proposals and commitments by Kenya Wildlife Service and WWF. For the partnerships within the LA 21 to be effective and sustainable, detailed budgetary commitments need to be specified.

One of the substantive outcomes of the entire LA 21 process was the strategic structure plan document and related action plans. The degree to which local governments have completed action plans and sustainable development policies is one way to measure progress. However, this does not capture process issues such as the presence and strength of stakeholders. The strategic structure plan has proposals and area-based action plans aimed at moving towards sustainable development. Different interest groups in Nakuru jointly developed these action plans and there were commitment documents for their implementation. As we have previously noted, these actions if implemented could harmonise economic, social and ecological spheres as they recognise the interconnectedness of these aspects.

The other indicator of substantive outcomes has to do with the effectiveness in terms of service levels. We need to indicate that not all intended interventions towards the improvement of the service levels have been implemented. Only short-term actions are being implemented. In combination with cleaning-up campaigns organised by the CBOs, this action largely met these objectives: whereas garbage was spilled all over the street before, it is now piled up in and around the refuse chambers. The construc-
tion of the refuse chambers in the low-income areas has made the collection easy (that is when it is done). However, handling of the solid waste towards and at these collection points still happens under most unhygienic circumstances. The effects of raising awareness about separate-at-source selection, hygiene, safety and security thus appear limited. This may be because CBO members who followed training courses either failed to apply them and disseminate their knowledge or have engaged in other activities since then. A second consideration is the design of the refuse chambers that makes the disposal and removal of solid waste inconvenient due to its elevated platform, and that requires regular maintenance due to its movable elements.

Greening the city efforts, which have been done through the support of the Green Towns Project in the Ministry of Local Government, have ensured a lot of awareness in environmental matters in communities and schools. This is also seen as a significant input to LAs 21 environmental action involvement. Within the water supply sector, the LA 21 project has helped rehabilitate three boreholes and also provided water troughs for livestock. LA 21 has assisted in the formation of CBOs in the Council estate of Lumumba to help improve and protect sanitation facilities in the estate.

There have been several workshops and seminars for the youth, CBOs and its members on environmental health. This has led to the change in attitude of residents involved towards the environment and the large number of participants indicates this, during neighbourhood clean-up exercises. The improvement of community managed water draw-off points from boreholes in peri-urban areas in Nakuru has direct benefits for the whole community using water: three peri-urban communities now have access to cleaner and safer drinking water. However, it is difficult to measure the impact of these improvements on community health.

7.5 Discussion on opportunities and obstacles

Experience in the LA 21 process in Nakuru has shown that a number of partnerships were formed and are involved in joint activities. The most striking innovative feature of LA 21 in Nakuru is the participatory decision-making that was a result of the consultative meetings. The consultative workshops and follow-up meetings departed from the traditional mainstream planning process in Kenya and almost all the stakeholders in Nakuru were involved. A dialogue process was initiated and organised in sequential sessions of introduction, individual reflection, discussions in small groups, and full group discussions. This work process resulted in some commonly agreed priority and policy statements. The long-term vision was formulated:

“To restore past glory of the town through integrated process as a regional service centre, prototype ‘eco-city’, a centre for eco-tourism with regional, national and international railway and road networks and services” (BADC /MCN/UNCHS, 1997).
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There are some factors that made the LA 21 process successful in Nakuru. Firstly, the entire strategic structure plan process involved people outside the planning system who showed their willingness to participate in the discussion of the long-term development issues. The process, through the inclusion of professionals, politicians and the civil society has actually shown that the gap between the planning system and the society can be bridged and new social settings can be established.

Secondly, the demonstrative value of the project was higher due to the proximity of UNCHS headquarters and this is also a purely logistic advantage because it allowed the programme manager to follow-up the developments in Nakuru in a more frequent and personal manner. Another reason that makes LA 21 a success in Nakuru is the long-standing relationship between key programme partners like UNCHS, PGCHS and project partners such as the University of Nairobi, and the national advisor (from ITDG) contributed to a good understanding of the project objectives, a smooth cooperation and proportionate distribution of tasks and responsibilities. The project partners in Nairobi and Nakuru agreed that the relationship between these core partners generated a tremendous potential to bring agencies together and generate synergy between parallel processes. We need to mention, however, that the availability of local stakeholders who were both competent and willing to join in helped LA 21 a great deal to realise that potential.

Thirdly, there is the issue of leadership. Initially, a deputy town clerk was a very able leader and could be able to guide most discussions during the consultative workshops. Councillors like the chairperson of the finance committee in 1996 were very helpful. He was a retired civil servant and conversant with environmental issues. The LA 21 coordinator has also been an influential figure and possesses unique leadership qualities. She has managed to coordinate the activities of different actors and has been an inspiration to CBOs.

However, the LA 21 process is facing substantive challenges and constraints some of which have to do with institutional weaknesses, lack of political will and support, lack of coordination, lack of financial resources, poor communication and inclusiveness. Regarding institutional weaknesses, the recent change of council members through elections led to changes of policies and a slow down of activities. During the last national and local government elections, the council experienced a complete overhaul with only four out of 19 elected officials having served on former (or other) Councils. The new councillors had no knowledge of procedures, or operations or functions of Council. However, mounting induction courses for councillors solved this problem. The other issue related to institutional weakness within the structure of the MCN is the inability to operationalise the office of the town planner. The newly recruited town planner is unable to control or influence planning decisions within the
council as he reports to the Municipal engineer rather than directly to the town clerk. This means that the implementation of planning proposals within the strategic structure plan will not be so easy.

Most of the proposals within the strategic structure plan are not in actual sense supported by the current policy environment within the MCN. For instance, the greening initiatives proposed in the strategic structure plan seem to contradict what is happening in practice. For example, in one community the council sold the open space that was supposed to be converted into a communal green area and playground. The developer who purchased the plot plans to build a supermarket with parking lot. This clearly demonstrates that the greening of residential areas does not figure as high on the municipal agenda as proposed by strategic structure plan.

Intra-organisational uncertainty is of great value in understanding many obstacles observed. It concerns power relations and tensions that always exist in an organisation, such as municipal administration. The change from one mayor to another, sending the town clerk on compulsory leave, death of an acting town clerk and a senior education official and transfers of the senior personnel have had negative impacts on the continuity of the process and implementation of issues highlighted in the process. The frequent tensions between the elected councillors and the chief officers within the MCN do not argue well for the intended dialogue and exchange of ideas. LA 21 in Nakuru has faced a lot of hostility from a group of councillors who did not understand the process from the onset. Most of them wanted some tangible outputs and physical activities that the process did not offer. The tensions between officials from different sectors of the administration can be explained by differences in status and authority or access to budget resources. Other explanations can be found in variations in professional backgrounds and culture.

The Ministry of Local Government is in charge of recruiting and transferring technical officers. During the project period key personnel have been transferred to other local authorities, adversely affecting the smooth follow up of activities. General laxity on the part of the council personnel slows down the implementation of activities. Delayed salaries, inadequate transport and lethargy are some of the factors that affect the project work and spill over to the community initiatives. Informants often refer to the lack of knowledge and staff involvement as a major obstacle in integrating LA 21 in the mainstream planning. Furthermore, some issues addressed in the action plan are not very clear and may therefore not be achieved within the specified period and areas.

Regarding the appropriate coordination, we observed that a clear mechanism is lacking to coordinate other development partners such as government departments,
NGOs, CBOs and organisations from the private sector. Currently there is a loose forum, which exist as provided for in the LA 21 project. To consolidate gains of co-operative action, there is need to develop such relations by forming a coordinating body. Such a body also needs to be involved at national level to guide the process. There is also lack of clear guidance from the central government about the relationship of LA 21 to other areas of activity of local government or existing planning initiatives. This is a particular issue in relation to the statutory duties of the local government. There appears to be a vacuum surrounding LA 21, and in particular and perhaps of more consequence, the implementation of the LA 21 action plans.

Insofar as financial resources are concerned, we noted that the LA 21 process in Nakuru was introduced after the town was selected together with two other towns for a pilot project ‘Localising Agenda 21’ funded by BADC through the UNCHS. The fact that UNCHS lent its support to the initiative has added leverage to this process, but overall, government officials involved in the LA 21 gave the distinct impression that the new approach had their full support and approval. The MCN just added the LA 21 to the existing officer’s duties with the exemption of former UNCHS-paid programme officer, a physical planner and a few assistants. A key issue underlying the whole LA 21 is the scarcity of resources. LA 21 comes at a time when the local government is facing tight financial constraints. Consequently, lack of resources and over-stretched staff are likely to be a major constraining factor on both the MCN and other organisations involved in the process. The low financial capacity of CBOs and the general poverty of the majority of the residents make the process of participation difficult. Involvement of community groups takes time, energy and resources but it is still regarded as worth the effort and perseverance which is required. There was evidence of misunderstanding among different community groups and manipulation by community leaders. Some participants in a workshop conducted in January 2002 indicated that this resulted in frustrations, mistrust and slowed down the progress of work (see Mwangi, 2002).

We observed that there was a lack of communication between some sections of the community and this has made the dissemination and feedback of the strategic structure plan proposals rather poor and slow. Similarly, not all residents fully understand the intended and proposed changes and there are still some stakeholders who insist that some proposals are not achievable. According to the former town planner involved in the exercise, about 1,000 responses and reactions to the strategic structure plan proposals were received from the general public and their concerns were noted. We contend that this is quite a low response in a town with nearly 300,000 inhabitants. Many residents were not aware that they were supposed to raise objec-

117 Discussions with the former Town Planner in January 2002.
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tions and comments on the proposed interventions. All the plans and related documents were in English only and we contend that not all residents can read or understand the language, let alone speak it. In any future publicity of such plans, it is important that the plans are translated in a language that is common in the town and in this case action plans and proposals need to be translated into Swahili. We also note that many residents in Nakuru are still not aware of the LA 21 and the proposals within the strategic structure plan though we have area-based action plans. This is because CBO representatives were seen to be representing the local communities but CBOs are concentrated in the low-income areas.

Despite the clearly stated objective of Rio's Agenda 21 to encourage marginalised groups to participate in LA 21, experience in Nakuru has shown that those groups who have traditionally participated in decision-making processes continue to do so. Despite the best efforts of coordinators and their teams, problems of engaging ordinary people persisted: women, youth and generally the poor have been excluded from the process. This was much evidenced in the preparation of the strategic structure plan for Nakuru. A team of high-level physical planners and some officers of the MCN who are dubbed the ‘MCN Planning team’ did the Plan preparation and final documentation. Though the team relied more on sectoral studies done by several consultants, there was the exclusion of the ‘local people’, the Nakuru County Council, the Kenya Wildlife Service, the church and the informal sector.

We need to recognise that the political factor is an integral part of formulating and implementing LA 21 proposals at the municipal level. This can be handled in a constructive way by laying emphasis on familiarising newly elected officials with long-term vision and actions already achieved while at the same time leaving enough room for the priorities of a new council. Political change has undoubtedly induced some delays in implementing certain activities under the LA 21 framework, particularly as far as institutional change and municipal resources are concerned. Several action plans within the LA 21 in Nakuru fell victim to local politics. We observe that there are a number of possible causes. Some of these are related to the councillors. Most of them have limited levels of education and exposure. The two-yearly election of council and lengthy decision-making processes due to the committee system affect their effectiveness. There are also causes related to the council administration. These include limited information-flow between councillors and their officers, lim-

118 The County Council is in-charge of the entire Nakuru District which includes Nakuru’s hinterland and the rural areas. It was observed that is involved in the LA21 process.

119 Initially the KWS was involved in the process but in due course, it withdrew for some political issues.

120 Traditionally, the position of councillor in Kenya has been attracting the lowly educated and least exposed persons whom in most instances are local businessmen.
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It is important to indicate that there are also complexities of local politics in Nakuru and LA 21 reports have depicted local politics as a hindrance to the success of the programme. With the election of ZDCs, it should become possible for the CBOs to increase the pressure on local politicians to work for their constituencies. We further note that the failure of LA 21 to yield physical outputs, say improvement of physical infrastructure, has made the local politicians very apathetic and this will affect the implementation of the proposals. Currently there is the proposal that all decisions made regarding the LA 21-type proposals and the strategic structure plan proposals will be discussed and approved by the full council meeting and this will raise political support among the local politicians.

From the foregoing, there are opportunities and prospects for a successful LA 21 and the implementation of the strategic structure plan. There is a strong desire to continue with the process. Paying attention to and the management of intra-organisational uncertainties must continue, however, since new problems and obstacles will most certainly arise before the LA21 and the resultant strategic structure plan has become an integral part of the ordinary planning and decision-making. The LA 21 project in Nakuru makes it clear that there are gaps to be abridged within the municipal planning system itself, between politicians and chief officers and between officials at different and in different sectors if participatory decision-making is to be achieved.

7.6 Conclusions

The LA 21 programme is not just about products, but is a multifaceted process that endeavours to involve an as wide a spectrum of actors as possible in pursuit of urban sustainable development. A major characteristic of the process is the empowerment of partners, the local level communities in particular, which, after the donor support is ended, will become the ultimate owners of development process. The Nakuru strategic structure plan (1998-2020) has outlined how the ultimate goal of achieving sustainable development will be achieved in Nakuru. The need to put in place an institutional mechanism for plan implementation has been recognised and the MCN will need to utilise and fully exploit the positive attributes of changes in planning and urban management legislation in Kenya. These regulations have decentralised powers to prepare plans, regulate land use and coordinate the actions of the public and private sector in land development to local authorities.
It is surprising that the LA 21 process and most initiatives remain invisible to the general public and this indicates that communication with the public was rather poor. The approach that has been used to develop the local Agenda was top-down and it is very difficult for the residents in Nakuru to link the process to their daily struggles and aspirations. Another challenge is to connect the product of LA 21, the strategic structure plan, to the mainstream decision-making processes of the council so that the LA 21 really influences the way people live and relate to the environment. Some approaches that can help build LA 21 into the decision process include basing sustainable development aims and appraisal criteria on the LA 21 vision; asking service committees to include relevant actions from the Agenda 21 strategy in their own departmental service plans and building community involvement process into formal planning processes.

We observe that there is strong representation of the MCN in the LA 21 process. This has strong and weak points. Its strength lies in increasing the likelihood of LA ideals and initiatives to get the required official backing and support. Its weakness is that the local government continues to steer the process while much of the citizenship has lost faith and trust in the government. Respondents in our household survey had the opinion that the local authority should be responsible for adequate water supply, adequate sanitation and waste collection and disposal, but it has not been doing so. The CBOs (or their representatives) that are included are likely to fall into the trap of clientelism that is so characteristic of Kenyan politics. In a workshop that the author organised in Nakuru on the 3rd and 4th January, 2002, a former councillor who indicated that most of the CBOs actively working with the MCN had strong inclinations to the ruling party raised these sentiments.

The LA 21 process in Nakuru relied very much on external funding and support. We need to indicate that this was a very important input from the external support agencies. However, for the process to succeed and for the continuation of the implementation of the proposals, there is need to mobilise local resources and have budgetary allocations for the LA activities. There is need for long-term funding both from donors and the central government. The MCN also needs to allocate funds for the proposals and area based action plans in the strategic structure plan.

There is also need for the council officers to cultivate and nurture the culture that the programme has introduced, that of true partnership with the civil society sector. The issue of coordination is critical, as there are many organisations beginning to show interest in Nakuru. A key issue facing the main stakeholders active in the Nakuru programme so far is whether the political will can be strengthened to support what is seen as a quite new approach in planning and environmental management. The councillors are key to this. They need to see their roles quite differently and to influence the rest
Challenges of Urban Environmental Governance

of the council to show them what benefits they can all get by working with the community. A priority is to dispel the fear that is growing in the minds of some of the council representatives, that an empowered community will be a threat. We conclude that the LA 21 project and the proposals have the potential of leading Nakuru on the pathway to sustainable development. As we have discussed, a number of obstacles need to be addressed. The potentials of combining different forms of capitals (from households, CBOs, local government, NGOs, private sector and external support agencies) leads to the pathway towards sustainable development and poverty reduction.

There is urgent need to build capacity in partner institutions. The new ways of working and recasting of power relationships imply that there is need to develop new skills and capacities among all participants to establish the new careers that partnerships require. There is need to have the entire process firmly integrated into a national agenda. First and foremost, because the central government needs to deliver effective legal, budgetary and administrative measures that give the local council the legitimacy and the resources to actually implement the Local Agenda. Second, lack of any intergovernmental structure for the integration of the Local Agendas is likely to confuse and diffuse efforts. National officials have shown interest in the LA 21 exercise in Nakuru because, if successful, it would give them an example to replicate throughout the country.

Regarding contributions to urban sustainable development, the LA 21 process has potentials to putting Nakuru on a pathway to sustainable development, especially when all the proposals have been implemented. However, as we have noted, there are certain constraints that have to be dealt with. There is need to make resources available for the implementation of the proposals contained in the strategic structure plan. These resources can be mobilised locally, though the external support will also be required.