

SECTION ONE: URBANIZATION, URBAN MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview of urbanization and urban development, socio economic information of County urban areas, urban development challenges, legal and regulatory framework for urban management and county wide planning and urban development with Vihiga County.

1.1 OVERVIEW OF URBANIZATION IN VIHIGA

1.1.1 URBANIZATION TRENDS

Vihiga County continues to experience rapid urban growth attributed to increased rural-urban migration. The main urban areas in the county are; Luanda, Majengo, Mbale, Chavakali, Cheptulu, and Serem. The population living in the urban areas accounts for 12% of the total population of 590,013 based on the 2019 census. Mbale town has the highest population while serem has the least population among the urban areas in Vihiga. The distribution of urban population by gender is shown in table 1

Table 1: Urban Area Population by Gender

Urban Centre	2019			2022		
	Male	Female	total	Male	Female	Total
LUANDA	6354	6963	13317	6587	7218	13805
MBALE	8263	9141	17404	8566	9476	18042
CHAVAKALI	6073	6601	12674	6296	6843	13139
MAJENGO	5785	6128	11913	5997	6353	12350
SHAMAKHOKHO	2564	2853	5417	2658	2958	5616
JEPTULU	3002	3091	6093	3112	3204	6316
SEREM	1923	2061	3984	1993	2137	4130
ESIBUYE	1,748	1,926	3,674	1812	1997	3809
GAMBOGI	5,557	5,976	11,533	5761	6,195	11956
MUDETE	2327	2606	4933	2412	2702	5114
EKWANDA	3019	5991	9010	3130	6211	9341
TOTAL	46615	53337	99952	48324	55294	103618

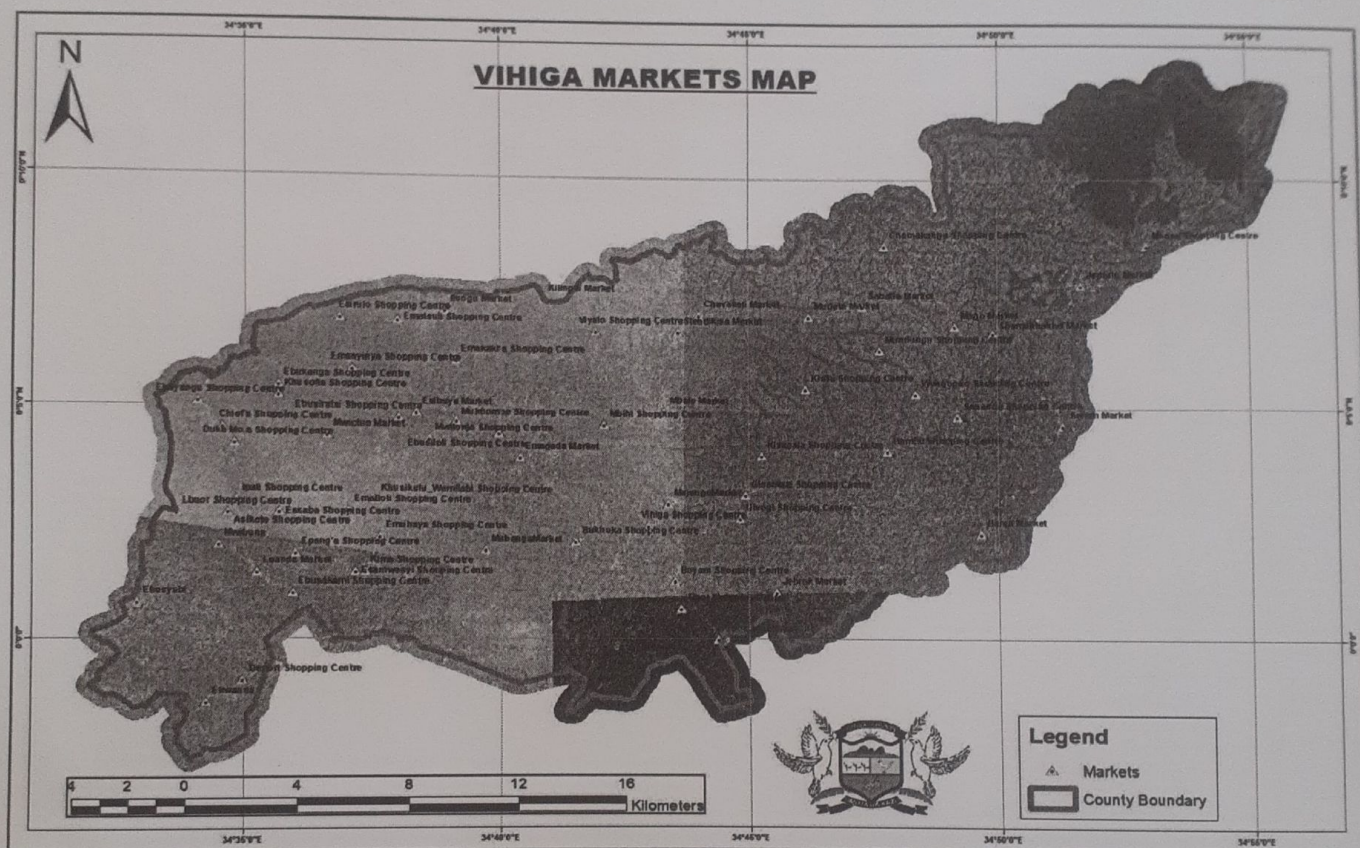
Source: KNBS 2019

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The Kenya Vision 2030 and the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda envisages an integrated design and land use planning of urban areas in a sustainable environment. Accordingly, this CIDP prioritizes to facilitate the development and access to affordable and adequate housing, improved access to clean and safe water and sanitation services, expansion of road infrastructure and sustainable supply of electricity. Other proposed plan is the decentralization of urban development through proposed establishment of Kaimosi/Cheptulu and Luanda Municipalities.

MAJOR URBAN AREAS

Vihiga County has 11 major urban centers which attracts population in search of employment and urban quality (shelter and services). The county urban population is approximately 32% which is lower than the national figure (about 40%). The major urban areas in the county include: Mbale, Majengo-Vihiga, Chavakali, Mudete, Luanda, Serem, Kaimosi-Jeptulu, Gambogi, Shamakhokho, Mago, Emuhaya-Kima, Sabatia and Hamisi.



1.1.2 URBANIZATION AND COUNTY SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The main economic activities in the urban areas in Vihiga are; wholesale and retail trade, trading of agricultural produce, transport industry, small scale artisans, cottage industries and construction/building industry.

Financial institutions have played a major role in the development of urban areas by facilitating growth of enterprises and public institutions. There are five (5) commercial banks in the County namely: Kenya Commercial Bank, Equity Bank, Cooperative Bank, Post Bank and Barclays Bank. There are also micro-finance institutions namely; Rafiki Bank, Kenya Women Finance Trust and 74 registered SACCOs.

Other drivers of economic activities in urban areas in the county include: learning institutions such as the Kaimosi Friends University, Secondary schools, and Health facilities such as Vihiga County Referral Hospital (VCRH), Sub county Hospitals and Major Hotels such as Sosa cottages, Roddys and Hemara hotels among others

Urbanization has resulted to transformation of socio economic well-being and reduction in poverty levels, in Vihiga currently estimated at 41% monetary poverty and 63% Multidimensional poverty, through enhanced access to superior social facilities and employment opportunities respectively. In addition, urbanization has resulted in better education enhanced innovations, efficient and sustainable utilization of natural resources as well as social integration and cohesion in the county.

1.1.3 URBAN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Limited infrastructural development including absence of waste management systems, erratic water supply and link roads.
- Inadequate decent housing coupled with limited capacity for housing development
- Insecure land tenure affecting urban residents, the rural poor, women and youth
- Poor and lengthy land administration characterized by limited access to land information due to poor quality records management and lack of transparency
- Different land tenure regimes with limited harmonization of the various conflicting laws
- Land scarcity and population pressure resulted in several land cases and disputes
- Land use changes and lack of management plans by land owners.
- Inadequate investments in the housing sector
- Spontaneous and haphazard development of urban centres
- Growth of unplanned settlements in excess of carrying capacity of available infrastructure i.e water, sanitation and roads
- Inadequate parking spaces
- Inadequate open/closed market spaces
- Limited preparedness to deal with terrorism, fire outbreaks, flooding etc.
- Absence of zoning and spatial plans for urban areas
- Inadequate employment opportunities
- Inadequate access to healthcare resources
- Absence of social amenities eg. library
- Absence of street naming and road signage
- Limited lightning arrestors on buildings

1.1.4 CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED CHALLENGES

Climate change phenomenon has been a threat in the recent past and has had negative impact on the people's livelihood. Human activities such as burning of fossil fuels, deforestation and unregulated industrial waste disposal are largely seen as the causative factors of this global scour. Vihiga County as experienced some climate change related challenges as stated below;

i. Changes in precipitation patterns

The normal rainfall patterns have been altered. Flooding has been experienced in some parts of the County as a result of high rainfall intensity leading to destruction of property and infrastructure as well as proliferation of water related disease and damage to the ecosystem. A prolonged dry season has affected food production and resulted in drying up of water sources.

ii. Landfills and soil erosion

Solid waste collected and disposed within the urban centres has led to emission of greenhouse gases such as methane into the atmosphere; leachate also percolates underground affecting the underground water. Impacts of climate hazards such as eroded soils, landslides, rocks fall and gullies are more common in sloppy areas in the county.

iii. Urbanization

Increasing urbanization has led to destruction of ecosystem to create space for settlement and businesses. The cutting down of trees, use of motor-vehicles and motorcycles and use of firewood as a source of heat have resulted in emission of carbon-dioxide gas into the atmosphere significantly affecting the quality of air. Generation of both solid, liquid and E-waste has significantly increased due to high population increase.

iv. Impact on Environment

Most of the tree species planted along the rivers and water catchment are eucalyptus known to draw large amounts of water. This has led to drying of streams and rivers downstream.

1.1.5 LEVEL OF VULNERABILITY/INEQUALITIES COUNTY CLIMATE PROFILE

Sub-County	Climate Profile/Risk	Effect/Impact
Emuhaya – Luanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in Climatic conditions Soil erosion and rock-slides (Emabungo and Wemilabi) Intense Hailstones in Wemilabi and lightning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erratic rainfall with delays Increased crop pests and diseases. Declining soil fertility Environmental degradation caused by cultivating on steep slopes Declining water sources both in quantity and quality Reduced agricultural production and productivity
Hamisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in Climatic conditions Increased storms & lightning Landslides in Banja, madea Deforestation at kibiri forest Soil erosion in Jepkoyai due to sand harvesting Marrum pits in Goibei 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erratic rainfall patterns and prolonged dry season which leads to stresses on water sources. Crop pests and diseases Flooding in the lower parts of Shamakhokho ward as witnessed in Mwasavatia and Saosi in Kisasi sub location Declining soil fertility Reduced agricultural production and productivity
Sabatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in Climatic conditions Human activities - sand harvesting and deforestation Landslides in mudete Murram pits in chatamilu Flooding in Nadanya Busamu river Gold mine pits in Mkichutu Marrum pits in savalu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erratic rainfall patterns and prolonged dry season which leads to stresses on water sources. Gulley erosion Delayed onset of long rains affecting agricultural calendar Destruction of infrastructure and flooding in farmlands.
Vihiga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in Climatic conditions Soil erosion and rock-slides (South Maragoli and Mungoma Flooding at Idavaga, Oceanic area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erratic rainfall patterns and increased intensity of the rainfall especially during the short rains. Climate hazards are compounded by human activities such as deforestation and cultivation in fragile areas as is the case with Maragoli Hills in Mungoma and South Maragoli Wards. Increased soil infertility and reduced crop productivity and formation of gulleys Increase in incidences of flooding and vector borne diseases such as malaria