

AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENT SCHEMES ON THE KENYA HIGHLANDS

D.G.R. BELSHAW

The various settlement schemes for African farmers on the former "White Highlands" (officially, the Scheduled Areas) of Kenya undoubtedly constitute the most rapid change in the economic and human geography of an area of this size ever experienced in East Africa.⁽¹⁾ The five-year 'one-million acre scheme' for the purchase of European-owned mixed farms and the creation of African-owned small-holdings is not scheduled for completion until 1967, but by the beginning of 1964 the main areas for settlement had been established, and a considerable acreage already purchased and occupied.

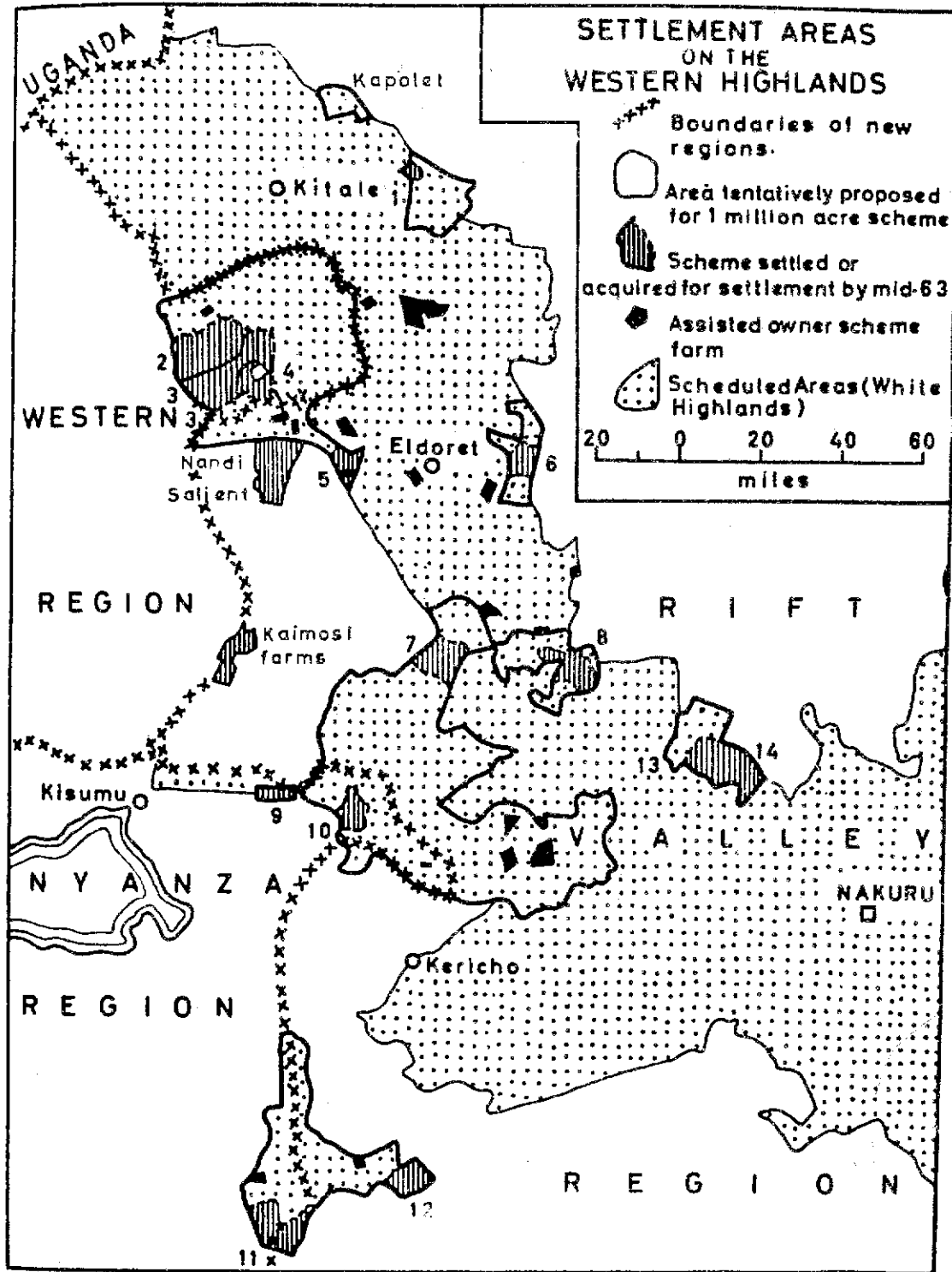
It is the purpose of this note to describe the location of the major settlement areas at the beginning of 1964, and to indicate in broad outline the relationship between these areas and the former tribal land units. It is not intended to discuss the effect of the resulting changes in land use on the economy of Kenya, nor the controversial question of the short and long term viability of the new small-holdings.⁽²⁾

Methodology.

With a continuous settlement programme of this magnitude, involving land valuation, farm survey, acquisition by the Land Board, plot measurement, water and conservation works, registration of title and occupation by settlers as separate stages, there is an obvious difficulty in deciding which stage in the sequence to select, and in securing homogeneous data for all schemes. In mapping the settlement schemes, the basic criterion has been to indicate areas actually occupied or ready for occupation (as opposed to merely earmarked or valued prior to purchase) by the beginning of 1964. However, the only readily mappable data comprised lists of farms to be purchased by the Land Development and Settlement Board in the years 1962/63⁽³⁾ and 1963/64⁽⁴⁾. Owing to the time-lag between purchase by the Board and eventual occupation by the settlers, it was decided to map only the first year's purchasing programme, i.e. finishing June, 1963. The areas to be purchased were mapped on 1:50,000 sheets which indicated individual farms boundaries and identified them by their land registration number. This data was then redrawn and reduced to the scale of the maps accompanying this note.

To supplement the mappable information, data on areas of the schemes actually acquired and numbers of plots ready for occupation was obtained from

* The co-operation of the Director and Staff of the Department of Settlement, Kenya, and of Mr. P.D. Abrams and Mr. W.J. England in particular, and the assistance of Mr. H.D. Patel and Mr. A. Serubiri in assembling and mapping the data, are gratefully acknowledged.



A. Serubiri

Fig.1

official reports⁽⁵⁾ and from visits to the Department of Settlement in December, 1963. This, together with other information concerning types of scheme, origin of settlers and farming patterns, is presented in Tables I and II. This method, dictated by the nature and availability of the data has resulted in some chronological inaccuracies, either where little or no progress has been made in acquisition or settlement in areas earmarked for purchase in the 1962/63 programme (e.g. scheme I, Cherangani), or where greatly accelerated activity has occurred, as in the case of Schemes 15 (Ol-Kalau), 16, (Wanjohi/Kipipiri) and 17 (South Kinangop), where crash programmes offer the settlement of large numbers of unemployed and landless Kikuyu were initiated in the latter half of 1963. Whilst the acreage data in the Tables in a few cases does not correspond with the areas shown on the maps, the Schemes described do represent the nuclei of the whole five-year programme, and their location allows certain conclusions to be drawn concerning the tribal pattern of land settlement on the former scheduled areas of the highlands.

General features of the 'One Million Acres' Plan.

The settlement of landless, unemployed or under-employed Africans on extensive mixed-farm areas falls into the category of agricultural scheme embraced by the term Land Reform i.e. partition and redistribution of land on socio-political rather than economic grounds. This policy is in contrast to both 'settlement' as it has been used to refer to settlers taking up land in the tropics for the first time, and 'resettlement', the planned transfer of peasant farmers from densely populated to completely uncultivated areas. These land reform measures have taken place mainly in the mixed farming areas of the highlands, which occupy some 2½ million out of the 7½ million acres comprising the former Scheduled Areas. The remainder is occupied by plantation crops – coffee, tea and sisal in particular – or by low-rainfall ranching areas and forested land. These are either physically unsuitable for small-scale peasant agriculture, or could only be acquired for such purposes at prohibitive expense.

The original one million acre plan encouraged over the period 1962–67 the purchase of 200,000 acres of mixed farm land per annum for high density settlement, financed by grant and loan from the United Kingdom Government, and 30,000 acres per annum for low density settlement, financed by the World Bank and the Colonial Development Corporation (I.B.R.D./C.D.C. schemes). The high density schemes aim to provide subsistence for the peasant family and a cash income of £25 per annum, whilst the target income on the low density schemes is subsistence and a cash income of £100. In 1961 and 1962 there was some emphasis on two other types of schemes – the Yeoman Farmer Scheme, with a target income of £250 per annum – and the Assisted Owner Schemes whereby experienced African farmers were given loans to cover the purchase of sizeable farms and to provide working capital. Slightly over 100 schemes in this category had been completed by the end of 1963, but owing to the heavy capital demands of this and the Yeoman Farmer Scheme, in relation to the number of families benefitting, both have been discontinued. Separate finance has been available for compassionate purchases, where aged or infirm settlers have been given priority for purchase outside the designated settlement areas. Over half a million acres of land in this category had been acquired by the end of 1963.

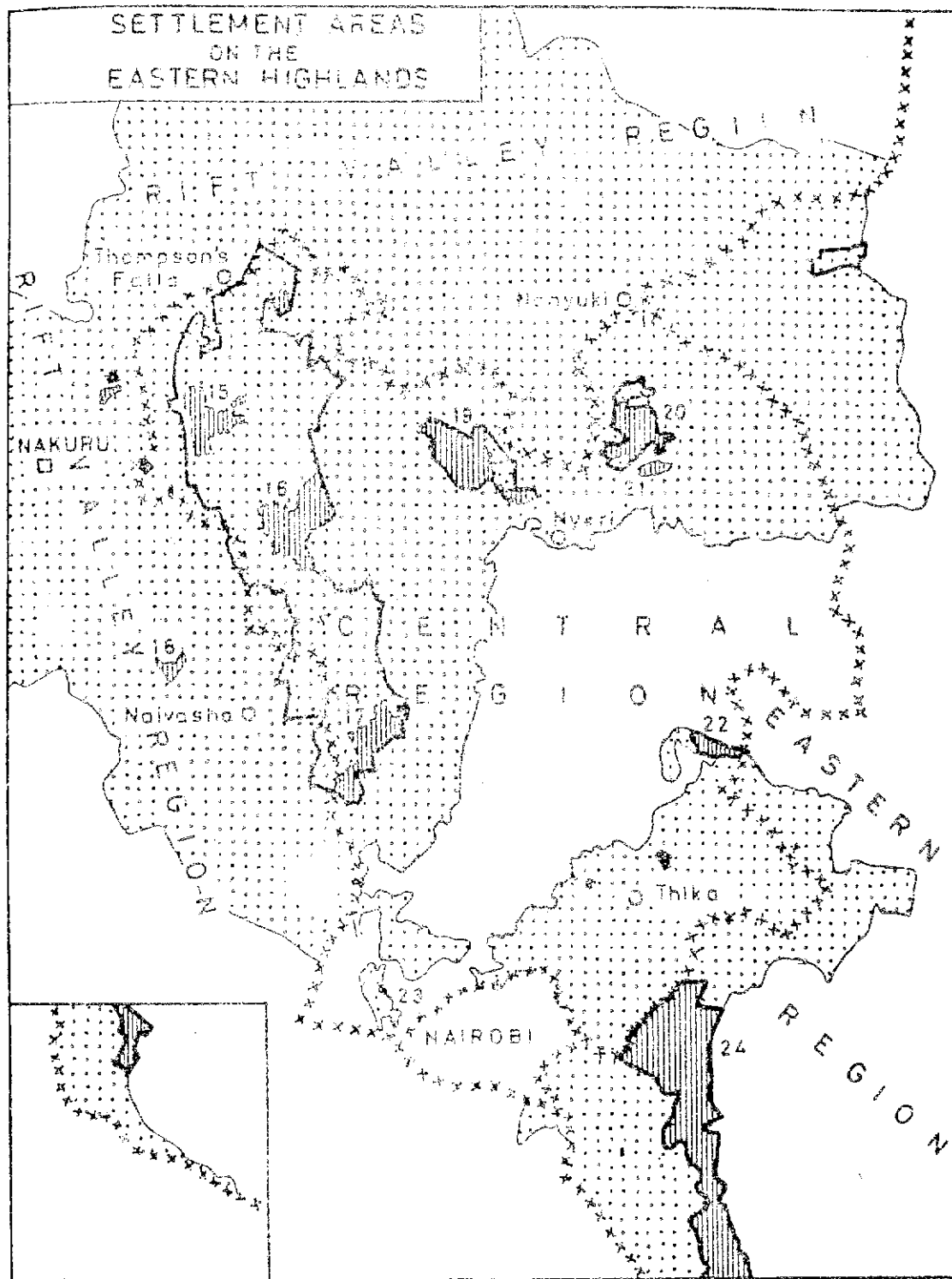


Fig.2. For key see Fig.1.

A.Serubiri

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TABLE I - MAJOR SETTLEMENT SCHEMES IN WESTERN KENYA, DECEMBER, 1963

Ref. No. :	Official Name of Scheme	Area acquired for Settlement (acres)	Number of holdings occupied:	Type of Scheme	Tribal Group	Major Cash Crops
1	Cherangani	7,600	Nil	High - and Low-Density and grazing	Elgeyo, Pokot and Marakwet	Tea and maize. Beef cattle.
2	Kabisi	12,400	326	High Density	Maragoli/Bunyore	Maize and Cattle.
3	Lugari	15,500	273	High Density	"	Sisal and maize.
4	Kipkarren	10,800	Nil	High Density	Abaluhya	Maize.
5	Ndalar	8,100	402	High Density	Nandi	Dairy and maize.
6	Elgeyo Border	9,200	304	High Density	Elgeyo	Cereals and dairy.
7	Lessos and Keben	14,900	333	Low Density	Nandi	Dairy, tea and maize.
8	Ainabkoi East, West and North	16,100	234	Low Density	Elgeyo/Tugen	Pyrethrum, Oats, dairy and wool.
9	Kibigori	3,000	Nil	High Density	Luo	Maize.
10	Muhoroni and Tamu	7,200	Nil	Low Density	Luo	Sugar, maize and milk.
11	West Sotik (Lietego, Gelegele, Koye etc.)	19,400	581	Low and High Density	Kipsigis/Kisii	Maize and cream.
12	East Sotik	10,100	398	High Density	Kipsigis	Cream, maize and coffee.
13	Sebatia	10,300	187	Low and High Density and Grazing	Tugen	Dairy, beef, pyrethrum and coffee.
14	Kilombe	13,200	100	Grazing	Tugen	Beef cattle.

Note: European farms have also been acquired for settlement outside the present scheme at Kaimosi (5,300 acres, 181 settlers) and in the Nandi Salient (16,000 acres, 87 settlers).

TABLE II - MAJOR SETTLEMENT SCHEMES IN EASTERN KENYA, DECEMBER, 1963

Ref. No. :	Official Name of Scheme	Area acquired for Settlement (acres)	Number of holdings occupied:	Type of Scheme	Tribal Group	Major Cash Crops
15	Oi Kalou	19,800	650	Low and High Density	Kikuyu	Dairy, wool, wheat, pyrethrum.
16	Wanjohi, Malewa and Kipipiri area	76,400	2,300	High Density	Kikuyu	Maize, potatoes, dairy.
17	South Kinangop and Njabini area	49,400	1750	High Density	Kikuyu	Cattle and sheep, maize and vegetables.
18	Eburu	3,400	Nil	High Density	Masai	
19	Mweiga/Amboni (5 schemes)	73,000	800	High Density	Kikuyu	Dairy, pyrethrum and vegetables.
20	Naro Moru and Warazo		1200	High Density	Kikuyu/Emba	Pyrethrum and dairy or wheat&beef
21	Island Farms	3,300	259	High Density	Kikuyu	Pyrethrum and dairy.
22	Maragwa Ridge	5,900	257	High Density	Kikuyu	Beans, Onions, dairy, and maize.
23	Sigona Estates	500	37	Low Density	Kikuyu	Milk and vegetables and eggs.
24	Machakos (Mua Hills, Komo Rock, Lukenia)	12,100	288	High Density	Kamba	Cream, Onions and peas. Beef cattle. Cream, Onions and peas.
		36,400	60	High Density	Kamba	
		43,000	90	High Density	Kamba	

Note: A further 1,700 families have been settled on Central Region on 'Jet Schemes' on former Crown Land (forest reserves, etc.)

In practice the purchasing programme has been greatly accelerated, with nearly 300,000 acres acquired in the first year of the scheme, and a slightly larger figure scheduled for 1963/64, so that the purchasing programme is now scheduled for completion a year earlier, by July 1966. In particular, all the proposed purchases within the Central Region have been brought forward to 1963/4 and 1964/5, in order to accelerate the settlement of landless and unemployed Kikuyu, who constitute the major social problem in the country.

The size of each smallholding varies according to whether the scheme is high or low density, and on the ability of the soil fertility and cropping patterns to achieve the target incomes. The size of high density plots may vary from 5 acres in high potential areas to 100 acres in the grazing areas. Each scheme consists of approximately 10,000 acres, with two settlement officers responsible for preparing plots, crops and livestock for, on average, some 500 families. By the beginning of 1964 nearly 10,000 families had been settled on the Highlands.

The Regional Allocation of Land:

The outline of the million acre plan on the accompanying maps shows the first 'tentative' boundary, which has been modified in a few instances in the light of the recommendations of the Regional Boundary Commission. All the settlement areas are contiguous to the former African Land Units (the 'reserves') and can be regarded as essentially tribal overspill areas. The new regional boundaries have been drawn to embrace within each region sufficient areas for the settlement on the Highlands of the tribal groups living within that region.

This predominant concern of the Boundary Commission, which was not, strangely, included within its terms of reference, explains the two eastward bulges formed by the Nyanza and Western Regional boundaries, and the striking westward and northward projection of the Kikuyu tribal area towards Thompson's Falls and Nanyuki. In the case of the Western Region boundary, tribal pressure has already been active in attempting to secure a further eastward extension to embrace Kitale. The pattern of settlement, therefore, is essentially the extension of the tribal land unit onto what was formerly a racially exclusive preserve. There is still, however, a large area remaining in Rift Valley Region which is now multi-racial and which could conceivably also become the first multi-tribal rural area in Kenya.

References.

- (1) See Morgan, W.T.W., *The 'White Highlands' of Kenya*, *Geog. J.*, Vol. 129, Pt. 2, pp. 140-155 for a geographical and historical summary of the European farming areas in Kenya. More detailed statistical material can be found in the Reports of the *Kenya European and Asian Agricultural Census, 1960* (E.Afr. Statistical Dept., 1961) and the *Kenya Agricultural Census, 1962* (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 1963).

- (2) See, e.g., Etherington, D.M., Land Settlement in Kenya: Policy and Practice, *E. Afr. Econ. Rev.*, Vol. 10, No. 1, June 1963, pp. 22-34.
- (3) Land Development and Settlement Board (Kenya) 1. *Details of Farms Purchased, or for which offers will be made between 1st. July, 1962 and 30th September, 1963*, and 2. *Outline of Tentative Area recommended for consideration by the Central Land Board in the One Million Acre Scheme* (mimeo. n.d.). The Land Development and Settlement Board was replaced by the Central Land Board with effect from 1.6.63.
- (4) Land Development and Settlement Board (Kenya), *Proposed Purchasing Programme No. 2, 1963-64* (Mimeo. n.d.).
- (5) Particularly the Ann. Rept., Department of Settlement 1962/63 and Ann. Repts., Regional Agricultural Officers for Western, Nyanza, Rift Valley, Central and Eastern Regions, 1963 (mimeo).
- (6) *Kenya: Report of the Regional Boundaries Commission*. Cmd. 1899, H.M.S.O. December, 1962, para. 39, p. 7. This is an additional consideration outside the terms of reference as set out in para. 1, p. 1.