



**POST GRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS**

**SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

**DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**MDS 503: SUSTAINABLE RURAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE: 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2026**

**DURATION: 3 HOURS**

**MAXIMUM MARKS: 60**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **FOUR (4)** questions.
4. Question **ONE is compulsory**.
5. Answer any other **TWO** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **30 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided**

**QUESTION ONE**

**Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow:**

**SUSTAINABLE RURAL-URBAN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN NYANDA CORRIDOR, KENYA**

The Nyanda Corridor is a rapidly transforming region in Kenya comprising a medium-sized urban center surrounded by extensive rural hinterlands. Over the last two decades, Nyanda has experienced accelerated urban growth driven by rural-urban migration, population increase, expansion of transport infrastructure, and growth of agro-processing industries. While urban core has attracted investment in housing, trade, and services, the surrounding rural areas remain heavily dependent on agriculture, characterized by smallholder farming, seasonal incomes, and limited access to markets.

The rural economy in Nyanda is dominated by rainfed agriculture, with maize, goat rearing, vegetables, and dairy farming forming the backbone of livelihoods. However, climate variability, land fragmentation, declining soil fertility, and inadequate agricultural extension services have constrained productivity. Many young people perceive agriculture as unviable and migrate to urban centre in search of non-farm employment, yet the urban economy has struggled to absorb this influx. As a result, informal settlements have expanded rapidly, like in Kolipa (one of the suburbs of Nyanda), thus, placing pressure on housing, water supply, sanitation, transport, and waste management systems. The interdependence between rural and urban areas in the Nyanda Corridor is evident. Urban markets depend on rural food supplies, while rural households rely on urban centres for inputs (e.g. seeds, fertilizers, and small farm machineries), services, remittances, and employment opportunities. However, weak integration of rural and urban development planning and poor implementation of approved policies has

resulted in uneven / non-equitable development. Public policies have often favored urban infrastructure at the expense of rural investment, reinforcing spatial inequalities and exacerbating poverty in rural areas.

Population growth has intensified these challenges. Rising population density in the urban core has increased unemployment, uncontrollable congestion (as in Kolipa), and environmental burdens such as pollution, solid waste accumulation, and encroachment into environmentally sensitive areas. In rural areas, population pressure has led to overcultivation, land degradation, and competition over natural resources. Poorly regulated land-use changes, including conversion of agricultural land into residential and commercial uses, threaten long-term food security and environmental sustainability.

Government interventions aimed at promoting balanced rural-urban development include agricultural modernization programs, promotion of non-farm rural enterprises, urban housing initiatives, and infrastructure development. However, implementation has been undermined by limited coordination among institutions, inadequate data for planning, and weak stakeholder participation. Although national and county development strategies emphasize sustainable development, population management, and environmental protection, translating these policies into practical outcomes remains a major challenge.

**Required:**

**a)** Critically analyze the multidimensional nature of rural-urban development in the Nyanda Corridor, highlighting interdependence between rural & urban sectors.

**(10 Marks)**

**b)** Analytically examine how population growth, migration, and land-use patterns have shaped development outcomes and environmental challenges in Nyanda Corridor.

**(10 Marks)**

- c) Evaluate the effectiveness of public policies and development strategies in promoting sustainable rural-urban development, and propose integrated approaches suitable for the Nyanda context.

**(10 Marks)**

## **QUESTION TWO**

- a) Using relevant major theoretical perspectives and paradigms of rural-urban development, explain the patterns of growth and transformation observed in African contexts. **(8**

**Marks)**

- b) By using relevant scenario or example, critically contrast the social, political, and academic contexts influencing rural-urban development planning in developing countries, with specific reference to Kenya.

**(7 Marks)**

## **QUESTION THREE**

- a) Demonstrate four roles of agriculture and allied rural economic activities in supporting sustainable rural development, including the need for expanding non-farm activities.

**(8 Marks)**

- b) Assess the contribution of agricultural extension services, farm management practices, and sustainable utilization of natural resources to long-term rural and urban sustainability.

**(7 Marks)**

## **QUESTION FOUR**

**a)** Analyze the relationship between population growth, population density, and resource management in rural and urban areas.

**(8 Marks)**

**b)** Critique rural and urban land-use patterns and environmental problems, and formulate strategies for achieving environmentally sustainable rural-urban development.

**(7 Marks)**