

THE INFLUENCE OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY IN KYUSO DISTRICT KITUI COUNTY

Degree Programme: [MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT](#) [1]

Student Names: RAPHAEL MUSYOKA NGUMBI

Student Registration Number: L50/65406/2011

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This study is concerned with alternative approaches to sustainable food security in Kyuso District-Kitui County. The objectives of the study includes; to establish how capacity building and increase in grain production can be used as approaches to influence sustainable food security in Kyuso district; to determine whether safe storage of grains and development of food grain tolerant to drought can influence food security; to explore the extent to which Genetically Modified Crops (GMCs) and dietary diversification have been used as approaches to food security in Kyuso District; to find out whether gender sensitive development and good governance can influence food security. The research design which was used was descriptive while several sampling methods such as stratified, cluster, purposive and convenient were used. Data was collected using a questionnaire which contained open as well as closed ended items. An interview schedule was also used to obtain data from the agricultural officers and the NGOs representatives who had been sampled. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyze various items of the questionnaire. These included averages, percentages, frequencies and totals. This study used frequencies and percentages because they easily communicate the research findings to majority of readers.

The study found out that the alternative approaches which had been identified had influence on sustainable food security in Kyuso District in that they increased food production, and knowledge of producing the food for instance research and capacity building. It also found out that though the approaches had influence on sustainability of food very few had been used to a great extent in the region. For instance it was established that GMCs had not be implemented in the District, dietary diversification was still poor because majority of the residents depended on maize products for their food. The study also found out that food security in the region could be attained by enhancing gender sensitive development which had not been attained in Kyuso. The study thus recommends that; focus should be made towards ensuring that more awareness creation concerning GMCs and their influence on food security is done in Kyuso district. There is need for a lot of sensitization to be done on the alternative approaches as well as be implemented in the region. Gender sensitive development should be enhanced by women being educated on agricultural techniques, as well as increasing their literacy levels. Diet should be diversified from over-reliance on maize crop to other food varieties that could do well in the area as well as meat products such as fish products being introduced in the region. More agricultural officers are needed to be deployed to the region which is big and vast hence the few officers available are unable to reach majority of the farmers for capacity building and research work. There was no agricultural research institute in the region and the study strongly recommends that there is need for one to be established in the region. The study also recommends that the NGOs should move from distributing relief food to the residents to focusing on alternative approaches, particularly cash for assets and food for assets, to enhance resilience of the community to shocks and hazards associated with climate change. The government can also start irrigation schemes to increase food in the region since River Tana forms the boundary between the District and neighboring Tharaka Nithi District and therefore water from the river could be accessed easily for irrigation.

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