AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING FARMING AND FOOD SECURITY IN WESTERN KENYA:

A Case Study Of Bunyala Location, Kakamega County, Kenya.

By

GEOFFREY MAKHEI OKUMU WAWIRE

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented to any other University or college for any diploma or degree award.

Signed ........................................... Date ..................................

Geoffrey Makheti Wawire.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university supervisor.

Signed ........................................... Date ..................................

Mr. Evanson Mbuva

Lecturer,

Department of Extra Mural Studies,

University Of Nairobi.
ABSTRACT

Many research organizations argued that in the long run, subsistence agriculture could not be an economically viable activity and was unlikely to ensure sustainable simple household food security and general welfare. The purpose of this study is therefore to ascertain the economic viability and use of enhanced agricultural food production at a subsistence level as a means to alleviate poverty in rural Kenya and explore the possibility of applying the model obtained thereby to the vast farms in Kenya and Africa at large. This is done with an aim of achieving food security for the country. It is engrained overtime and therefore theoretically believed even by this study that farming is central to rural livelihoods and it is indispensible if food security and poverty reduction is to be achieved as the Millennium Development Goals are realized for Africa. Research methods and methodology are used to analyze data collected from ninety six mixed crop and dairy farmers in Bunyala Location. A cross section sampling was done with 12 farmers strategically drawn from each of the eight subdivisions of the Bunyala Location. Questionnaires were arrived at, drafted, supplied and used to conduct interviews which were done by trained enumerators over a period of eleven months with two rainy seasons. The major factors were identified as own and hired labor, cost of firm inputs, price of crop and dairy products, product marketing distance, farm output, sales and income and how income is managed, cattle characteristics and management, soil fertility, availability of arable land, weather climatic patterns, general demographic features, other incomes from other economic activities, level of literacy and government policy administration. After undertaking the relationship between the output of food and various socio-economic factors, the findings show that various socio-economic factors have to be reviewed in order to improve the production of food in the Location. The results described that acreage (land), physical capital, fertilizer and price, have positive relationship with the food output. This study therefore recommends that these are factors on which, the government should give emphasis, in order to increase the production of food. There are other factors such as education which has shown a positive coefficient, but explained an insignificant relationship to the food output.

Labor as a variable has shown negative effect. However based on these findings, we can conclude that land, physical capital, fertilizer, and price are the important socio-economic factors that have effect on the production food in Bunyala.