

Title: An investigation of resources women farmers used to enhance household food security. a case study of Embu district Kenya

Author: Kamonji, W. Virginia

Abstract: The purpose of the study was to determine the resources women used for household food security in Embu district. The major objectives of this study were to: (i) Determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents (ii) Determine the status of food availability in Embu District. (iii) Determine the human and materials resources women used to ensure food sufficiency. (iv) Determine the constraints women encounter in providing adequate food for their household. (v) Determine the effects of some selected resources on household food sufficiency. (vi) To investigate how resources could be used efficiently to enhance household food security. A descriptive survey design was used in the study. A total of 231 respondents were drawn from three (3) sublocations (Karurumo, Kianjuki, Nguviu). The sublocations were selected randomly from three (3) locations (Nginda, Gatari North and Karurumo) which had been selected purposively from three divisions (Manyatta, Nembure and Kyeni South). The three divisions were purposively selected according to the climate conditions that prevailed. Data collection instruments used during the survey were focus group discussions and interview schedule. Descriptive statistics such as the Pearson product moment correlation was used to obtain relationships between variables. Frequencies, means, percentages were used to summarise data. Results showed that most households in Embu district were food insecure because of various reasons such as inadequate income, unreliable and inadequate rainfall. Farm implements and inputs were too expensive for most farmers to afford. There was lack of extension services from the government and other development agencies to the farmers. The farms were too small and infertile hence they produced very little harvest in terms of food and cash crops. Access to credit facilities from co-operative societies was expensive due to the high interest rates these institutions charged. To improve household food sufficiency, various suggestions were put forward such as: planting drought resistant crops, reforestation and intensification of extension service.