

# Analysis of poverty alleviation initiatives among small scale farming communities in rural Naivasha, Kenya

Njuguna, Christine Wambui

## Abstract:

---

Small-scale farmers are the centre of concern about globalization because they are the largest employment and small business group among the world's poor. More than 80% of Kenyans live in the rural areas and earn their livelihoods in agricultural-based activities. More than 50% of Kenyans live below the poverty level and struggle to meet their basic needs. Therefore the purpose of this study was to analyze of poverty alleviation initiatives among small-scale farmers in rural Naivasha, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to identify opportunities and challenges facing small-scale farmers in meeting their basic needs as regards water for irrigation, land and training on modern agricultural practices; to determine household resources through asset mapping and subsequent zonal differences by wealth accumulation and to analyze poverty alleviation initiatives for and by the small scale farmers. The study methodology included Ex-post facto research design through use of participatory rural appraisal tools such as the direct contact questionnaire, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. A sample of 136 respondents were interviewed that comprised of 100 small scale farmers, 6 development agencies and 30 people for focus group discussions. Quantitative data was analyzed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) where descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were computed in order to understand the patterns and nature of relationships. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically, where labels were assigned to various categories and themes. The survey found that the efforts by the small scale farmers to alleviate poverty had been hampered by lack of support in skills acquisition and farm inputs, natural disasters such as drought and dependence on rain fed agriculture. This is in addition to constrained access to markets, lack of technology transfer to farmers coupled with low levels of technology adoption. The role of development agencies was found to be of paramount importance as they provided training and credit, farm inputs, education and health services at subsidized prices and enabled farmers to have better access to markets. However there was lack of synergy and coordination of operations among these development agencies leading to an overlap, competition and conflict. There were significant differences between farmers who received training on modern agricultural practices and those who did not ( $p < .05$ ). There were also significant differences between farmers who had access to water for irrigation and those who did not have access ( $p < .05$ ). Findings also showed that there were significant differences among agricultural zones and annual wealth accumulation ( $p < .05$ ). It was concluded that poverty alleviation initiatives that had made the most contribution to the small scale farmers were: training on modern agricultural practices, improved access to water for irrigation, self help groups and financial assistance. It was recommended that various development agencies should work in a coordinated manner to benefit the local communities; and improved access to water for irrigation and irrigation technology would greatly improve the standard of living of the small scale farmers.