



A review of policies and agricultural productivity in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALS), Kenya: the case of Turkana County

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: This paper seeks to present a review of policies relating to agricultural productivity in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALS) with a focus on Turkana County, Kenya.

Methodology and Results: This paper adopted a qualitative approach and data collection majorly relied on document analysis of policy papers, the Kenyan Constitution, parliamentary proceedings as recorded in the Hansard, academic papers, organizational journals, newspaper articles and government statutes relating to agriculture. Despite the culture of the people being centered on pastoralism, food security in the ASALS is far from adequate. The numerous policy documents reveal the efforts Kenya has made to increase Agricultural productivity. The successive governments though at varying degrees, developed plans that focused on rural areas albeit with little progress in the ASALS. Institutional failures and adverse policies are to blame for the growth of the Agricultural sector in Africa.

Conclusions and application of findings: There are numerous overlapping policies due to failure to evaluate existing ones. There is need to involve beneficiaries and to address resource allocation to agriculture to reflect the recommended 10% of overall country budget as per the Maputo agreement of 2003. Proper management of funds and fighting corruption is vital in effective implementation of development programs and realization of economic growth. Investment in both social and physical infrastructure (roads, livestock markets, abattoirs etc.) would ensure effectiveness of the various policies. There is need to prioritize water supply and water use efficiency for dryland agriculture.

Keywords: Agricultural productivity, rural Kenya, food security, Devolution, Policy, Development