



**TEGEMEO INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL
POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**MAKING AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS WORK FOR THE RURAL POOR IN
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

PROCEEDINGS OF A DISEMINATION WORKSHOP

ON

**ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES AND COMMUNITYS'
VOICE/PRESENCE IN GOVERNANCE OF FOOD SECURITY RELATED
INITIATIVES HELD AT THE COUNTY HOTEL, SAGANA ON 11TH
MARCH, 2011**

Acknowledgement

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Introduction

Improving agricultural productivity is crucial in enhancing food security and accelerating pro-poor growth. Various functions in implementation of programmes/projects that are geared towards mitigating food insecurity and poverty reduction have been decentralized to the local level (district and below) as a way of increasing responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency. This has been achieved by establishment of organs through which various functions are effected and by involvement of various stakeholders, including the farmers. To ensure that initiatives are/remain relevant to the needs of local communities particularly the poor and vulnerable, it is important to continually review the governance mechanisms that are in place at these local levels. A key objective of the agri-food systems project is to promote policies and governance mechanisms for sustainable agri-food systems. It seeks to contribute to the understanding of why current policies, institutions and governance mechanisms have not enhanced ability of the rural poor, women and the vulnerable to secure sustainable livelihoods, food and income security and a revitalized natural resource base.

It is against this backdrop that Tegemeo Institute of Egerton University undertook studies in Mbeere, Kirinyaga and Nyandarua to establish the local level structures responsible for various food security-related initiatives, their composition and the existing linkages both upstream and downstream as well as horizontal linkages. In addition, the Institute captured the perception of local stakeholders on dimensions of governance that are relevant to making agri-food systems work for the poor and vulnerable namely, the satisfaction, participation and their influence. This study is within the broader project on **“Making Agri-food Systems Work for the Rural Poor”** being carried out in collaboration with other local and regional partners.

Preliminary results show that the structure is still limiting farmers’ involvement in decision making, in resource allocation and in ensuring programmes and projects remain accountable. In addition, current funding levels seem to be curtailing the convening of various organs/committees and wider farmer representation. Farmers on the other hand seem to have minimal understanding of the projects in which they are participating in although there was an above average perception on satisfaction with benefit derived from the projects. There was also little knowledge on existing civil society groups, their agenda/mandate and influence on the committees.

Tegemeo Institute organized for a workshop to disseminate its findings and get feedback from the community. The workshop drew participants from farmer groups, civil societies and NGO working in Kirinyaga West, agricultural line ministries and the provincial administrations. The workshop was officially opened by the District Officer for Baricho, Mr. Chege who represented the District Officer for Sagana.

Proceedings

Session I: Welcome and Introduction

The facilitator, Mr. Raphael Gitau, a Research Fellow at Tegemeo Institute welcomed the participants and invited Mr. Maina to start off the workshop with a word of prayer. Thereafter, he invited the participants to introduce themselves after which he invited Dr. Mary Mathenge, the Director Tegemeo Institute to invite Professor J. M. Mathooko, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Extension Egerton University to give welcoming remarks.

Prof. Mathooko, DVC Egerton University

Good morning, I will use Kiswahili because it a language which all understand. My name is Prof. Mathooko, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Egerton University, I am specialized in aquatic sciences and I think that there is no river in the Mt. Kenya region that I don't know including the aquatic animals. Egerton University is an institution widely known in the field of agriculture. Egerton University was started in 1939 as an agricultural school. The school was founded by Lord Maurice Egerton from England. The school started with three students who had come from war. The school then grew to attain university college standards. In 1968, the first female students were admitted. The institution operated as a branch of the University of Nairobi until 1987 when it became Egerton University. Currently we have over 14,000 students. The university has three university colleges, Kisii, Laikipia and Chuka. We also have one campus college Nakuru Town Campus. The institution has three divisions namely: Academic affairs, Administration and finance, and Research and Extension which carries out research and work with local communities for rural development. I am in charge of the Research and Extension division. The University trains farmers on issues like bee keeping, tree planting, soil conservation, organic farming. It has been forefront in reforestation and plants thousands of trees annually. It has a botanical garden where medicinal trees are grown and is working together with herbalists while training farmers on several herbs. The university is currently promoting an animal from South America (llama) which is usually kept for wool, milk, meat and for carrying goods. The University is currently training farmers on its husbandry. The University mostly provides free services to the local communities. It is committed to disseminating research finding to the stakeholders so that the research can benefit the community. Tegemeo is an Institute of the University that deals in Policy Research. Today is one occasion where the Institute is disseminating their findings to the stakeholders. This is important as the researchers' expects to interact with you and get to hear on the way forward. Thus it is important that we actively participate. Egerton University is ready to work together with you and every one of you is welcome to the University where you can learn about biogas production, soil conservation, and yoghurt processing amongst others. With those few words, let me take this opportunity to invite the District Officer to address us on behalf of the DC and to officially open the meeting.

Mr. John Chege, District Officer-Kirinyaga West

Thank you Prof. DVC, Tegemeo Institute researchers and all participants, good morning. Kindly receive greetings from our DC Ms. Rhoda Onyancha who could not make it to here due to other commitments. Mine is to welcome you all to this workshop and to Kirinyaga West District, Tegemeo Institute has been working with us for long (about 3 years now) in the offices, farms and farmer groups. DVC, here in Kirinyaga, people love their work and in fact if you go to the farms, you will find them busy working. We would like you to continue teaching us the issues related to better farming. Kirinyaga West is very productive, but we have some areas that are vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity. We always encouraged our people to continue working hard and to adopt new technologies so that we can increase farm output and be food secure. I welcome you all and let us continue working together. With those few remarks I declare the workshop opened.

After the DO's opening remarks, the chair of the Session Dr. Mary Mathenge thanked the DO for welcoming the team to Kirinyaga West. She then welcomed Dr. Mercy Kamau to present the Agri-food system project goals, research study objectives and the expected outputs from the workshop.

Dr. Mercy Kamau, Research Fellow-Tegemeo.

Good morning, I welcome all of you, we are happy to have you here. During our research we spoke to individual farmers and to representatives of farmer groups but today we are here to hear from all of you. In today's workshop we shall talk about governance in food security initiatives. We shall discuss where the power to make or influence important decisions regarding food security initiatives lies, the local community's ability to influence decision making and resource allocation and how community's influence can be enhanced so that they benefit from programmes and projects in their area. I am here to speak about the agri food systems project whose aim is to reach the poor and the vulnerable in society. The objective of the project are:

1. Identify and promote local innovations and adaptation strategies that work for the poor rural men and women to cope with food security vulnerabilities.
2. Adapt and scale up technology and **market innovations** for promoting orphan crops that enhance food security, increase incomes and ecosystem integrity in selected areas of Malawi, Kenya and Uganda.
3. Analyze and **promote specific policies and governance** mechanisms for sustainable agri-food systems.
4. Determine mechanisms for scaling up agri-food systems and sustainable agriculture

From today's workshop the output what is expected

- *Introduce Agri-food Systems Project*
- *Share findings from a recent study on Governance*
- *Get Feedback from Stakeholders*
- *Chart a way forward/Action plan*

The chair thanked Dr. Mercy for her presentation and indicated that results from the study were to be presented in the next session. She then welcomed Mrs. Angelina Njeru DAO Kirinyaga and the Chair of Stakeholder Forum to present the food security initiatives in the district.

Session II: Presentation on the Food Security Initiatives in Kirinyaga West

Mrs. Angelina Njeru, District Agricultural Officer

Am happy and honoured to be here today, more so to be associated with Egerton University where I undertook my Bsc degree. We have several issues here at Kirinyaga West concerning food security and which cannot be addressed by an individual. That's why we have a Stakeholder meeting in order to discuss these issues together and come up with way out. As a ministry we are working towards ensuring that everyone here is food secure and that we have a surplus to sell. However in our quest to attain this, we are constrained by a number of factors which include: climate variability, high cost of input like fertilizers and seeds, pests and diseases, over reliance on maize, storage issues, extension where we have only 19 staff serving almost 20000 farmers, poor research-extension-farmer linkages and lack of demand-driven extension on the side of the farmers.

To address these issues, the Ministry has been training the farmers and encouraging them to produce enough and not sell all the produce. The Ministry has also has some programmes/ initiatives geared towards attainment of food security which include: Subsidized fertilizers and we are lucky to have a deport here at Sagana where the farmers can access the same upon recommendation from the Ministry; Promotion of orphaned crops like sorghum, sweet potatoes, cassava etc; Promotion of water harvesting especially in the dry areas through construction of water pans; promotion of horticultural crop production; improved storage facilities and other technologies like growing of upland rice which is being promoted i.e. Nerica rice; Encouraging farmers to practice agro-forestry; promotion of cereal banks among the farmers; Encouraging adoption of early maturing crop varieties because of climate change and finally having a supportive agriculture extension system.

In conclusion, attainment of food security is not a mere dream but we can actually achieve it if we work together and cooperate since the success of our farmers is our success too as a Ministry. Thank you so much.

The chair thanked the DAO for her presentation and invited the district stakeholder chair Mr. Githae for his presentations.

Mr Githae, Chairman Stakeholder Forum

Before I continue, I want to appreciate the Prof. together with his team, the farmers and all officials, all protocols observed. Thank you all. The Stakeholder Forum is the voice of farmers because it is a forum where they forward their agricultural related challenges for example; high cost of inputs such as fertilizers, seeds and chemicals. For instance, some fertilizers are not up to standard and because some farmers may lack the knowhow of the right proportions they are required to apply to the crops, these fertilizers may end up affecting farmers themselves or their crops. Another issue affecting our farmers is to do with marketing of the produce. Some of the produce receives very low prices that are not even able to cover the production costs incurred. Another problem is exploitation of our farmers by brokers. Generally, farmers face a lot of challenges but we are happy that we have this team of experts whom we will continue working with to enhance our agricultural activities through helping our farmers deal with some of the production and marketing challenges they face. We are also happy about what this team is doing in promotion of orphaned crops to curb over reliance on maize. So we want to welcome you to come and do your research in our district. Thank you.

The chair thanked the presenter and introduced the chair of the next session who was to be DAO Mrs Njeru.

Session III: Presentation on the Governance Structure in Food Security in the District.

The chair invited the presentation from Tegemeo Institute. She informed the participants that after the presentation the floor will be opened for questions with regards to all the presentations made even in earlier sessions. Mr. Raphael Gitau presented on behalf of the research team.

See ppt in pdf.

Session IV: Plenary Discussion and the Way Forward

Mrs. Angelina Njeru, DAO

The chair thanked the presenter and opened the floor for questions and clarification.

Question from Mr. Chege, DO

Thanks, according to the outcomes, it seems like farmers have a lot of representation and trust in the groups in the village level, but as you go up to the higher levels, represented diminishes, what could be the problem?

Dr. Mercy Kamau, Research Fellow, Tegemeo Institute

It is not that farmers are totally dissatisfied, but there is some level of satisfaction, though at lower levels (village) farmers are more satisfied with their representation than at higher levels.

Response by Mr. Raphael Gitau, Research Fellow-Tegemeo

As from the presentation, the farmers' perception is that as you move up from the village to the district level, their influence/voice becomes low. Maybe the farmers themselves should tell us they think that their influence diminishes as you move up.

Response by Mr. Gitau, farmer

The problem is to do with communication between the farmers and the offices concerned. There is a problem at the grassroots because once a project is put up, marketing becomes a problem. Farmers maybe willing to take up the project, but question the issue of marketing.

Farmer

On my I feel that in the village, farmers are more involved in the committees and therefore their representation is high. But at higher levels, only a few people are chosen to go and represent the farmers which could be because of lack of funds.

Farmer

At the village level, some of the committees are left out to represent farmers at higher levels and this could explain why there is low farmers representation at the higher levels. On the other hand if though they are chosen to go to meetings at the district level, they are not given a chance to speak and therefore the farmers' issues are not addressed.

Daniel Kerimo Mwangi, farmer

What is actually happening on the ground is that when people see project taking place, they assume that it belong to the agricultural officers and when projects fail, agricultural officers are always blamed. The community do not own the project e.g. in Kirinyaga West, we have many demonstration farms, but the farmers do not own them. I recommend that agricultural officers involve farmers when doing demonstration. We are happy that Tegemeo has brought this project to this area which can be likened to Southern Sudan.

Mrs. Angelina Njeru, DAO

Kerimo has talked about a very important issue on the ownership of projects and demonstrations. Can we get a woman farmer to speak on the same issue.

Mr. Meti, DAEO-Kirinyaga West

I want to challenge the women who are here. On the issue of food security, we have a problem. When we tell our women to cook for us the traditional dishes like sweet potato, cassava, and arrow roots for breakfast, they normally say that the children will not accept them and they will opt for a loaf of bread. When it comes to bananas they normally say that it will soil their hands. Therefore, our women have failed in using the orphaned crops like cowpeas, sorghum, and millet for food.

Mrs. Patricia, Home economics officer-Kirinyaga West

As we have observed, there is a problem because many farmers don't know how to utilize the various crops we have. For example, we keep teaching farmers on various ways of utilizing pumpkin for making *chapati* and *mandazi*, and sorghum in making sorghum pilau. We also teach them on how to make a balanced diet using the orphaned crops, e.g. mixing sorghum pilau and cowpeas; we also encourage them to use leafy traditional vegetables which are drought resistant. So the major problem we have is in utilization.

Mr. Githae, Chairman Stakeholder Forum

Thanks a lot, in my opinion, I think we have a western mentality which has destroyed our lifestyle. People think that if you don't dress, talk or eat in certain ways then you are not westernized. We have dropped our culture while thinking that the western culture is the best. I want to say that our native traditional foods are very strong, balanced and healthy. We should therefore drop the western mentality and stick to our culture. We should teach our people about the importance of the traditional staples.

Ruth Njeri

I want to comment on what the chairman has talked about, our extension officer are few and people in the village sit back waiting for their services. Therefore, farmers should understand about demand driven approach, if people understand it, then they are likely to benefit. Agricultural policies have been neglected, and liberalization has made people not to think ahead to some extent. The National Cereals and Produce Board only buy from large scale farmers and so the small scale farmers sit at home with their produce.

Paul Wanjohi

I would want to thank DVC. He has indicated that Egerton University process and sells yoghurt. Our group is involved in processing yoghurt though we have a lot of challenges. We have a

problem of storage especially during the rainy season when the milk supply increases and therefore farmers are left stranded with their milk because of lack of markets and storage facilities. In our value addition efforts, we are constrained by lack of enough funds and marketing. We therefore request that you teach us on production, and post harvest handling techniques. We also request you to advise us on the possible source of funding.

Mr. Sira, Livestock Officer

We have come from very far with these farmers because it was the first group to be involved with NALEP program. There has been a lot of misunderstanding among the leaders. We have offered them training on leadership and I hope that they are one step ahead. Concerning marketing and storage, the group requires coolers but because they don't have funds to buy them, we have taught them on value addition as they await for funding. We have also linked them to groups like Brookside which can help them market their products.

Mary Mwale, Office of the Prime Minister

This research has focus so much on farmers and food security, and we want to say that the government is very concerned in laying down strategies to ensure food security. It has given you all the experts, like the home economics officer to show you how to utilize the various foods. Representation of farmers from the village up to the district level is very crucial because, if you have an issue and you communicate it to the DC, then it will reach the office of the president. DAO sends the food security updates to the higher offices which are then shared among the stakeholders. From this report the needy people are identified and issued with relief food. Kirinyaga people are lucky because unlike other parts of the country they are able to produce their own food. It is therefore surprising that you face marketing challenges yet there are many people in the country who are starving.

Question by farmers

The ministry has been teaching as on the ways on increasing agricultural productivity; however the DAO has stated that farmers should not produce if they don't know where they can market their produce. Now what should the farmers do?

Response by DAO

What I am trying to say is that we should produce but we should be aware of where to market our produce.

After the plenary discussion, the chair thanked all the participants for their contribution and informed the participants that it was time to draw an action plan or way forward given the recommendations from the research finding and also from issues raised during the plenary discussion.

See the way forward matrix in pdf.

After charting the way forward, the chair thanked the participants and reverted back to the facilitator Mr. Raphael Gitau who thanked her for chairing the two sessions. He then invited the Director Dr. Mary K. Mathenge to give the closing remarks.

Dr. Mary Mathenge, Director-Tegemeo

Thank you so much, I am very happy for the good work that we have done today. It is now our responsibility to take up what we have received from this meeting. Both the public and the private sector have been using the top down approach in addressing farmers' issues, but you now have the opportunity to find the solution to our own problems. The decentralization system has been very beneficial and we should use the chances that we have through the Stakeholder Forum, KENFAP, FADC, and NGOs. We should start implementing immediately some of the recommendations given today like increasing membership and annual meetings. As individuals we have a responsibility of getting actively involved in committee meetings to ensure that our voices are heard. We can start this at individual level while also working to form a strong collective action that can improve our welfare. On the issue of climate change and drought, we should come up with mechanisms of addressing these problem e.g. adoption of drought resistant varieties. We have marketing opportunities for products from these crops especially in supermarkets. Let me take this chance on behalf of Egerton University to thank all of you for finding time to come here today. You are very knowledgeable and lively farmers. I appreciate, DO for being with us throughout the meeting, the DAO for facilitating the better part of the meeting, the chair of the Stakeholder Forum, Mary Mwale for your advice and providing us with the information on government initiatives on food security, the DVC Prof. Mathooko, Dr. Mercy Kamau, Gitau and Moses for the research work they have been doing with the farmers, IDRC for funding the project, KARI our partner - I specially want to recognize Dr. Gitari from KARI Embu. Also let me take this opportunity to thank the farmers without whom nothing could have been done. We will all continue working together. I now invite the chair of the Stakeholder Forum to give a vote of thanks.

Mr. Githae, Chairman Stakeholder Forum

I thank you all. Today I have seen wonders! We are privileged to have experts with us like the Professor, the Director Dr. Mary, Dr. Mercy, MoA officials, the DO, and farmers. These are people who really matter and it shows that they are concerned about us. Agriculture has been regarded as dirty work but these people have showed us that farming can actually be sweet. I thank you all for your patience and contribution and for making this day successful. I think Madam Director this will not be the end of our meeting but you will be coming many times. Thanks a lot and God bless you.

Chief, Mr. Karunditu

Our visitors from Egerton, officials from the ministry of agriculture, stakeholders, farmers good evening. I am a chief in this area and I tell you this work is not easy especially when leading poor and hungry people. Diversification is very important and people should not just depend on a few crops. I believe in that leadership should be done in a practical way and therefore as a leader I have planted a lot of cassava, I rear fish, and have planted fruit trees. In this are you cannot succeed as an individual, therefore team work is very crucial. When I became the chief here, poverty levels and insecurity was very high but after working as a team things have improved. We have been working together with the agricultural field officers, public health officers and the local government. Agriculture is a good economic activity that everyone should embrace, we also encourage capacity building and urge farmers to make use of the marketing opportunities available. I thank you all and may God bless you.

The Director thanked the chief for his remarks and then invited Mr. Maina to close with a word of prayer.

ANNEX 1: WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Making Agri-food System Work for the Rural Poor
County Hotel, Sagana
March 11th, 2011

Programme

Time	Activity
9.00 – 9:30 am	Registration
Session I	Welcome and Introduction Chairing: Director Tegemeo Institute
9:30 – 10:30 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction: All participants• Welcoming Remarks: Local Administration• Opening Remarks: Director, Tegemeo Institute• Overall Goal and Workshop Objectives/Outputs: Tegemeo Institute
Session II	Presentation on the Food Security Initiatives in Kirinyaga Chairing: Tegemeo Institute
10.30 – 11:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food Security Initiatives in the District : DAO, Kirinyaga West District• Role of Stakeholders in Food Security Initiatives: Chair, District Stakeholder Forum
11.00 – 11.30 am	Tea Break
Session II	Presentation on the Governance Structure in Food Security in the District-Tegemeo Institute Chairing: DAO, Kirinyaga West
11.30 -12:30 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific Objectives and Methods of the Study:

	<p style="text-align: center;">Tegemeo Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings/Results from the Governance Study : <p style="text-align: center;">Tegemeo Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q & A
Session IV	Plenary Discussion and Way Forward Chairing: DAO, Kirinyaga West
12.30 – 1:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenary Discussion & Way Forward: <p style="text-align: center;">All participants</p>
1:00 -1.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing Remarks <p style="text-align: center;">Deputy Vice Chancellor-Research & Extension, Egerton University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote of thanks <p style="text-align: center;">Chair, District Stakeholder Forum</p>
1.15 pm	Lunch & Departure

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NO	NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSTAL ADDRESS	PHONE NO	EMAIL ADDRESS
1	Buri, Maureen	Youth Leader Kirinyaga County Youth Association	23 Sagana	720238898	burimaurence@gmail.com
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13	Karunditu, Samuel N.	Chief	249 Sagana	721305387	
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19	Kirei, Benson M.	Gataini Catchment Nursery	55 Karatina	725627508	
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28	Murimi, Bernard	Kibirigwi Tree Nursery	235 Kirinyaga	724119732	
29	Murimi, John	ACK, Baricho	13 Baricho	723698721	
30	Muriu, Nicholas W.	Upper Nguguini Farmers	221 Karatina	729095976	
31	Muriuki, Zakary K.	Mukami Dairy Self Help Group	593 Karatina	721529652	
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38	Ngari, Susan C.	Upper Nguguini Farmers	1458-10101 Karatina	721792744	
39	Njambutu, Peter M.	Karingaini Kilimo Biashara Self Help Group	556 Karatina	724124612	
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