



SmallHolder Tea and Coffee Production and Its Impact on Food Production and Living Standards in Kenya



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Research Problem

There is evident low living standards and high poverty levels in tea and coffee growing areas in Central Kenya. This is due to a decline in these crops' prices, increasing family sizes, decreasing farm size, and drastic changes in climatic conditions leading to general poor agricultural production.

Objectives

- determine and compare the impact of cash crops on living standards and on accessibility of resources under different farm and family conditions.
- determine the impact of economic diversification on living standards and define potentials of better livelihood among the different groups of farmers.
- develop, test and simulate future development strategies on resource use and management to cope with cash crops uncertainties as well as assess the impact of these strategies on living standards.

Methodology

a) Data base

- Family survey from 120 farm families in two different cash crop zones using standardised questionnaires.
- Key persons interviews at village level
- Secondary data from tea and coffee factories, published statistics from government ministries and central bureau of statistics

b) Analysis

- Classification using hierarchical cluster analysis and socio-economic analysis of farming systems as in the conceptual framework

c) Future development analysis

- Farm farming modelling to measure impact of changes using multi-periodical programming models

Main Issues or Problems

- Reduced and/or no income from cash crops
- Reduced farm size thus less food production
- Large, poorly educated and 'inactive' family size
- Heavy debts and unemployment

Family Survey Data

Keys person survey data

Analysis

- Resource analysis
- Farm and family income analysis
- Gross margin analysis
- Health and education analysis
- Dependency of resource owner analysis
- Farm family models

- Descriptive and Situation analysis
- Comparative analysis
- Resource analysis at village level

Strategies and Impact analysis

- Reduce land subdivisions
- Increase drought resistant and traditional foods
- Short period variety crops
- Farming in other districts
- Cash generating group activities

- Regulate land owners' dependency
- Less government influence in farmers co-operatives
- Regulate 'small' cash lending
- Farmers' groups
- Youth income generating activities

Living standards and Food Production

Fig 2: Conceptual Framework

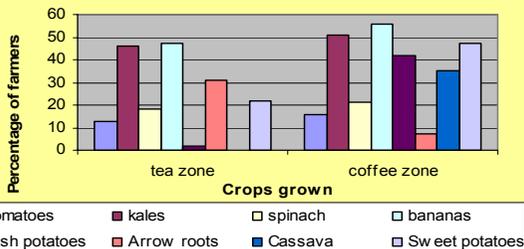


Fig 1: Food crop diversification in two study zones in Kenya in 2004

Current Results

Due to poor payment, coffee farmers practise higher level of food diversification growing more traditional and commercial vegetables (Fig 1)

Expected Result

Further analysis will

- Determine how smallholder tea and coffee production affect living standards and accessibility of resources under different farm and family conditions.
- Determine the impact of economic diversification on living standards and define potential of better livelihood.
- Application of models and testing impact of the strategies on living standards

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