

Population growth as a driver of land use change in Pserum

Over-view

There has been a steady population growth in Chepareria Sub County over the last 20 years. In line with national growth rates, the population can be expected to further increase and double until the year 2050. Increasing human population-pressure potentially triggers land use practices and dynamics over time. Using household interviews and group discussions, we aimed to explore how community members in Pserum perceive population change. Both positive and negative impacts of population change on land-use and socio-economic practices were analyzed. Further we attempted to gain insight into the role of family-planning as factor controlling population growth and alternative strategies to mitigate negative effects of population growth.

Findings

- Population in the area has grown seven fold in the last 35 years leading to decrease in land size per person due to subdivisions or to land-sale to cover school fees.
- The average number of children per household increased from 3 to 8-10.
- Mothers taking children to hospitals for vaccine and treatment has led to over 95% child survival rate, in spite the increase of waterborne diseases due to population growth.
- Number of livestock per household has decreased by 70%.
- There has been intensification and diversification of agricultural practices due to enclosures and the need to maximize the use of the smaller pieces of land.
- Off-farm activities like boda bodas and food kiosks have increased.
- Enclosures are reported to improve animal health and include the possibility to sell pasture as additional mean of income.
- Enclosures are connected to substantial sociological changes (positive and negative), which need to be considered when promoting enclosures.
- The need for family planning is emphasized by both men and women, but reliable information on family planning is missing.
- Women fear negative-side effects of the use of contraceptives.

Recommendations at community level

-forming of groups and collaboration when marketing newly produced goods could lead to an optimization of positive effects of land-use changes

-It is recommended to cross-check information on family planning one gets from neighbors with health workers. Negative side-effects can vary between women and can be decreased by individual adaptations



THANK YOU, we hope we have enriched your lives as you have made ours rich. Alfred and Rebecca.