

**AN ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL  
EXTENSION POLICY REFORMS (2001) AND ITS INFLUENCE ON  
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AMONG SMALL-SCALE  
FARMERS IN SIAYA AND KILIFI DISTRICTS, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

The Kenyan economy relies on agricultural production and tourism industry with the agricultural sector contributing up to 26% of its GDP. The performance of the sector majorly depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of the agricultural extension services. The decline in agricultural production in the late 1990s to 2000 was associated with unavailable and inaccessible farming related appropriate agricultural technologies and information to farmers. This was attributed to the ineffective and inefficient extension service delivery system. To address this and reverse the downward production trend, the National Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP) was formulated and implemented to provide guidelines and regulations on how to improve agricultural extension services delivery. Despite its initial indication of better production results in some parts of Kenya, small-scale farmers in other parts of Kenya still experienced low agricultural food production. The purpose of this study was to assess the implementation of NAEP reform and its influence on agricultural production among small-scale farmers for household food security and poverty alleviation. The study was carried out in Siaya and Kilifi districts. Ex-post facto survey design was used. A Multistage sampling procedure which constituted purposive, proportionate, simple and snowball sampling was used to select the study areas and the respondents. Purposive sampling was used to select the two Districts, the four divisions and the focal areas for the study. A combination of Purposive and snowball sampling were used to select nine (9) policy makers, fifteen (15) administrators proportionately distributed at the Ministry of Agriculture headquarters, provincial and district levels in the study areas. A saturated sample of all the extension workers within the divisions of the study areas was included in the study. Proportionate random sampling was then used to select three hundred (300) households from the sampling frame obtained from the divisions. Three interview schedules, one questionnaire, an observation schedule and two focus group discussion guides were used to collect data. Data was analysed using the SPSS for windows. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise, describe data while t test was used to analyse data at 0.05% significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The results show why, despite the NAEP implementation, food security and poverty problems still persisted in the two districts as a result of small-scale farmers' inability to adopt technologies due to prohibitive costs and change of quality in crop varieties, unsustainable access to extension service due to disintegration of farmer group and inability to demand for extension services. The study findings are useful to Ministry of Agriculture's policy makers in developing new agricultural extension policy for increased agricultural food production; to agricultural extension service providers and farmers in understanding why the reforms failed to increase agricultural production and areas that need to be addressed to improve extension services.

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