AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION ON DEVELOPMENT IN MARANI SUB-COUNTY, KISII COUNTY, KENYA

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

By

George Reuben Gisore

This Dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Master of Development Studies (MDS) from St. Paul's University.

September, 2014

Print to PDF without this message by purchasing novaPDF (http://www.novapdf.com/)

ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to address an outstanding research gap on the impact of environmental degradation on development in Marani Sub-County, Kisii County, Kenya. The study considered the socio-economic activities carried out in Marani Sub-County and factors contributing to environmental degradation in the predominantly rural sub-county. The study reviewed the impact of environmental degradation on various facets of development such as human development, economic development, poverty reduction, infrastructure development and on women. The research used the descriptive design which was considered appropriate to establish the situation as it is in the limited geographical area of Marani Sub-County. The study used stratified sampling and allocated respondents proportionate with the population of each of the 9 wards. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire with structured and open-ended questions. Focus group discussions handled the open-ended questions of the research questionnaire. The Data was analysed using descriptive statistical techniques (frequencies and percentages) with the aids of SPSS version 20.0. The study revealed that the majority of the residents engaged in agricultural activities and were heavily dependent on the natural environment to a great degree in most of their socio-economic activities. The residents indicated a great appreciation of the environmental goods and services that support agricultural production, supply fresh water for drinking, irrigation and industrial purposes, a source of timber, food, firewood and fibre. The study also revealed that the residents are aware of the factors contributing to environmental degradation but in many instances indicated that some of these factors are due to activities meant to ensure their survival. Poverty was perceived as both a cause and result of environmental degradation. The residents expressed concern regarding the attitudes of government institutions regarding their ineffective approach to citizen education on environmental laws and their inaction as common public resources (CPRs) were appropriated by private individuals, denying the public access to water and crucial forest resources which had been set aside by the colonial government. The study recommends a participatory approach to environmental governance and sustainable community settlement programmes to forestall the perpetuation of the unsustainable practices in the sub-county from manifesting into a full blown humanitarian crisis.

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Print to PDF without this message by purchasing novaPDF (http://www.novapdf.com/)