THE IMPACT OF HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN AMONG THE POKOT OF ALALE DIVISION, WEST POKOT COUNTY

Pamela Awuor Oliech – M.A.

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Pacificah Okemwa
2. Dr. Casper Masiga

The study examined the impact of household food insecurity on the status and roles of women in Alale Division, Pokot North District, West Pokot County. The study was based on the premise that hunger and famine seem to have been feminised as women and girls are compelled to deviate from their indigenous roles of food preparation to food provision for the household. The objectives addressed include; the traditional role of women, men boys and girls in food production, outline of programmes put in place to address food insecurity, effects of food insecurity and attempt to eradicate food security in Alale Division, Pokot North District, West Pokot County. The Pearsons gender relation framework guided the study. The research targeted households, opinion leaders and non-governmental organizations. A sample size of 100 respondents was used. Secondary data was obtained through library research. Primary data was collected by the use of questionnaires and interview schedules. Data analysis was done using qualitative and quantitative techniques. These were tabulated and analysed using descriptive statistics including frequency tables and percentages. This research established that most women engage in roles which were preserves of men like basic subsistence farming, mining of gold and small scale business as their main role in supplementing household food provision. The contribution of boys and girls in household food supply is significant compared to men, as women bear the major burden. The government and non-governmental organisations also play a major role in addressing food insecurity in Alale Division. The study therefore recommends that the government and other development partners sink more boreholes for purpose of irrigating farms all year round. The community should be exposed to modern food crop growing techniques through workshops, seminars, as opposed to heavy reliance relief food handouts from NGO’s and churches. The findings are of great importance to the community of Alale Division as it brings to the fore alternative measures which have been successfully applied in similar situations elsewhere in containing household food insecurity. The government may derive important clues on food insecurity in Alale and re-evaluate the future of relief food distribution as a key contingency measure of mitigation.