LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION AS A DROUGHT RESPONSE STRATEGY IN CHYULU-AMBOSELI ECOSYSTEM, KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA

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A Research Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfilment for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Environmental Planning and Management in the School of Environmental Studies of Kenyatta University

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Abstract

Frequent drought in Kenya's dry lands has raised uncertainty about the future of pastoralism as a livelihood practice. This is more so in arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya where recent droughts have forced farmers to consider alternative livelihoods. This study will be based in the Chyulu-Amboseli ecosystem, in Kajiado County. The aim of the study is to assess the impacts of the shifting livelihood strategies on pastoralists' capacity to manage drought. The specific objectives are to (i) examine the biophysical impacts of drought on the Chyulu-Amboseli ecosystem, (ii) examine the socio-economic impacts of drought on the inhabitants of Chyulu-Amboseli ecosystem, and, (iii) analyse the effectiveness of adaptation strategies in Chyulu-Amboseli ecosystem on household drought resilience. A cross-section household survey will be used for this study. Data on drought and its impact on biophysical system will be obtained through observation mapping using remote sensing techniques. The study population include all habitants of Imbirikani Group Ranch. These will be stratified according to ecological zones from which a sample of 228 farm households will be drawn using proportional stratified sampling. Socio-economic data will be collected by use of a questionnaire, focused group discussions and key informant interviews. Content analysis, vegetation index and propensity Score Matching techniques will be used to analyze qualitative and quantitative data respectively. It is expected that the findings will be important in understanding the linkages between drought, pasture availability and local livelihoods. In addition, it is expected that the study will highlight the effectiveness of community responses to drought to inform the design of adaptation strategies in the area.