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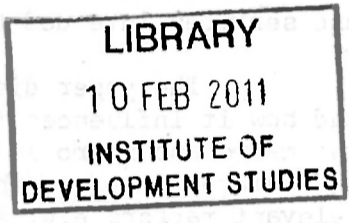
THE ROLE OF PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY IN
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN KISUMU DISTRICT
DISTRICT - WESTERN KENYA

by
Patrick O. Alila

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INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
P.O. Box 30197
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a partial analysis of data collected for a study examining the ways in which agricultural development is influenced by a public bureaucracy. In particular as the latter (a) seeks to convey technical information to the rural farmer and (b) to supply him with goods and services intended to enhance his agricultural productivity.

The paper discusses government policy on agricultural development and how it influences the distribution of resources and services both at the macro and micro levels. It describes, as a background to our present and future analyses, the research site, Kisumu district, highlighting relevant factors e.g. ecology, land utilisation, farm characteristics etc. It also describes the methodology which yielded our stratified farmer sample.

The major finding from farmer responses on the distribution of goods and services comprising visits by agricultural staff to farmers, distribution of crop demonstration, loan distribution etc. is that they disproportionately benefit the better farmers. Further analysis is intended to focus not only on the role of the public bureaucracy in this skewed distribution but also to suggest possible organisational arrangements to reach the disadvantaged peasant farmer to stem urban migration and indirectly urban unemployment by broadening the scope of agricultural development.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY IN AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN KISUMU DISTRICT-WESTERN KENYA

INTRODUCTION

In this paper is presented a preliminary analysis of part of the data collected for a study of "The Role of Public Bureaucracy in Agricultural Development in Kisumu District-western Kenya" conducted from the month of March, 1974 to March 1975. The major sources of the data were first a sample of farmers in the district, secondly, field staff, district, provincial as well as headquarters officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, lastly, secondary sources.

It should be noted, to put the present analysis into context, that the overall study is examining the ways in which agricultural development is influenced by a public bureaucracy. In particular as the latter (a) seeks to convey technical information to the rural farmer and (b) to supply him with goods and services intended to enhance his agricultural productivity.

Three broad hypotheses listed below were tested to furnish us with information on the foregoing question posed for the study. The theoretical context in which they were formulated included statements on the institutional development of the public bureaucracy, its internal functioning as an organisation and external relationships with the environment.¹

- I. The bureaucracy's relationship to its environment in Kenya is conditioned by two major variables
 - (i) criteria determining bureaucratic recruitment: ethnic representation, impersonal technical criteria and/or patronage etc.
 - (ii) the political and/or ideological needs of the regime
- II. The distribution of goods and services among local farmers disproportionately benefits local notables who are owners of the larger potentially more productive blocks of land.
- III. The pattern of distribution of goods and services gives rise to a patron-client relationship which is disadvantageous to the majority of the rural farmers. The resulting effect is increased inequality and hence rural stratification.

1. Alila, O.P., "The Role of Public Bureaucracy in Agricultural Development in Kisumu District-western Kenya", A Research Proposal to the African American Scholars Council, Washington D.C. 1973.

We shall discuss here government policy on agricultural development and how it influences the distribution of goods and services to farmers drawing mainly from our data collected from farmers in the field and relevant material from secondary sources. The paper is in three main parts dealing first with the basis of and present government policy on agriculture, secondly the strategy, scope and methodology used in the study, and lastly the distribution of goods and services at the local level premised on macro level policy influences.

I

POLICY OUTLINE

In examining the role of a government organisation or suborganisation in any activity it is useful, as will be attempted below, to spell out the relevant policy on the area under analysis. The rationale for such an approach is that government action, although this may vary, for economic as compared to social amenities activity for example, does not easily lend itself to a cost-benefit analysis. Hence the use of policy pronouncements as the major criteria in evaluating government performance. In our analysis of agricultural development this calls for identifying the pertinent government economic policies and the measures being taken to realise these policies.

Kenya has since "Uhuru" concentrated on three major economic objectives in devising a strategy for development. First, to achieve a fast overall growth rate. Secondly, to undertake Kenyanisation of the economy. Thirdly, to ensure that the benefits of development are distributed equitably. The major themes of action which emerged from a formulation of these objectives are briefly, strengthening of the administration machinery of planning and development; creation of new institutions to achieve policy objectives; manpower development and employment; self-help; and transfer of productive assets to Kenyans.²

There has been remarkable success in the first objective of achieving rapid economic growth. The Gross Domestic Product grew at an average rate of about 7% a year between 1964 and 1972, and few developing countries can better this kind of performance over an eight-year period. Such a rapid rate of growth has meant that real per capita incomes have increased significantly since Independence, despite one of the highest rates of population growth in the world.³ A major factor explaining this success is that the Government has on the one hand created a politically stable atmosphere necessary for a high level of private investment, and on the other hand has exercised consistent and generally sound management of the economy.⁴

2. 1974-78 Kenya Development Plan, pp 34-35.

3. Per capita increase £20 to £43.4; population growth rate 3.5% per annum.

4. World Bank Commission, KENYA: Into the Second Decade, Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1975 p.5

The second objective of Kenyanisation has proved a mixed blessing due to the relatively greater amount of emphasis placed on it. It has achieved its major aims of first, increasing African control of the administration and the economy, secondly, removing the politically more embarrassing vestiges of colonial rule. The former is clearly demonstrated by the fact that in overall quantitative terms, manpower shortages are now concentrated in a few categories of skilled workers and highly specialised occupations. Kenyanisation has been particularly most rapid in the public sector described by the Ndegwa Commission as an "extremely rapid and ill-prepared process of Africanisation....."⁵ The latter has involved confronting conspicuous problems including first, the concentration of economic power and wealth in the hands of noncitizens; secondly, the incidence of large scale European farms and estates; thirdly, the predominance of Asian traders in the rural areas in particular; lastly, the overwhelming dependence of the civil service administration on expatriate officers.

However, while the thrust of Government's attack on distribution understandably focused on the rectification of the more obvious racial imbalances it apparently sometimes diverted attention from the underlying causes of poverty and tended to entrench income inequalities and inappropriate standards of the past. There were other instances of basic skewed distribution now becoming increasingly obvious which required attention right from the outset if at all any significant progress was to be made on the third objective of distributing the benefits of development equitably. In the first place the urban areas had already drawn far ahead of the rural areas in their standard of hiring and amenities, and even within the rural areas themselves there were marked differences in living conditions.

Secondly, some of the people in high potential areas of the highlands were starting to enjoy reasonable living standards while those in the northern provinces of Kenya, to take an opposite extreme case, were at a bare subsistence level. Thirdly, with regard specifically to the wage earners, due to the inherited skewed wage structure, skilled workers ended up being paid ten to fifteen times the wage of unskilled workers. Yet even the unskilled wage earner was starting to emerge as a privileged member of society in the distribution of benefits, when compared with the majority of the rural population.

The Kenya government as evidenced by its policy statements cited below has consequently undertaken to launch a determined attack on the inequitable distribution of income, and to ensure that the benefits of independent

5. Ndegwa Commission.

development would be more fairly allocated. This has mainly resulted from a realisation of the fact that in spite of the rapid growth of the economy, as noted above, the problems associated with a rapidly growing population but emanating from disparity in rural urban development - unemployment and income disparities - have become more apparent than they were in 1963.⁶

The major consequence for policy has been a shift in focus of development strategy to rural development. This can be dated back to the 1966 Kericho Conference⁷ although it was given official blessing later, first in the 1970-74 and then the 1974-78 Development Plan.

The 1970-74 Development Plan stressing the role of rural development and agriculture stated that "The key strategy for this Plan is to direct an increasing share of the total resources available to the nation towards the rural areas."⁸ A remarkable move in this connection was the launching of the Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP) in 1970/71 in order to test strategies of national significance for accelerating rural development throughout the country.⁹

The 1974-78 Development Plan statement is more precise and further points out the policy direction that is the prime concern of this analysis.

"The attainment of the fundamental goal of this Plan of an improvement in the distribution of national income, with faster rural development and faster growth in development opportunities, will be dependent in very large measure on the attainment of the particular goals that have been set for the agricultural sector, since it is from agriculture that more than 90% of the population will be primarily dependent for their livelihood....."¹⁰

Thus agricultural development is not only an alternative but also a major policy priority in tackling the much wider problem of rural development which will in turn facilitate coming to grips with the problems of maldistribution of income and employment.

6. Development Plan op cit p.1
7. Sheffield, J.R. ed Conference on Education, Employment and Rural and Rural Development, 1966 Univ. College NRB.
8. 1970-74 Kenya Development Plan, p.2
9. Ibid.
10. 1974-78 Plan op cit p.197

Furthermore there are a number of agricultural goals that have been accordingly formulated specifically for the development of the sector worth enumerating.

- (i) to achieve 6.7% target rate of marketed production through intensified land use;
- (ii) to improve the distribution of rural income by obtaining a significant increase in the proportion of farmers who obtain a cash income from their land;
- (iii) to devise methods of developing the less favoured areas and to promote a more even development among different areas of the country;
- (iv) to increase the opportunities for employment in the agricultural sector;
- (v) to improve standards of nutrition in the rural areas;
- (vi) to increase agricultural exports
- (vii) to more than double development expenditures in agriculture compared with the previous 5 years;
- (viii) to complete the Kenyanisation of large-scale mixed farms and to make significant progress towards Kenyanisation of ranches and plantations.¹¹

To achieve the foregoing goals the most important feature of agricultural development strategy envisaged will be to increase the rate of public expenditure on programmes aimed at helping the large numbers of farmers to intensify production. These include programmes such as agricultural extension, training and research, farm credit and input supply programmes, land adjudication and registration, disease control, cooperative development and marketing. The implication is to give highest priority to programmes aimed at developing the smallholder farming areas.¹²

It is a fundamental aim of the strategy, quite evident from the agricultural goals as well, to achieve a well balanced pattern of development involving all areas of the country particularly those mentioned in category (b) and described as,

"high potential areas at medium altitudes or at the Coast.
Most of these are also heavily populated but the prospects for agricultural development at present are less favourable

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid

because it is not possible to produce such a wide range of valuable cash crops in these areas as in the first category".¹³

While a great deal of progress has been made in the high potential areas at high altitudes i.e. the first or (a) category referred to above, less progress has been made in the above described areas. The main reason given is that appropriate crop varieties and techniques were not available. Development in these areas will, therefore, involve first, the adoption of more efficient and labour intensive methods leading to increased output of products such as tea, hybrid maize, pyrethrum, horticultural crops, sugar and dairy products. Secondly, devotion of more attention to development of better crop varieties and improved methods of husbandry to promote more rapid development.

It is worth noting at this point that the outlined contemplated course of action closely corresponds to our view of development. Development is here defined as the acquisition by a society, undergoing structural change, of new characteristics as well as increased capabilities through the process of resource allocation and its close concomitant resource generation which is the structural change most salient to development.¹⁴ The Kenya government has specified new programmes for distribution of goods and services aimed at the large number of smallholders particularly in hereto-fore neglected areas to achieve a fairer distribution of benefits and an enhanced level of resource generation in the wake of agricultural development.

However, certain key questions arise that can provide us with a lead on the possible fate of these policies for development generally and agricultural development in particular. What are the effects of policy shift on present and future trends of agricultural development? Are more resources actually being directed to the rural areas? How are the intended beneficiaries of the policy shift fairing? Are existing gaps between different locales and/or individuals being narrowed, widened, or are new ones to the contrary being created? To what extent is the mechanism for the distribution of the goods and services suitable for the task at hand?

Admittedly, to provide satisfactory answers to all these questions is beyond the scope of a single study. There will mainly be, therefore, an attempt made to shed light on aspects of these questions to the extent permitted by our data which were collected at the micro level from one district located in the priority category areas. This by no means precludes macro level references whenever possible and appropriate.

13. Ibid

14. Kyong-Dong Kim, "Toward a Sociological Theory of Development: A Structural Perspective," Rural Sociology, Vol 38, No.4, 1973.
W.F. Ilchman and Uphoff, The Political Economy of Change, Univ. of California Press, 1969.

II

RESEARCH STRATEGY SCOPE AND METHODS
STRATEGY

In his study de Wilde (1967)¹⁵ identified Luoland as one of the four areas representing the principal types of ecological and human environmental conditions encountered in Kenya. These areas illustrate particularly the various problems and difficulties plus other factors which arise in connection with agricultural development in the country.

In Luoland first, the peasant has been stereotyped as an arch - conservative. It has been suggested, for example, that economic progress had been slow because the Luo cling to indigenous economic and value systems, and because their wants are generally limited to cattle and wives.¹⁶ Secondly, during the 1950s, politically - inspired opposition to the development measures of the colonial government such as land consolidation contributed to a failure to recognise the agricultural potential of the area.¹⁷ The independent government has recognised this potential, as has a recent World Bank mission,¹⁸ and made it agricultural development priority area as pointed out above in our discussion of policy. However, in regard specifically to the choice of a strategy for this study the neglect in effect provides us with a "clean slate" on which an evaluation of the impact of a public bureaucracy can be based.

Thirdly the area has suitable soil for cotton whose production is not yet limited like coffee, for example, and can therefore provide increased export earnings the government needs if its present production is expanded. The crop can in addition be grown even in small holdings, a factor which should greatly enhance its acceptability to the majority who are not yet growing it. There is of course room for other crops if the full potential is exploited especially by introducing new suitable crop varieties as exemplified by the expanded production of sugarcane since independence.

15. de Wilde, J.C., Experiences with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa, Vol II IBRD, Johns Hopkins Press, 1967.

16. Fearn, Hugh, An African Economy: A Study of the Economic Development of the Nyanza Province of Kenya, 1903-53. DUP, 1956.

17. de Wilde J.C. op cit

18. World Bank Commission op cit

Fourthly, the area has one of the highest population densities in the country and is one of the major sources of long distance migrants. Lastly, it has uniform cultural traits, which provides a fundamental environmental constant.

Kisumu district was chosen as an appropriate site to collect the necessary data following de Wilde's selection of one district in an area of ecological "uniformity" for intensive study.¹⁹ The implication is that findings in Kisumu district will be of direct relevance to the wider area to the extent that we can make generalisations about Luoland as a whole. Kisumu was also chosen because of the author's familiarity with the district coupled with the logistic reason of access. Finally since it was not included in the SRDP which is being phased out during the 1974-78 Development Plan another dimension can therefore hopefully be added to this kind of rural studies.

The decision to focus at the district level can be justified on at least three main grounds. First, conceptually, when discussing the public bureaucracy selecting an administrative unit with organisational "boundaries" facilitates one's analysis. One is, for example, able to identify what is internal as opposed to what is external to the organisation and hence their interaction. Secondly the relevant official data available on agricultural activities for this particular study are mostly given on a district basis and within the district on a divisional locational and sublocational basis. The sublocation is the smallest unit in the Kenyan administrative set up. Lastly, adopting a Government report issued in 1971 the district has been made the focus of development as evidenced by the appointment of District Development Officers (DDOs).²⁰

19. de Wilde op.cit.
20. Ndegwa Commission 1970-71.

KISUMU DISTRICT

Area Population and Administration.

Kisumu district has a total area of 2660 square kilometers of which 2093 square kilometers is land area. The rest is water area, part of Winam Gulf of Lake Sango, formerly Lake Victoria, bordering Luoland to the west.

In 1969 the district had a total population of 400,643 persons of whom about 95% of Kenyan Africans in the district were Luos. Its population density of 192 persons per square kilometer was the second highest in Nyanza province after Kisii district. However the actual figure could be lower if one takes into account the fact that the provincial headquarters, Kisumu town, which is also the district headquarters, is located in the district. Nevertheless, the population density for the province of 166 persons per square kilometer was the highest in the whole country. It can therefore, be safely concluded that Kisumu district has one of the highest population densities in the country. The spread is from less than 100 persons per square kilometer in some parts of the district to more than 500 persons per square kilometer in others.

Migration from Kisumu district and other areas in Western Kenya, notably Kakamega, to distant urban centres especially, dates back to the colonial period and is a well established fact that does not require further detailed documentation.²¹ The table below showing persons from districts with the highest population densities in the various provinces found in Nairobi and other provinces during the 1969. Census illustrates the point.

21. Alila, C.P., The Dynamics of Urban Unemployment. Trends in Nairobi, Unpublished M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1972.

Census illustrates the point

TABLE I POPULATION BY DISTRICT OF BIRTH FOR NAIROBI AND SELECTED PROVINCES

DISTRICT	DISTRICT TOTAL	DISTRICT DENSITY	NAIROBI		CENTRAL		RIFT VALLEY		COAST		NYANZA		TOTAL	% OF POP. OUTSIDE PROV	% OF DISTRICT TOTAL
			NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%			
KISUMU	400643	132	23553	5.9	3202	0.8	31654	7.9	12175	3.0	371420	92.7*	70524	17.6	
KISII	675041	304*	3462	0.5	1683	0.3	24870	3.7	1343	0.2	610516	90.4*	31358	4.6	
KAKAMEGA	78256	220	47296	6.0	4918	0.6	72,217	9.2	9186	1.2	17183	2.2	133617	17.3	
KIAMBU	475576	184	30565	8.5*	40803	8.6*	70905	14.9	4128	0.9	5544	1.2	121142	25.5**	
MACHAKOS	707214	50	42150	6.0	6028	0.9	8648	1.2	26624	3.8*	972	0.1	84442	11.9	
NANDI	209068	75	1103	0.5	1539	0.7	199642	95.5*	417	0.2	598	0.3	3657	1.8	
KWALE	205902	25	285	0.1	135	0.1	217	0.1	182298	88.6	199*	0.1	886	0.4	

* Kisumu surpasses Kisii in both rural and urban migration despite the latter's higher population density

** Most people going to Rift Valley going to rural areas mainly to farm

+ Figures higher due to location of the district within or close to the province

SOURCE: Kenya Population Census 1969 Vols I and III

Looking at Nairobi figures we see that the percentage for Kisumu district is about the same as those for Kakamega and Machakos and not far below that for Kiambu. Kisumu district is however outstanding if we look at Coast figures discounting Kwale and Machakos because of their location within and near the province respectively.

Administratively, it was the splitting up of the former Central Nyanza district as recently as 1968 into two districts viz Siaya and Kisumu that brought about the emergence of the present Kisumu district. Kisumu was subsequently organised into four divisions: Maseno, Winam, Muhoroni and Nyando out of which 12 locations were demarcated. The latter involved simply subdividing formerly whole locations such as Seme, Kisumu, Kane and Nyakach and labelling them appropriately North, South, West, North-East etc following the compass directions. The subdivisions ultimately reached the sublocational level with an important consequence of closer administration.

It is quite significant in view of the concentration of government development effort in urban and surrounding areas in the past that Kisumu town which was the headquarters of the now defunct Central Nyanza district and has remained the provincial headquarters is the headquarters of Kisumu district. Siaya on the other hand has had to build a new headquarters practically from scratch. This has meant dependence on Kisumu for government resources to a substantial degree.

Ecological Factors

Ecologically Kisumu district may be divided into three zones.²²

I The Lake Shore Savanna ranges from 3,700ft to 4,000ft in altitude and includes mainly the extensive Kano Plains. The whole zone comprising the portion that extends into the neighbouring Siaya district suffers from a rather irregular rainfall that ranges from 30 inches to 40 inches annually. Kano plains generally gets more rain than the remaining western portion. And although there are two rainy periods: the "long rains" of March - July and the "short rains" of October - December the latter is seldom sufficiently reliable and adequate to support a crop.

In East Kano it is characterised by deep, alluvial "mbuga" soils also known as black calcareous cotton soil and locally called "anywang," which although more fertile than other soils in the district, are difficult to drain and to work. A span of six oxen is generally used to plough these soils.

22. Adapted from J.C. de Wilde's classification which applied to the whole of Central Nyanza district with the help of current Kisumu maps.

Moreover, the E. Kano plains are susceptible to flooding by the streams coming down from the Nyando Escarpment. Ahero Irrigation scheme is the major step taken by the government to control both floods and drought in the plains.

III The Star Grass zone comprises the area between 4,500 ft and 5,000ft. The quality of its soil, which consists principally of latosolic dark red friable clays, locally known as "Lwala", is quite variable. Rainfall - generally 60 inches to 70 inches - is the highest in the district and is sufficient to support double cropping. Natural pasture conditions are quite good. Arabica coffee can be grown, though conditions are not ideal for this crop.

While characterised by probably the most favourable ecological conditions in the district, this zone is also the most densely populated. Moreover it is only a small fraction of the district, approximately 6% of the total area, confined to the Nyabondo plateau in South Nyakach location and Nyahera and Bar sublocations in the hilly areas of East Kisumu location.

II The "Intermediate" or "Higher Rainfall"

Savanna falls as its name suggests, between the two zones mentioned above with respect to altitude and rainfall. Although the rainfall is more reliable than the Lake Savanna its soils consisting primarily of red or brown friable clays tend to be less fertile. In the dry season, people and cattle often have to go long distances for water.

The greater part of this zone lies in Siaya district where most of it is still tse tse fly infested. In Kisumu district it spreads over the northern portion of West Kano location and part of Kajulu location. It is in this zone that the sugarbelt area in Nyanza is located. Part of the Nyabondo plateau falling under this zone suffers from a dearth of underground water resources.

Lastly the two main zones, the lakeshore and higher rainfall (Star Grass and "Higher" Rainfall) have also been of major historical significance for the Luo. The lower lakeshore grassland were ideally suited for a mixed economy of pastoralism, fishing and seed agriculture, and resembled the original Nilotic homelands. The Nilotes generally kept to this environment in their migrations from the Sudan and eventually into Kenya. It was only the pressure of increasing population in the 19th century which forced some of the Kenya Luo to abandon their traditional habitat and move into the higher rainfall

areas.²³ This had important repercussions for the Luo economy leading notably to a greater concentration on seed agriculture.

Land Utilisation

Due to the very recent division of Central Nyanza district there are no separate figures available in certain instances for Siaya and Kisumu. A case in point is the categories of agricultural land in each of the two districts. The figures given are therefore overall for both districts. They have 432,000 hectares of high potential land, 29,000 hectares of medium potential land and no low potential land.²⁴ There are neither forest reserves nor national parks in Kisumu district.

Land registration started in Kisumu district as late as 1965 doubtless resulting mainly from its location from the centre in a distant former nonscheduled area. As of December 1974 only 233 square kilometres had been registered leaving as much as 1145 square kilometres still available for smallholder registration. Thus we lack accurate figures of sizes of the various holdings in the district. However, our survey revealed that the phenomenon of landlessness is still virtually nonexistent in the district, while ownership of land as a gift, temporary or permanent, believed to have been common is now insignificant. Acquisition was in more than 90% of the cases through inheritance. Those who had bought additional pieces of land were mainly well-to-do farmers. The average acreage per person for the district is 4 acres with a range from as little as less than 1 acre to more than 100 acres.

The total acreage for which the owners have title deeds is most likely lower than the figure for registered land due to the countrywide problem of land owners failing to collect these title deeds when they are ready. This was found to be the case in the Nyabondo plateau where registration was complete at the time of the study and title deeds available.

The important point to note is that there is no more politically-inspired opposition to land consolidation and registration which was experienced in the 1950s, towards the end of colonial rule. A change of attitude has definitely occurred as was made clear to us by most people we interviewed either formally or informally. According to the District Agricultural Officers (DAOs)

23. Ogot, B.A., A History of the Southern Luo, EAPH 1967

24. Statistical Abstract, 1975.

who have worked in the district during the registration period and agricultural field staff interviewed it is staff shortage in the Adjudication Department which is causing a major bottleneck in carrying out consolidation, registration and other farm development measures tied to registration in particular. However interviews with Adjudication staff in the district and observations of the progress of their work clearly showed that the registration procedure in force is more to blame than staff shortage. In particular the requirement that all appeals disputing claims to parcels of land be heard and settled before the remaining steps that are more or less formalities are taken. Thus even one or two petitions can hold up registration process in a whole sublocation.

There is an important distinction between consolidation and adjudication which is in operation now, that may have facilitated the latter's ready acceptance by smallholders, worth mentioning. Adjudication involves a final ascertainment of existing rights in land. As now conceived, the program merely entails the conversion of customary rights over defined parcels of land to statutory rights through a process of demarcation and measurement of the parcels and registration of title. Although the legislation allows for some adjustment of boundaries, this rarely takes place except for the provision of roads of access. The basic justification of the program is that the security afforded by registration of title should encourage improvement and development of the registered holding. It is on the basis of land titles which act as security that farmers are specifically able to obtain credit.

Land consolidation program was the original form of adjudication that involved both the much longer, slow, and expensive process of measuring and consolidation of scattered fragments of land forming parts of one farm and registration of the consolidated holding.

Farm Characteristics

It can be inferred from our zonal classification that natural conditions in Kisumu district presently offer less attractive opportunities for profitable cash cropping and animal husbandry than the better endowed areas such as the neighbouring Kisii district, for example, or most parts of Central Province. Some high value cash crops such as tea and pyrethrum cannot be grown at all while conditions are not ideally suited for exotic or grade cattle which generally thrive best at altitudes of 5500ft and over. This constitutes a basis for establishing a strong and realistic case against the stereotype belief that Lups are arch conservatives who do not take to farming seriously. Infact, it seems that this talk has emanated from people who have

relied on administrative reports dating back to the colonial period²⁵ and have not taken time to visit Kisumu district and other contrasting Luo areas notably the better endowed Migori in South Nyanza district and see the relative vast progress being made even in the face of the prevailing adverse conditions.

It has also been argued, and this is more to the point, that the absence of so many able-bodied males due to labour migration has made it very difficult to develop the agricultural potential in the district.²⁶ In other words that the issue is one of both the supply and quality of labour. It is quite obvious even from our scanty data on Table I that a number of males, certainly able-bodied, are away from the district. However, the problem with this second position is that it tends to emphasise the absentee phenomenon thereby failing to identify the basic cause of migration which has a lot to do with prospects for successful agricultural pursuits in the district especially in the past.

This type of absenteeism should not however be confused with the absentee or "telephone" farming which has been identified in the sugarbelt area and even more so in former European farms. The latter generally necessitates employing someone else to manage the farm while the former remains a family affair with the owner's wife, elderly father, or brother left in-charge. Furthermore in both cases labour is hired to different degrees but at another level homes where able-bodied males are absent tend to require temporary labour at peak periods to greater extent compared to those not affected. In so far as such labour is available the issue then becomes one of capital which leads us back to whether agricultural prospects are good enough for one to invest capital on one's farm.

25. HAY, M.J. Economic Change in Luoland, Kowe, 1890-1945, University of Wisconsin Ph.D., 1972. These colonial reports are contradictory if one considers the praise for Luos as hard working in plantations that led to recruitment of many as labourers for European farms.

26. Wilde J.C. op. cit.

As for crops grown in the district a D/O appropriately stated in his 1968 annual report that most agricultural crops grown are to a large extent determined by soil types rather than rainfall and altitude.²⁷ It is however significant to emphasise that rainfall greatly reduces the crop land that is double cropped while its unreliability heightens a farmer's uncertainty as to whether he will have a successful year or suffer a crop failure.

An outstanding characteristic of farming in the district which emerges from an overview of crops grown given in Table II below is the predominance of subsistence crops.

TABLE II ZONAL CLASSIFICATION OF KISUMU DISTRICT CROPS AND LIVESTOCK

<u>I Lake Shore Savanna</u>	<u>II Intermediate</u>	<u>III Star Grass</u>
Sugarcane	Sugarcane	Local maize
Rice	Cotton	Hybridmaize
Cotton	Local maize	Grade cattle
Local maize	Hybridmaize	Groundnuts
Hybridmaize	Groundnuts	Sisal
Sisal	Sisal	Coffee
Sorghum	Cassava	Beans
Serena Sorghum	Sorghum	Bananas
Vegetables	Serena Sorghum	Sorghum
Sunflower	Beans	Serena Sorghum
Local Breed cattle	Vegetables	Vegetables
Sheep and goats	Bananas	Local Breed cattle
Poultry	Grade cattle	Sheep and goats
	Local Breed cattle	Poultry
	Sheep and goats	
	Poultry	

An examination of district annual reports revealed that four crops have clearly emerged as the leading cash earners in the district viz sugarcane, rice, maize and cotton. Up-and-coming cash earners are only groundnuts and grade cattle although the latter is very highly restricted and really. The exclusion of coffee is mainly due to the small amounts grown. In addition owing to the limitation placed on acreage expansion by the government and processing problems experienced in the district it is not likely to be a major cash earner in the foreseeable future, much less a leading one.

27. District Annual Report, Agricultural Department 1968 p. 17.

Sugarcane, the leading cash crop in the district was for long until the time of independence an Asian dominated enterprise in which Africans only participated as labourers not unlike in coffee and tea plantations. In contrast now there are small, large and block cane growing farms owned by Africans. Although cane is currently grown mainly in the Nyanza sugarbelt area of Kisumu district and neighbouring higher altitude areas of the Kano plains there is a more promising vast potential for cane growing under irrigation in the lower altitudes of the Kano plains. This is particularly in view of findings at Ahero Research Station which have proved that sugarcane grown under irrigation in the said area can produce at least 100 tons per acre compared to averagely 30-40 tons currently being produced under non-irrigation.

Rice is grown almost exclusively in the Ahero Irrigation Scheme by tenant farmers. The major problem with this crop has been planting seed. The scheme started with the "Sindano" variety of rice which went on very well but was later replaced with bismati because it became prone to two diseases: the yellow mortal virus disease and the paddy blast disease. The bismati has so far proved successful. However, a new variety from the Philippines has now been introduced to provide a better crop since it is not vulnerable to the tropical rice diseases and can get ready quickly. Finally it is worth noting that in addition to the newly started West Kano Irrigation Scheme there is still a wider suitable area clearly indicating the vast potential for this crop as well in the Kano Plains, also under irrigation.

As regards maize the major point is that it can be grown in all the three zones although zones II and III are ideal for the crop. Hybrid seed has been introduced in the district but it is the local variety which is still widely grown especially in zone I. Thus it is grown even in marginal areas and occupies the largest cropping area in the district. This is basically explained by the fact that maize is a staple food crop as well as a cash earner.

One would have expected that cotton, given the fact that it was introduced in the district as early as the 1930s and the existing suitable conditions for it, should have become the leading cash crop with improved governmental support. On the contrary what one finds in statements by government officers and researchers alike is an expression of disappointment at the poor performance of the crop. There is no doubt therefore that the crop has done poorly. But this does not warrant simply explaining away the

problem in terms of the so-called archconservatism of the Luo community. One needs to know for example, why other crops eg sugarcane, hybrid maize etc., have surpassed cotton despite being introduced relatively much later - more than half a century later! Furthermore Moris and Aldington among others have documented problems with incorporating cotton into the traditional farming system.²⁸ These among other things point to the fact that the matter is more complex than it has been made to sound. The issue will be taken up in greater detail in a later paper.

There are in addition to the above crops a number of crops grown mainly for subsistence as mentioned above and listed in Table II and indigenous cattle, sheep and goats also kept. The main ones are sorghum, cassava, potatoes, beans, bananas and vegetables. Sorghum is grown in conditions similar to those for maize but is more drought resistant. It is interesting that even those who have adopted hybrid maize and stopped growing local maize still grow sorghum principally due to its utility in the local value system. An improved variety serena sorghum, has been introduced in the district. Sorghum, beans, peas and vegetables are generally interplanted mostly with local maize and even cotton.

The root crops, cassava and potatoes, have a crucial place in the Kisumu district farming system serving as security against famine that frequently occurs due to floods and/or drought. The DAC reported in 1968 that root crops were pushed as a matter of policy to alleviate any food distress that may result from the foregoing causes.²⁹

Two additional important features of farming in the district emerge from a brief look at husbandry practices and organisation among farmers in the district. First, it is striking that a move has been made towards farm mechanisation. A Tractor Hire Service (THS) was introduced in the district in October 1973 by the Ministry of Agriculture to supplement privately owned ones that have practically all been bought with government loans. It is apparent that this policy is being encouraged as indicated by a memorandum presented jointly by members of the Provincial Agricultural Board and District Agricultural Committee to the Minister for Agriculture after a seminar in Kisumu in January 1974 which requested for a renewal of the service and an

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28. Moris J, The Agrarian Rev. in Central Kenya: a study of farm Innovation in Embu District 1970 Ph.D thesis N.W. Univ.
Aldington T. 'Cotton policy in Kenya experiences and prescriptions',
IDS staff Paper No. 12.
29. Agricultural Dept. op.cit.

increase in the number of tractors in the area.

A major rationale for the move is the hardness of cotton soils in particular and the much larger acreage of land that has to be cultivated in the sugarcane areas. While it may be sound policy for the sugarcane large farms areas its feasibility, not to mention efficiency of the service, in small holdings where the hoe is still the dominant mode of cultivation is highly questionable and calls for further investigation. This seems all the more necessary since the DAOs report a shortage of oxplough equipment in the district which if rectified could provide a cheaper and more appropriate technology to alleviate the problem especially in holdings outside the sugarcane areas.

Secondly, organisation among farmers is at best minimal. It is in the sugarbelt area in which there is the Sugarbelt Cooperative Union constituted by several sugarcane primary societies that one finds the greatest concentration of cooperatives which serve the area adequately. Elsewhere in the district there are only two cooperative societies basically for cotton marketing viz Kano - Kajulu and Kisumu - Some Cotton Cooperative societies. A third one, Nyakach Cooperative Society is relatively more multipurpose, supplying hybrid seed to members, for example, in addition to the marketing of cotton. Lastly, there is a dairy cooperative society on the Nyabondo plateau mainly for marketing milk. Thus farming including the marketing of produce is basically undertaken on a family basis for most products in nearly the whole district.

METHODOLOGY

Although the study has a district focus, for several reasons already advanced, for the purposes of data collection we had to deal with units below the district eg divisions, locations, sublocations, individuals etc first, because it is the activities of these subdistrict units that constitute agricultural activity in the whole district. Secondly, given the limited time and other resources it is impossible to collect information from all over a district of the size and population as Kisumu. It is, therefore, necessary to deal with only a few of these units that are together representative of the district. To this end 8 sublocations listed below in Table III were selected out of a total of 69 in Kisumu district.

TABLE III DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF 8 SAMPLE SUBLOCATIONS IN KISUMU DISTRICT*

SUBLOCATION	AREA IN SQ KM	TOTAL POPULATION	POP. DENSITY PER SQ KM	ALTITUDE IN FEET†	ECOLOGICAL ZONE	LOCATION
KAKOLA	33	7052	212	3739 - 3805	I	S.E. KANO
CHIGA	22	6680	310	3805	I	KOLVA
MATHOREGO	11	4282	391	3870 - 3936	II	KAJULU
KOMBEMA	22	3973	183	3870 - 4330	II	E. GEM
OJOLLA	19	3274	175	3939 - 4920	I + II + III	N. KISUMU
KADONGO	23	3396	147	4330 - 4592	II + III	W. KISUMU
NYAHERA	18	5178	293	4592 - 4986	III	E. KISUMU
EAST KADIANGA	30	9513	319	4592 - 4986	III	E. NYAKACH

* Table based on information from Kisumu maps and Kenya Population census 1969 Vol. 1

† 3.28ft = 1 metre

The major criterion for selection was the three ecological zones identified in the district: I The Lake Shore Savanna, II Intermediate and III The Star Grass Zones. We also took into account other criteria such as area, population, land utilisation, farming characteristics and location to make the sublocations more representative of the district. Thus we could collect data on farmers operating under the various constraints found in the whole district.

Sampling

Two samples to which two different questionnaires were administered were used in this research. The first was a stratified sample of farmers. A better farmer stratum and a peasant - farmer stratum were constructed which constituted the farmer-sample strata. The second was a total sample of agricultural field staff in the district.

The eight sublocations we identified served as the basis for the construction of the peasant - farmer stratum. But first, an important shortcoming which should be borne in mind needs to be pointed out. It has been noted that land registration has been carried out in the district to a very limited extent. The implication here is that although Kisumu is basically a small holder district there are only meagre statistics on land ownership and acreage and practically all aspects of smallholder activity. We consequently ended up with only one sublocation, East Kadianga, in our sample of sublocations which had a land register.

In two sublocations, Chiga and Nyahera, adjudication was complete but there were no registers because a few petitions were still pending. In kombewa adjudication was still in progress while in the remaining sublocations no date had been fixed to start adjudication.

It was therefore possible to use the land register in the case of E. Kadianga only. Since the individual farmer is the unit of analysis in the farmer-sample we selected the E. Kadianga sample from the register by taking every n - th farmer starting from a randomly selected point. Thus we gathered information from 27 farmers in the sublocation.

In the case of the other sublocations although we still used the random sampling technique we had to change our method of selection. We chose every third home in the centre, towards the north, west, south and east ends of the sublocations. An average of 5 homes (farmers) were selected from each of the five points. In this way information was gathered from another 172 farmers - giving us a total of 199 peasant farmers. It should be emphasised that the peasant - farmer stratum was constructed after we had already selected the better farmers using a different technique to be described presently. If, therefore, the random sampling in any of the sublocations netted any of these better farmers the next n-th peasant farmer was taken to replace him.

In the selection of better farmers we used a wider area, the location as opposed to the sublocation as our sampling frame. The first step was to visit the District Land Registrar's Office, adjudication teams working in some sublocations in the district and the District Agricultural Office and compile a list of owners of large tracts of land wherever this was possible. However the main part of the exercise started off with asking agriculturalists in the field to enumerate by sublocation those having large tracts of land whom they considered good farmers in the location and why they so labelled them. At least two of the farmers mentioned were then located and asked for the same kind of information. From the two lists obtained any one farmer who was not mentioned twice was located and asked the same question.

An Assistant chief in-charge of a sublocation was next asked for the same kind of information. A casual conversation was also held with any two people met, usually around a market place on the same subject and the names of farmers they mentioned noted. Finally, as a kind of check, if an agriculturalist had worked elsewhere in the district especially in a different location he was asked to enumerate the kind of farmers we were inquiring about from his days

there. The technique used was in essence, asking key informants to designate for us the better farmers and then using other informants and partly the self-designating technique of asking a respondent a series of questions to determine the degree to which he perceives himself and others to belong to a group of better farmers as a check.³⁰

A list of 50 better farmers was in this way compiled considering first, to cater for being notable, how often a farmer was mentioned, "designated" by the different informants paying particular attention to those outside his sublocation or further afield. Secondly, his level of farming especially whether he is growing a cash crop(s). Thirdly, whether he has a relatively larger piece of land if this information was available for the particular farmer in question.

It should therefore be apparent that our usage of a better farmer is not the same as a progressive farmer defined as an individual who is relatively earlier to adopt new ideas than other members of his social system.³¹ In other words for us progressiveness is a necessary, in so far as one's selection is influenced by the adoption of a cash crop (s), but not a sufficient condition for one to be a better farmer at the sampling stage. He should also be a notable and own a relatively larger piece of land.

There is no denying that there is some overlap between the two as it has been adequately shown by findings of innovation studies that progressive farmers tend to be influential and also the owners of larger tracts of land.³² However, the finding is not conclusive if we take the opposite side of the equation and are interested in the extent of progressiveness among influentials and/or owners of relatively large tracts of land. In fact it has been argued by these same studies that some owners of large pieces of land are not progressive.

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30. Rogers E.M., Diffusion of Innovations, free press, 1969, p. 228.
31. Ascroft J. et al, "The Tetu Extension Project" USSC, 1972 p. 7
32. Ibid.

If it is true that they are the recipients of a disproportionate share of goods and services, as would be expected in view of the possible use of influence for one, this does not change the major concern of the possibility of a widening of income, standard of living etc gaps in the rural areas but another dimension is added to these studies having started from a different stand point.

The utility of the method used we leave to be demonstrated by the data obtained. This is not, however, the place to report in detail the rather unproductive aspects of the exercise such as being given several names mostly of relatives in the hope that those listed will get benefits, especially in the form of loan from the government.

Lastly, a major decision was made in regard to our universe for the field staff sample particularly that also affected the farmer sample universe. We were concerned with Ministry of Agriculture field staff functioning as members of one organisation and could not therefore accomodate the Ahero Irrigation Scheme and sugarbelt zone whose staff belong to other organisations which are somewhat "special" such as the National Irrigation Board. Furthermore the conditions under which the farmers in these two areas operate especially the tenant farmers at Ahero are also somewhat special and not typical of what one finds in most smallholder areas.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES - MACRO LEVEL

Since it is the avowed policy of the Kenya government to direct an increasing share of total resources available to develop rural areas through development achievements in the agricultural sector in particular it is instructive to look briefly first at the flow of these resources at the macro level before discussing our micro level findings on who actually gets these resources. The idea is to provide a background to the ensuing discussion by establishing first, whether there is an inherent differential treatment of the various localities in resource allocation. Secondly, if there is any concrete backing at all for the change of policy in terms of the agricultural department hence the rural areas getting more resources from the centre.

Heyer has clearly shown in analysing agricultural development in small farm areas of Kenya since the 1920s from a historical perspective first, that marketed output of Nyanza and Central Provinces were close until the mid-50s after which the latter drew ahead fast. Secondly, that the benefits of the coffee boom of the 1960s were concentrated and that the more recent expansion of pyrethrum, tea and dairying appear to have followed a similar line.³³

There may be an inclination to overlook these trends as belonging to a period prior to the change of policy by the government and are therefore irrelevant. That would however be rather injudicious in view of a major complementary finding that areas with high levels of modernisation tend to receive high allocation of expenditures on certain sectoral areas such as education transportation, agriculture etc.³⁴ Applied specifically to the agricultural sector this can be interpreted to mean in our terms that the high potential areas whose relatively greater development has been noted will tend to receive high allocation of agricultural expenditures in spite of the policy change.

One may argue that the problem will not be that serious if there is a relatively substantial allocation of resources to the whole sector thereby

33. Heyer, J., "A Survey of Agricultural Development in Small Farm Areas of Kenya Since the 1920s", IDS Working Paper No. 194, 1974.

34. Nyangira, N., Relative Modernisation and Public Resource Allocation in Kenya, EALB, 1975.

narrowing the disparity in real terms. Available data shows alright that total public expenditures have more than doubled since independence. But to the contrary outlays for agriculture have fallen, totalling about £13 m in 1970/71 as compared with more than £14 m in 1963/64. Relative to total public outlays the fall has been very sharp, from 21% in 1963/64 to 8.4% in 1970/71 - see Table IV.

Table IV: Public outlays for Agriculture

	<u>All Purposes</u> (£ million)	<u>Agriculture</u>	<u>Agriculture</u> % of total
1963	68.1	14.4	21.1
1967/68	94.6	13.3	14.1
1968/69	105.0	15.0	14.3
1969/70	121.4	12.6	10.4
1970/71	156.8	13.1	8.4

Source: Kenya into the second decade, World Bank Country Economic Report, 1975, p. 451.

In the same vein, in a parliamentary debate on Ministry of Agriculture estimate of £29m required in recurrent expenditure for the 1976/77 financial year Members of Parliament and even Assistant Ministers expressed a feeling of dissatisfaction that the estimate was too little compared to the work the ministry was doing.³⁵

It seems that at the root of this trend of resource flow is the fact that government agricultural development policy in African areas is still based on the famous 1954 Swynnerton Plan. Specifically the progressive farmer policy which stipulates that the goods and extension services should be concentrated on progressive farmers. According to the Progressive farmer strategy or what others call "betting on the strong strategy", total national agricultural production and export of agricultural commodities can best be promoted by concentrating one's efforts to introduce productivity-raising techniques on farmers who have large farms, the capital to innovate and education to grasp the advantages of new ideas quickly. These, by and large tend to be located in the high potential areas. That way, the pay-off from the limited resources available to the Ministry of Agriculture is said to be maximised.

To maximise productivity in this way or increased aggregate output as noted earlier is an expressed goal of the Kenya government made manifest at the local level by the yearly rising crop production targets that field

35. Daily Nation 21/7/76.

staff have to meet. While our concern here is with the actual beneficiaries of this policy, it will be argued elsewhere that this target setting is a major factor leading to the common practice, by field staff of visiting a particular type of farmer relatively more than the rest.

In sum, the foregoing overview of resource flow raises issues which are crucial in understanding why there are relatively more scarce resources or goods and services in Kisumu and similar small-holder areas. This in turn raises the basic question of the extent and nature of possible agricultural development vis-a-vis government expectations.

The goods and services include mainly meagre agricultural extension, irregular farmer training, limited credit resulting from a slow progress in land adjudications, few cooperatives and extremely localised marketing system. The main point of interest taken up in the next section is the distribution or who gets what out of these goods and services supplied by the public bureaucracy.

DISTRIBUTION OF GOODS AND SERVICES - MICRO LEVEL

It was hypothesised that the distribution of goods and services among local farmers disproportionately benefits local notables³⁶ who are owners of the large potentially more productive blocks of land. The first part of the hypothesis was confirmed by our data presented below. As for the second part, the historical pattern of settlement resulted in various clans owning land which has been handed down to clan members through the generations by inheritance. Thus there was a complete clan ownership of land and the individual had only usufruct rights although it is fast being replaced by individual ownership.

It is however evident from the predominance of acquisition of land through inheritance revealed by our data that practically everyone still lives on their respective original clan land - see Table V below. The ownership of a potentially more productive piece of land cannot therefore be said to be greatly dependent on one's current status. The point to note is that there is a greater tendency now among the Better Farmers (BFs) to own a separate piece of land, even as far afield as Muhoroni settlement acquired not through inheritance but bought. This separate piece of land also marks off BFs as owners of even larger tracts of land than was originally anticipated. And the ability to have one gives them a very good chance of acquiring the more productive pieces. The dynamics of the situation is therefore more interesting

36. Used synonymously as better farmers.

indicating a likelihood of accentuation of inequality particularly if one has the facilities to put the more productive pieces to use.

Table V: Summary data on BFs and PFs

	Cases			Strata		Total cases as % of total sample 249	
	BF	PF	Total	50 BF %	199 PF %		
Farm size in acres							
	0-5	14	146	160	28%	73.4%	64.3%
	6-10	15	28	43	30%	14%	17.3%
	11-45	19	12	31	38%	6%	12.4%
	50+	1	0	1	2%	0	0.3%
How acquired	Inherited	48	185	233	96%	93%	93.6%
	Bought	20	25	45	40%	12.6%	18.1%
	Other	1	2	3	2%	1%	1.2%
Land ownership elsewhere		41	109	150	82%	54.8%	60.2%
How acquired	Inherited	33	111	144	66%	55.8%	57.8%
	Bought	22	18	40	44%	9%	16.1%
	Other	1	2	3	2%	1%	1.2%
Cash crops grown							
	Hybrid maize	46	76	122	92%	38.2%	49%
	Cotton	29	46	75	58%	23%	30%
	Sugarcane	23	23	46	46%	11.6%	18.5%
	Groundnuts*	12	7	19	24%	3.5%	7.6%
	G/cattle owned	4	3	7	8%	1.2%	2.8%
Farm practices	Crops in rows	27	90	117	54%	45.2%	47%
	H/maize seed bought	48	61	109	96%	30.7%	43.8%
	Uses ox plough	20	80	100	40%	40%	40%
	Hires c. labour	15	53	68	30%	26.7%	27.3%
	Uses fertiliser	33	24	57	66%	12%	22.9%
	Uses tractor	14	25	39	28%	12.6%	15.7%
	Uses insecticide	28	11	39	56%	5.5%	15.7%
	Sprayed cotton	24	8	32	48%	3.2%	12.9%
	Sprayed cattle	13	11	24	26%	5.5%	9.6%
	Witnessed demons.	39	42	81	78%	21.1%	32.5%
Leadership	School committee	14	12	36	28%	18.1%	14.5%
	Church group	23	33	56	46%	16.6%	22.5%
	Harambee	8	6	14	16%	3.0%	5.6%
	Coop society	11	6	17	22%	3.0%	6.8%
	Local Authority	2	3	5	4%	1.5%	2.0%
	Other	10	8	18	20%	4.0%	7.2%
Miscellaneous	Maize sold	29	41	70	58%	20.6%	28.1%
	Maize bought	20	137	157	40%	68.8%	63.0%
	Cattle owned 10+	24	36	60	48%	18.1%	24.1%
	Cassava for famine	11	63	74	22%	31.7%	29.7%
Marital status	Monogamous	21	123	144	42%	61.8%	57.6%
	Polygamous	29	62	91	58%	31.2%	36.5%

* Groundnuts grown on a separate piece of land only.

A word is in order on other characteristics distinguishing BFs from peasant farmers (PFs) also in view of the data we collected summarised in Table V. In selecting our BF sample the three characteristics which constituted our dividing line were to what extent one is known i.e. notable or influential, has a larger acreage and grows cash crop(s). It was therefore to be expected that the BFs should score higher in these than PFs. However the scores were much higher on these and similarly on other characteristics - see BF and PF strata percentages columns on Table V - showing a greater and more widespread disparity than expected.

There were relatively more BFs growing cash crops as the figures show. Secondly, leadership role which is an important indicator of influence that we did not ask about at the sampling stage showed BF dominance in all groups we chose particularly cooperatives, harambee groups and school committees. Lastly although farm sizes also show the disparity between BFs and PFs the disparity is even more striking if we look at total acreages. There are 50% BFs who own more than 20 acres of land and 12% who own more than 50 acres while there are only 6% and 0% PFs respectively in the two categories.

Information on other characteristics on which our sampling was not based showed that although our starting point was different we had similar findings on them as innovation studies, hence our contribution. Like these studies in which time of adoption of farming practices is the sole criterion distinguishing the progressive farmers, first, our results on these practices showed this tendency to be greater among BFs than PFs. Apart from the information on Table V showing that there are relatively more BFs than PFs following the practices there is additional information showing that relatively more BFs started doing them as early as before independence when the area was still neglected. Secondly, the fact that BFs are able to buy land and sell more maize are important indicators that they have relatively more capital that can be invested on the farm if need be.

The relatively advantaged position of the BFs outlined above we found to covary with the distribution of goods and services resulting in their benefiting disproportionately. We examined for this purpose visits to farmers particularly by agricultural staff to furnish them with new crop varieties and teach them improved methods of husbandry, the distribution of crop demonstrations, the distribution of materials free mostly on a trial basis to facilitate adoption, loan distribution and the recruitment of farmers to attend courses at the Farmers Training Centre (FTC). It will be recalled that agricultural extension forms the backbone of government strategy to develop the agricultural sector in the smallholder areas and therefore critical for the realisation of agricultural development goals.

Table VI: Visits to farmers by staff

		Agricul- tural Workers		Veteri- nary		Admini- stration		Commu- nity Develop- ment		Health		Government officers to farm	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
BF	Number	46	4	30	20	12	38	2	48	6	44	44	6
	% of Category	92%	3%	60%	40%	24%	76%	4%	96%	12%	88%	88%	12%
PF	% of Category	37.2%	62.8%	21.1%	78.9%	10.1%	89.9%	1.5%	98.5%	5%	95%	12.6%	87.4%
199	Number	74	125	42	157	20	179	3	196	10	189	25	174

The major finding on visits from farmer responses is that the BFs are visited disproportionately more often than the PFs. While about 92% BFs admit having received visits from agricultural staff at least once during 1973 only about 37% PFs admit having received the visits in the same period. The credibility of these responses hinges on the general and quite reasonable complaint aired by field staff and farmers alike that agricultural staff who are assigned to one large or even two sublocations are only "seen riding bicycles past or never seen at all". A more weighty issue is how adequate these visits are and for what purposes they are made. This must await detailed analysis when considering the purposes for which staff told us they visit farmers. However the initial impression which is in BFs favour is that they do not only get relevant follow-up visits but are also visited more either in connection with cash crops or for special purposes such as the trial of gesaprim, a new spray weed killer.

It is evident from Table VI that agricultural staff visit farmers more often than any other group of government workers. Thus they are more in contact with them, a point further verified by farmer responses we received on which group of government workers the farmers initiated contact with or paid more visits to presented in Table VII below. The problem is therefore how best this contact can be used for agricultural development and possibly some other form of development.

The poor showing of the Administration is of particular interest for comparison purposes. It can be interpreted to mean that the Administration is still much more concerned with law and order issues. Their main meeting point with farmers for this purpose is the weekly *baraza* except when arrests have to be made. Another purpose for which some of the above recorded visits were made closely related to law and order, is to collect funds for harambee projects. There were instances of force being used on such a mission. Lastly, visits were made when a higher government official(s) in the Administration or a technical department went on a tour of a chief's or an Assistant Chief's area to see one of the farmers in the area. These tours notably also covered BFs mostly.

Table VII: Visits by farmers to staff

	Agricultural Workers		Veterinary		Administration		Comm. Dev.		Health	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
BF Number	35	15	13	37	8	42	0	50	2	48
50 % of Category	70%	30%	26%	74%	16%	84%	0	100%	4%	96%
PF % of Category	21.6%	78.4%	16.6%	83.4%	0.5%	95.5%	0	100%	0	100%
199 Number	43	156	33	166	1	198	0	199	0	199

We also notice that for Agricultural and Administrative staff who paid more visits to farmers PFs received about 1/3 the visits received by BFs percentagewise, Table VI. The point we are driving at is that PFs not only received disproportionately less visits from all categories of government workers but also that they received disproportionately much less from groups of government workers who paid fewer visits. This pattern of disparity was also observed in the extent to which agricultural workers fulfilled promises of goods and services made to BFs as compared to PFs, their dissemination of information on maize storage 'dawa'; and the information on cotton spraying.

It had been our hope that information gathered on the person from whom a new idea was first heard and on the person who was most influential in the use of that idea would serve two important purposes for us. First, to support or disprove the trickle down theory according to which new ideas received by BFs who are focussed on by the agricultural staff are supposed to eventually find their way downwards or be disseminated to the PFs. Secondly, to gain some idea of the pattern of patron-client relationships that may be in existence.

Our expectation unfortunately did not materialise. We found out in connection with the first point that the person who passed the information was the one who was generally influential in its use. It turned out that the agricultural staff accounted for 90% in the first instance of information source and monopolised the dissemination of cotton spraying information. One possible conclusion may be, considering the technical nature of the information in question, that ideas which trickle down in conformity with the above theory and between patron(s) and client(s) in similar situations are of less technical or complex³⁷ nature. In any case therefore to return to the issue of visits in

37. Rogers op cit p. 130.

order to understand and adopt this type of new idea the PFs would also need follow-up visits from staff.

CROP DEMONSTRATION

Table VIII: Crop Demonstration distribution to farmers

	No. of recipients	% of category	% of total recipients:48	% of total farmer sample
BF 50	35	80%	72.9%	14.1%
PF 199	13	6.5%	27.1%	5.2%

It is glaringly clear from Table VIII above that the BFs receive a disproportionately larger share of crop demonstrations than PFs. A comparison of the figures for witnesses of hybrid maize demonstration in Table VI above: 78% BFs and 21.1% PFs, and these ones for recipients: 70% BFs and 7% PFs, shows the disparity to be much greater in the latter case. In other words a ratio of 4:1 as compared to 10:1 which means that for every PF who witnesses a hybrid maize demonstration 4 BFs witness such demonstrations while for every PF who receives a demonstration 10 BFs get demonstrations. The PFs knowledge of demonstrations is therefore not matched by what they receive. There is no question therefore, of explaining their receiving a less proportionate share simply in terms of their lack of awareness of the existence of demonstrations.

One might point out that the BFs did have the majority of demonstrations on other crops such as cotton and that this should boost their number of witnesses as well if we do not confine ourselves to hybrid maize alone. However, data on all demonstrations showed that hybrid maize is leading, accounting for approximately 80% of the demonstrations given. What should be emphasised about these other demonstrations is that they are of a more specialised nature e.g. serena, cattle spraying etc. and that they practically all went to BFs thus increasing the substance of their advantaged position.

MATERIALS GIVEN FREE

Table IX: Percentages by stratum of recipients of free materials

	Fertiliser		Insecticide		Cotton seed		Serena seed	
	Cases	%	Cases	%	Cases	%	Cases	%
BFs 50	29	58%	25	50%	12	24%	4	8%
PFs 199	30	15%	12	6%	28	14%	6	3%

* Percentages are all of the various strata.

It should be emphasised first that there is a close relationship between getting a demonstration and receiving materials free due to a ministerial policy that for some demonstrations certain materials e.g. seed, fertiliser insecticide, transport etc. are supplied free. It is not therefore surprising that the stratification witnessed in the case of demonstrations is upheld in Table IX as well.

The choice of these four materials was for no other reason apart from the fact that we gathered data on these. We can therefore safely assume that the same stratification would hold for other materials that may be distributed free through the same channels. It should be pointed out in connection with the narrower gap between strata in the case of cotton seed that it was supplied free to voluntary and forced growers until as recently as 1972. This serves as a pointer to the possible narrowing of other gaps if goods and services are made more accessible not necessarily through force to all farmer strata.

LOANS

Table X: Percentages by stratum of loan recipients

	Cases	% of total recipients	% of sample stratum	% of total farmers sample
BFs 50	18	72%	36%	7%
PFs 199	7	28%	4%	3%

Table XI: Chronological distribution of loans received

	1962	'63	'64	'65	'66	'67	'68	'69	'70	'71	'72	'73
BFs 50												
PF received	0	1	2	2	1	1	2	11	1	4	7	4

The distribution arguments advanced earlier regarding the disparity between BFs and PFs hold for Table X. A major point of interest on the dates when the loans were received given on Table XI is that we located no one who received a loan before independence followed by an upward trend especially after 1970 which has something to do with the start of Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) operations around that time.

This trend is understandable in view of the colonial policy of furthering mainly European farming interests and only a few years before independence concentrating on progressive farmers in Central and part of the Rift Valley Provinces. An indication that the AFC the major agricultural loan granting body is still continuing the latter emphasis was surprisingly revealed Corporation's annual loan figures and confirmed by the AFC Kisumu Branch manager. Furthermore there were attempts to introduce loans applicable to European large farm areas such as Guaranteed Minimum Return (GMR) which is unsuitable for small-holder areas like Kisumu especially with its 15 acres requirement which incidentally favours the BFs.

We found out in connection with loan purposes and sources that overall the AFC accounted for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the loans distributed which were mainly for hybrid maize and grade cattle. The second loan source after the AFC was the Cooperative societies. The point to note is that while the AFC concentrated more in the more agriculturally suitable ecological areas such as E. Kadiang'a, Nyahera, Marera etc. the Cooperative Societies' aid was reported from relatively less suitable areas such as Kombewa and Wathorego. In addition the latter were catering for crops the AFC is not concerned with such as sugarcane and cotton. One would therefore expect the Cooperative societies' aid to a relatively larger number of PFS to have important positive consequences for agricultural development all over the district.

FARMER VISITS TO FARMERS TRAINING CENTRES (FTC)

Table XII: Farmer visits to FTC

No. of visits	Strata			% of visitors by No. of times		Total cases as % of total sample
	BF	PF	Total	BF	PF	
10	5	167	172	10%	84%	69%
1	11	18	29	22%	9%	12%
2-3	25	12	37	50%	6%	15%
4+	9	2	11	18%	1%	4%

We need to point out that we are using 4+ number of visits to FTCs for comparison purposes only and that in actual fact no PF had gone to FTCs more than 4 times while the maximum number of visits for BFs was 9. That in itself is a conspicuous indication of the concentration of Agricultural Staff who recruit farmers in BF category and the latter consequently receiving more goods and services, having showed willingness to cooperate.

There have been arguments that some farmers like going to FTCs and actually seek out such opportunities. It is however amazing that those finding their way to the FTC should turn out to be so disproportionately and substantially BFs. One important qualification to simply liking going to FTC which should not be forgotten is being able to afford frequent visits to the FTCs in view of the 15/- fee charged per visit. That is if we assume that the information is passed uniformly to all farmers at public barazas. However, what in fact happens, judging from staff and farmer responses, is that staff in the majority of cases seek out farmers, even BFs, to go to the FTC after the formal public baraza announcements, thus raising the issue of approaching certain persons more than others. Some staff, contrary to the argument that BFs like going to

FTCs, find this job of recruiting farmers for FTC generally difficult and suggested that it be performed by the Administration, presumably so as to apply force. This should not be the case if the BFs are willing as there are no specific conditions on who is to be recruited.

Finally the figures on Table XII show that the gap between BFs and PFs widens as we consider more visits to the FTCs. It is more reasonable to expect that among the PFs who go to FTCs there are at least some who seek out the opportunity. The problem which then arises is that most of them manage to go only once. The possibility raised here which can have far reaching consequences is that of getting inadequate and/or irrelevant information from a one-week specific course. One could be disillusioned about new farming ideas received from the FTC or anywhere else and even the whole farming enterprise. The BFs are thus in an advantaged position having the chance to rectify the situation during the next visit(s).

CONCLUSION

It has been shown that despite policy pronouncements to the contrary resource flow has not only followed a trend which started in the mid 50s but has also been disadvantageous to the agricultural sector in particular. The continuation of this trend is bound to have negative consequences for agricultural development goals in smallholder areas like Kisumu district by continually limiting resources that flow to these areas.

At the moment there is no doubt that the limited resources that staff have are major constraints on the level and content of contact that they have with farmers in these areas. This does not, however, wholly explain the skewed nature of this contact in favour of BFs whom we clearly found to obtain a disproportionate share of goods and services viz visits, crop demonstration, loans etc. In the face of lack of a clearly articulated extension ideology in Kenya a feasible explanation could only be found in various pronouncements of government policies that are evidently based on the Swynnerton Plan which favours progressive farmers.

But without attention to PFs first, while the chances of narrowing the gap between smallholder and high potential areas, leave alone urban areas, are slim, disparity which has been identified in the smallholder areas is likely to lead to the widening of these already existing gaps. Secondly, there will only be economic growth as opposed to economic development which is the close correlate of agricultural development.

Lastly, to devise ways to boost contact with PFs has been a major concern of this study from its inception. After stating the problem here in a somewhat descriptive fashion this also will be taken up in a later and more complete analysis of our data.