

Studies show that fuelwood is the traditional energy source in rural Kenya, and is most accessible to the rural population for logistical and economic reasons. The chapter looks at the fuelwood plantation component of the Bura Irrigation Settlement Scheme, drawing on surveys from 10 villages involving 186 questionnaires. Project objectives were to provide the population with an adequate supply of fuelwood and construction wood, and an environmentally satisfactory cover of protective woody vegetation on a sustainable basis, thus saving the riverine forest from destruction. It was expected that during the first 4.5 years of settlement, supplies of fuel would be met from the cleared bush land accumulated during project construction. However, the bush did not last two years. Furthermore, the Bura tenants did not embark on tree planting on arrival in spite of being aware of diminishing fuel resources. Survey findings are presented relating to the fuelwood situation at the household level in Bura, and the factors influencing tenant participation in tree planting. Findings indicate that tree planting would be successful if the individual approach were employed, implying and re-emphasizing ownership. Besides expecting rural households to participate in sustaining wood resources through tree planting, it is absolutely necessary to assure them that the trees will be truly accessible to them in every sense of the word. The Bura project planners did not see tenant participation in tree planting as being of much significance. Recommendations are made.