



## RURAL-URBAN MIGRANTS - CHALLENGES TO KILIMO KWANZA INITIATIVES IN THE RUAHA RIVER BASIN, IRINGA REGION

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### ABSTRACT

More than 80% of the population in Iringa region lives in rural areas where majority relies on agricultural productions. In spite of this dependency, 80% of agricultural practices are done using simple hand tools which makes rural life relatively tasking. These tasking rural lives are thought to accelerate rural-urban migration in search for better working environment consequently impair *Kilimo Kwanza* initiatives as well as household food security. This paper assessed the challenges imposed in household agricultural production when majority of the productive age migrate from rural to urban centres. Three districts namely Iringa Rural, Makete and Mufindi districts in Iringa region were selected for interviews. A semi-structured questionnaire survey was administered to 45 selected households in each district to seek information on whether migration exists, and if it is a challenge to rural agricultural production. The purposive sampling design was employed in order to create a sample of households with migrants and non-migrants characteristics. This assessment enabled the establishment of a link between rural-urban migration and agricultural production in relation to *Kilimo Kwanza* performance of the region. Results confirmed that about 85% of household in Iringa experienced rural-urban migration and the migration accounted for about 67% of underperformance of *Kilimo Kwanza* initiatives in the region. Also, majority (84%) of the respondents revealed that food status of households with migrants were poor compared to non-migrant households. The findings concluded that rural-urban migration is a challenge to *Kilimo Kwanza* Initiatives. The migration is driven by hardships associated

with agricultural production such as inadequate capital, poor production technologies/transportation infrastructure, dependence on rain-fed production and malpractice of informal markets referred as “lumbesa”. It is therefore recommended that, not only agricultural subsidies will accelerate *Kilimo Kwanza* Initiatives, but also other initiatives to reduce rural-urban migrations will gear up the process. Among other identified initiatives were; rural infrastructure development, education extension, value addition to agricultural produce and improved access to markets. These initiatives are thought to enhance rural life and in-turn decelerates the rural-urban migration.

*Keywords:* Rural-Urban; Migrants; *Kilimo Kwanza* initiatives

### INTRODUCTION

Migration is a geographical movement of individuals or groups for the purpose of permanently resettling (Columbia Encyclopedia: migration) or temporarily settling. Migration can also imply the movement of people from one place to another (Zaionchkovskay, 1996). The terms in-migration and out-migration are used for internal migration, where no national boundaries are crossed of which the Iringa region migration is considered, and the simplest classification separates this from international migration. Migration can either be voluntary or compulsory, temporary or permanent depending on the drivers responsible for the migration. Other classifications are based on the nature of the points of origin and arrival, such as rural-rural or urban-rural. Rural-rural migration may be seen in the movement of nomadic people while urban-rural migration might include the



movement of elderly people when they retire or when richer people move from the city to suburbs. According to Caldwell (1969), rural depopulation describes rural-urban migrations.

Among the drivers of rural-urban migration is food shortage or insecurity and income. Ishengoma (1998) argued that, food security is the availability of food and one's access to it or available food for household consumption. In superfund such as World Food Summit, a household is considered food secure when its occupants do not live in hunger or fear of starvation (WFS 1996). Many research findings have viewed agricultural development as among the major avenue to ensure food security especially in developing countries. FAO believes that, agriculture development includes the active surplus production of useful plants or animals that may include cultivating the soil, growing and harvesting crops, and raising livestock (FAO 2002). In Tanzania for example "Kilimo Kwanza"-Agriculture First is believed as new strategy aimed at spearheading government efforts to bringing about agriculture revolution in the country (FAO 2008) and ensure food security at household through the national level.

The United Republic of Tanzania believes in reducing poverty through Kilimo Kwanza initiatives (Joachim 2010). Agriculture plays an important role in poverty reduction, particularly in poorer countries such as Tanzania where the majority of people depend on agriculture for their livelihood. A growth in agricultural value addition has had the largest impact on poverty reduction in Asia in 1970s and 1980s (HBS 2007). However, left alone, agriculture could also become a poverty trap. That is what is happening in many poorer countries in sub-Saharan Africa where the agriculture sector has been left behind as a result youth migration to seek for greener future in urban or even abroad. There are no adequate investments in rural infrastructure, agricultural technology, equipment or basic inputs (HBS 2007). As a result, agricultural productivity either remains stagnant or increases only at a very slow rate, if at all.

Agriculture remains the largest employment sector in Tanzania and international agriculture agreements are crucial to a country's food security (World Food Summit 1996). Also agriculture seem as an option of

attaining MDG 1- eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Some critics argue that trade liberalization may reduce a country's food security by reducing agricultural employment levels. According to FAO (2003) some societies in Tanzania are chronically hungry due to extreme poverty, while most of communities lack food security intermittently due to varying degrees of poverty. The phenomenon might be due to increased farming for use in bio-fuels/agro-fuels, loss of agricultural land to residential, industrial development, rural-urban migration (Charles *et al.*, 2006), and a growing consumer demand in major cities like Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Zanzibar which have pushed up the prices of grain.

Of recent, Tanzania has begun to aggressively promote medium and large scale commercial farming. Plans are underway to mobilize resources for irrigation development and mechanical farming. This move will inevitably affect land ownership, environmental management and rural development initiatives (Charles *et al.* 2006). Given the size and importance of the agricultural sector in the Tanzanian economic and social development initiatives, this sector will continue to drive all agrarian and rural development strategies.

Reducing poverty in Tanzania clearly requires investing in agricultural growth in rural areas, where 90% of the country's poor live (FAO 2002) of which Iringa region communities are one of them. It might be argued that, in order reduce poverty through agriculture development we must address specific challenges imposed by rural-urban migration. Therefore rural-urban migrations processes need to be addressed to enable the targeted communities benefit from any Kilimo Kwanza strategies to produce for surplus. According to IFAD (2010) the process will also capitalize on the positive impact that the Agricultural Marketing Systems Development Programme (AMSDP) had in successfully linking producers to markets and in creating opportunities for rural dwellers and enterprise development of which in turn will reduce the urban influxes from rural areas.

Out-migration from the agricultural sector, particularly in developing countries, has been an ongoing phenomenon in recent years and is



likely to continue into the future (Martin 2009). Rural-urban migration accounts for much of the migration in the agricultural sector. There are also cases of agricultural migration beyond borders to fill jobs in major cities (Martin 2010). Note that the agricultural sector comprises the largest reservoir of workers looking for higher wages and more opportunity; in such a phenomenon rural-urban migrants seem to be a major challenge in achieving agriculture first goals in Tanzania and other developing countries which majority of its people and GDP depends on agricultural businesses. In this extreme, different effort has to be undertaken to make productive groups not to undertake such migration rather produce for subsistence and commercial agriculture.

Tanzania has about 16 million hectares of rain-fed arable land of which 2.5 million hectares are actually cultivated, the area increasing by about 5% annually. Iringa Region has a total area of 2.3 million hectares, of which 1.7 million hectares are cultivable (FAO 2008). Note that the large area of the region is under conservation (Ruaha National Park-the largest National Park in Tanzania). More than 80% of the land is cultivated by small holder farmers using simple hand tools which make the exercise relatively tasking a situation that promote rural-urban migration of the productive group. The history indicates that the region could feed most of other regions as well as Southern African countries with food deficits if its productive land could be utilized more effectively and profitably. In past decades (1980s), the region was the major area for maize production in Tanzania referred 'Kilimo cha mahindi Iringa' (Maize production in Iringa).

The agricultural sector is vital to Tanzania's economy and therefore the biggest component in the country's GDP (almost 50%), 85% export earnings and 80% of employment, though more than one third of the population lives below the poverty margin (FAO 2008). Currently a Tanzanian farmer produces food for two people while a farmer from EU produces enough food for 130 people (WFS 1996) per season. As a result there is food shortage and the government is forced to import food to cater for the need of its population which is in danger of famine.

More than 80% of the population in Iringa lives in rural areas and are in some way or another dependent on agriculture (FAO 2002). The majority relies on subsistence farming and as a consequence they tend to avoid risks associated with agricultural production despite that agricultural production could help them out of poverty. This situation makes them move to seek new opportunities the life could give.

In most cases, the challenges youth face in rural areas results on rural-urban migration that in turn leads to deterioration of the rural agricultural economy leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity. The movement of people from rural to urban areas is a common phenomenon in Tanzania (WFS 1996). The movement poses some problems in the rural as well as in urban centres even though; there are benefits derivable from it. The fall of rural agriculture economy arise mainly due to excessive drain of youths from the rural populace thus leaving only the older and aged members to constitute the labour force of the rural agricultural activities. In Tanzania agriculture has been praised as the backbone of the country's economy of which the nation has come up with different slogans that stress the importance of agriculture in the country (e.g. 'Kilimo ni Uti wa Mgongo', 'Kilimo cha Kufa na Kupona', 'Siasa ni Kilimo' and now 'Kilimo Kwanza') in order to increase agricultural productivity.

Historically, Iringa region has been famous as an important producer of food and cash crops (e.g. maize, Irish potatoes, green tea, beans, peas among others) sometimes for export. Currently however the region's food security is threatened. The major reason for the relatively poor performance of agricultural sector in Iringa region, as in many other regions in Tanzania has been the neglect of the sector in the development priorities of the government as well as rural-urban movements. The region also is well known as market for casual labour for major cities in Tanzania which act as a trigger for its productive group (youth) to move to the major cities to seek for better life opportunities. Normally, migrants are usually concerned with the benefits they hope to gain and give less thought to the problems that may be generated to themselves and the society as a result of the process.



Despite many studies on the potential of agricultural subsidies, modelling agricultural production (e.g. Cobb-Douglas agricultural production equation), agricultural intensification and technological innovations none or few of the studies have considered the impacts of rural-urban migrants as a challenge to rural agricultural production. This report contributes to filling this information gap as well as input to the policy processes regarding rural-urban migration and MKUKUTA. It will as well contribute to national strategies that decelerate rural-urban migration.

The general objective of this study therefore was to assess the nature and dynamics of rural-urban migration in Iringa Region. To achieve the goal this study assessed the food security status of households with migrants and those without migrants, examined the different agriculture based factors influencing rural-urban migration from local perceptions and finally assessed the role of government in mitigating rural-urban migration in Iringa region.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### Study Site Description

The study was conducted in Iringa rural, Makete and Mufindi districts. The selection was based on the fact that Iringa rural is famous for Maize and rice production while Makete and Mufindi are good producers of potatoes, tea and timber plantations. Further, in spite of their high agriculture productivity, migrants are known to originate from these districts.

### Data Collection

The study employed questionnaires which were administered orally to selected households in three districts. Two villages were then randomly selected from each district making a total of six sample villages. Interviewed households were selected purposely in order to include as much as possible the households with migrant and without migrant family members. Questionnaires were administered to 15 households from each of Iringa rural (Kiponzelo and Maboga), Makete and Mufindi districts. A total of 45 household (i.e. 15 households from each district) were interviewed. The questionnaires sought to

acquire information on the food security status of households in the villages, different agriculture based factors influencing rural-urban migration from local perceptions and the role of government in mitigating rural-urban migration in the region especially as it relates to Kilimo Kwanza initiatives and youth migration. Participant observations were also used to supplement gender roles in household chores, the information that was hard to collect through questionnaires.

### Data Analysis

Collected qualitative data were organized, presented in numerical basis and finally analyzed using Microsoft Excel software. Results were summarized and presented using the measures of central tendency (mean), pie and bar charts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Rural-Urban Migration- Situation Analysis

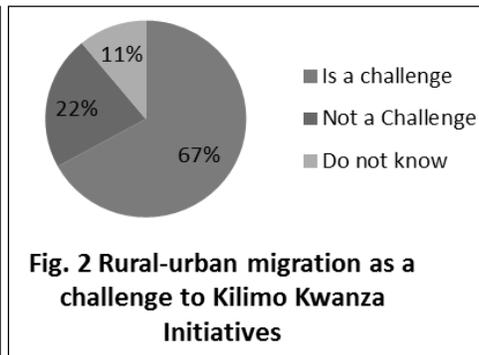
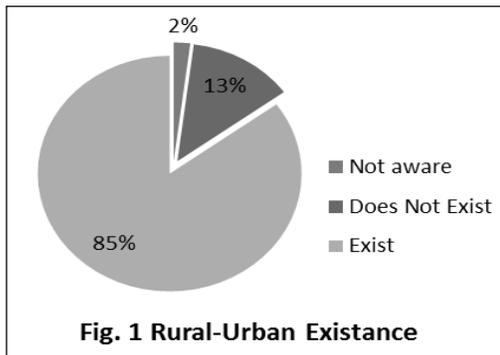
Assessment of whether there exist migration and if it is a challenge was established in order to create a link between rural-urban migration and agricultural production especially Kilimo Kwanza performance in the study districts. Figure 1 and 2 indicated that the rural-urban migration exists and it is a challenge to agricultural production and Kilimo Kwanza initiatives. Accordingly, 85% of the interviewed respondents revealed that rural-urban migration exists (fig.1) while 67% respondents agreed that migration is a challenge to Kilimo Kwanza initiatives in the region (Figure.2). This therefore calls for efforts to decelerate youth migration out of the village. About 13% of the respondents said that migration does not exist. This might be view as they never take it seriously or they have no not experience the migration in their family. Minority (2%) of the respondent seems not aware with the migration issues. The implication is that this small portion are susceptible to undertake migration since they are not ware with the risk associated with the phenomenon, hence call for education extension of the implication of migration to agricultural productions. In figure 2, about 22% of the respondents confirmed that although migration exists it is neither a challenge Kilimo Kwanza nor food security.

Their main arguments were; when member of household move out of the family even its



food share is removed, so the migration seem not a big challenge to them unless the migrants

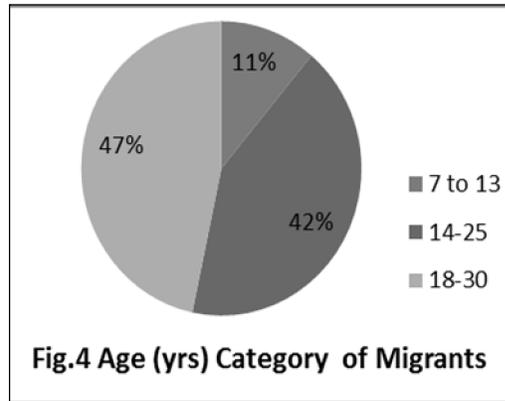
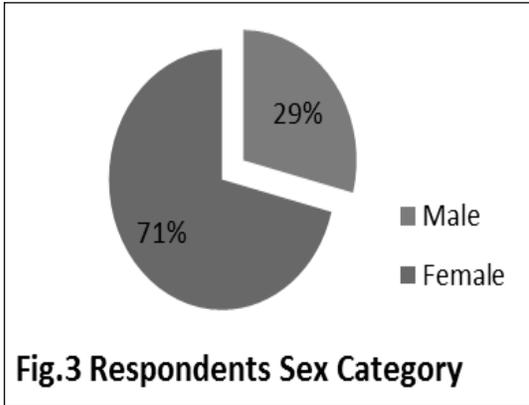
were the major labour source.



### Gender Participation in Agriculture Productions

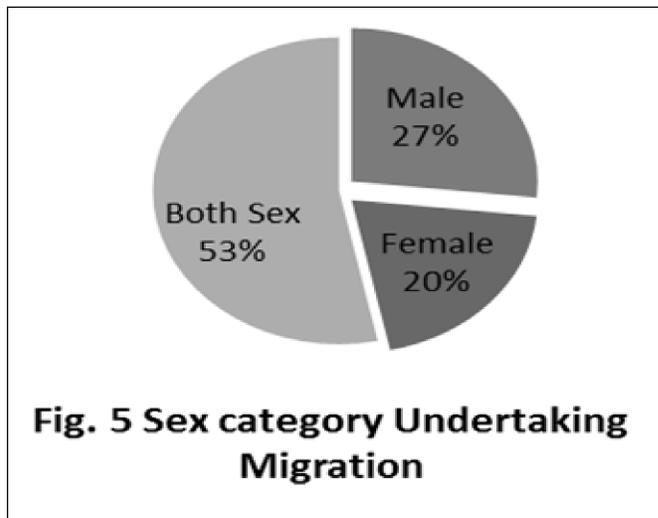
Majority (71%) of the respondents were females (Figure 3). This may be due to the fact that most of men were out of house at the time of data collection. Also when visited the respondents in their farm, women were the majority. The findings indicate that women in Iringa are more involved in agricultural practices than men. The study also assessed on the age category involved in undertaking migration. The results indicate that the age group of 18-30 years (47%) are the most affected by rural-urban migration followed closely by the age group 14-25 (42%)(Figure 4), When assessed the sex category mostly affected by rural urban-migration the results indicated that though males make the biggest proportion of migrants (27%), both male and female (53%) do migrate (Figure 5). These results imply that young people are usually

ambitious, impatient and have no capital to invest in modern agriculture. Some of them even escape from their family after school dropout and they feel like investing in agriculture is a punishment. Most of the reasons spelled out during the interview were that investing in commercial agriculture or to produce for surplus does not only depend on availability of agricultural subsidies but also market and communication network in order to ferry the produce to consumers. Further it was discovered that some of the village like Maboga in Iringa rural rent farms for agricultural production, as a result low income people fail to acquire land for agriculture production. This result into most of the young people migrating out to search for greener kind of work hence impair *Kilimo Kwanza* initiatives and food security at household level.



Only 20% of the respondent (Figure 5) agreed that females move to urban areas, the reason being that women are afraid of facing new environments compared to men who believe that they were born to fight. Most parents/relatives confessed that those who moved out from the village have no much contribution back home as far as the Kilimo Kwanza initiatives is concerned. This is because some of them face difficulties and have no remittances to send back home rather

add their children back to the community. The situation is even worse when they fall sick and go back to join their relatives and by so doing agricultural production is impaired and the family take the sole responsibilities of taking care of the sick ones who return home. This situation was revealed at Makete district where there are high HIV cases that are attributed to interactions resulting from the patterns of migration.



**Food Security Status of Households with Migrants and those with no Migrants**

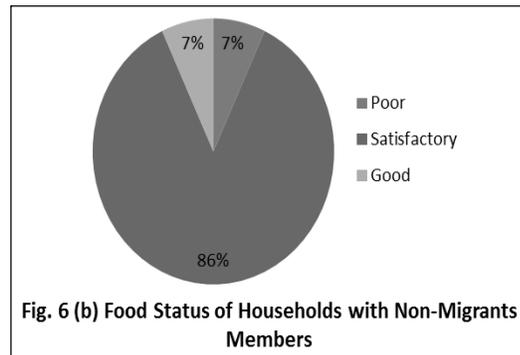
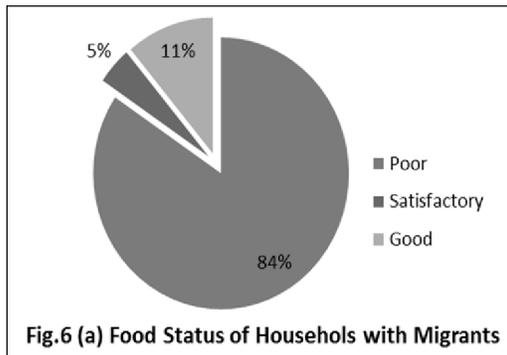
Agriculture provides the livelihood of most people in Makete, Mufindi and Iringa Rural districts. Majority of people dwelling in these districts are involved in the production of maize, wheat, potatoes, timber and tea.

Pumpkin, phaseolus beans and peas are cultivated as mixed crops. Because of the temperate like climate, fruit trees such as plums, peaches, apples and pears are also grown. The region is known for its bamboo wine (ulanzi), a famous local brew which is prepared from the fermented juice of the bamboo (*Oxytenanthera braunii*).



About 84% of the respondents (Fig 6a) revealed that the food status of the household with migrants was poor compared to that of non-migrants household 7% (Fig 6b). Also the results indicated that food security for the non-migrants households were satisfactory (86%) compared with household with migrants. This

is because young people in the family are usually the major labour force for agricultural production. Therefore if the productive ages continue to move out they become a hindrance to Kilimo Kwanza initiatives hence impair the food security.



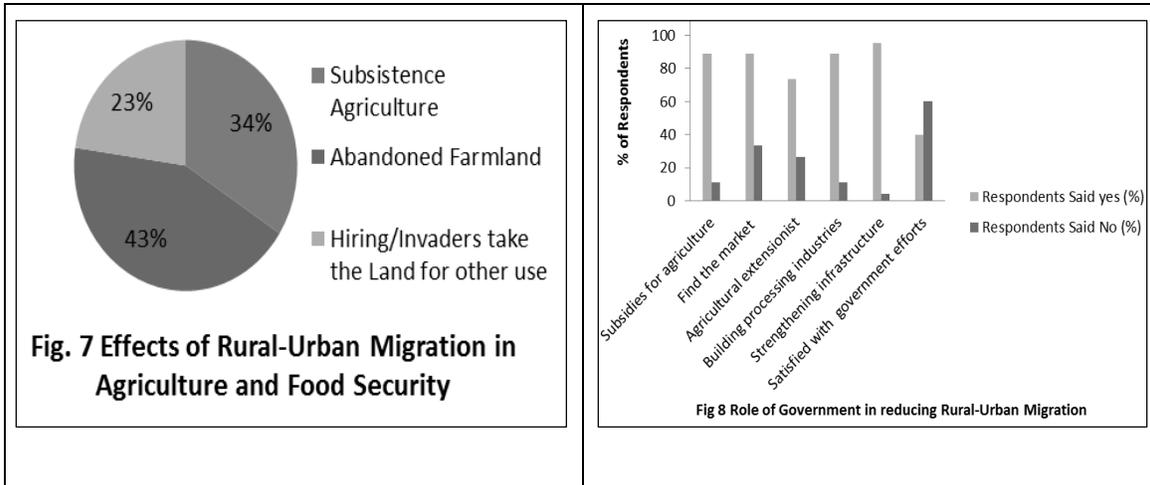
### Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Agricultural Production

It was also revealed that when children or members of the family move out, the household of the migrants face difficulties in agriculture, as about 34% of production shifts to subsistence farming due to inadequate labour force. Further most farming lands (43%) become abandoned or rented at low price in order to earn a leaving (Fig 7). These findings suggest that if no measure taken to reduce rural-urban migration, most of the area used for food production might turn into forest or act as a charm for land grabbing for non-food crops for export those results into food shortage in the region. Hence call for more food relief.

### The Role of Government in Reducing Rural-Urban Migration

The study was interested to understand how the community perceived the role of government in reducing rural-urban migrations. Hence respondents were asked if they had a role to play in reducing the migration. The majority (90%) of the community however strongly believes that it is the role of the government to continue subsidizing agriculture, find and control the market for the produce, providing extension

officers, and building the communication networks to enable efficient access to markets. About 48% of the respondent agreed that the government was providing them with subsidies though arriving late thus not serving the purpose adequately (fig. 8). Also building and reviving small processing industries seemed as an option to reduce migration as the process will create more jobs as well as add values agricultural and non-agricultural produce. Iringa region for example is famous for local brew “Ulanzi”, a locally made alcohol from bamboo plants, which is used as drink refreshment for villagers. A small manufacturing or processing industry would enhance the production and preservation of the local brews hence improving the income and thus decelerating the rural-urban movement in the region. People move from one place to another in search of life relief, their creating job vacancies within the region could reduce the migration. The other views the findings would be surplus agricultural produce without an assurance of good market is a force of rural urban migration and decelerating efforts towards the Kilimo Kwanza initiatives. Majority of respondents lamented that the government is doing very little to decelerate rural-urban migration.



### CONCLUSIONS

Rural-urban migration is driven by hardships' associated with agricultural production processes such as unavailability of capital, poor farm implements, poor infrastructure (feeder roads), dependence on rain-fed production and poor markets. Not only agriculture subsidies will accelerate Kilimo Kwanza initiatives, but also reducing rural-urban migrations will gear up the process. Some of the finding suggested that land use planning, improved working environment (e.g. modern agriculture practices), infrastructure networking, education extension, efficient marketing process and control of agricultural produce will improve village life and in turn decelerate the rural urban migration while attracting the productive group to engage in agricultural practices.

The findings recommended that the government and the community have the role to play in order to reduce the rural urban influx and rather enhance urban-rural influxes. In order to reduce rural-urban migration the government should ensure the followings.

- Subsidies should reach the farmer on time at reasonable price to avoid the current situation where farmers complain to get subsidies late which cannot suffice the needs of farmers.
- The government (local, regional or central) should search and control the market for agriculture produce to avoid 'lumbesa'. Through Kilimo Kwanza subsidies, farmers have managed to produce surplus but the market is not well

planned. If this is well strategized, the process promised to reduce 80% of rural-urban migration because of employment creation and commercialization of agriculture.

- Build small and medium processing industry. Most of the respondent revealed that selling pre-processed or value added agriculture produce will help make agriculture industry grow in the region and eventual eliminate the rural-urban migration
- Strengthen the infrastructure network, especially feeder roads to facilitate farming activities. Also improved telecommunication infrastructure could aid the purchase and sell of agricultural produce. The discussed services at present were M-Pesa, Tigo-pesa and Airtel-Money.
- Land use planning and fair distribution of community land for agriculture is an essential pro-poor approach to minimizing rural-urban migration. Meaning that, secure land turner will enhance demoralized people who they own nothing and hence they are slave in they are own land.
- Furthermore, ensuring adequate agriculture extension services through improvement of the working environment will improve the current situation where one extension officer save the whole district.



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