



# Potential for Poverty Reduction Strategies to Address Community Priorities: Case Study of Kenya

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**Summary.** — Poverty reduction strategies show promise for more transparent and rational delivery of public services to meet the needs of Africa's rural poor. An analysis was conducted to determine how closely Kenya's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) matches with the problems and priorities articulated by residents of 80 rural communities in 10 districts of Western Kenya. The results suggest that there was a good match between national PRSP priorities and priorities generated from the 80 rural communities, but poor matches between district level PRSP priorities and community priorities, and between national PRSP priorities and the national PRSP implementation plan. The results imply the need for a stronger multiscale approach to poverty reduction, with special emphasis on the mesoscales of locations and districts.

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**Key words** — Kenya, PRSPs, poverty reduction, Africa, decentralization

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty alleviation moved to the very top of the international development agenda in the 1990s. The goal of halving, between 1990 and 2015, the number of people whose income is less than \$US one per day was the first of the eight Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. The World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund launched the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative in 1996 to provide debt relief to 41 heavily indebted poor countries, 32 of which are located in sub-Saharan Africa. In September 1999 it was agreed that concessional lending and debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative would be based on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Since that time several multilateral and bilateral donors in addition to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have indicated that they will only support activities that are clearly spelled out and given priority in the PRSP documents. By April 2004, 37 countries had completed their first full PRSP and 48 had completed Interim PRSPs

([www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/board-list.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/board-list.pdf)).

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers have thus become among the most important documents for national planning and communicating priorities to development partners. As the PRSP process has unfolded over the last several years, analysts have noted both achievements and concerns with the PRSP papers and the

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poverty reduction programs that they support. Analysts generally agree on two major achievements. First, poverty reduction has been brought to the center of national planning processes, so that sector investments need to be clearly justified in terms of their impacts on poverty. Second, the PRSP processes have generally been more transparent and participatory than other national planning processes (Booth, 2003; Hanmer, Ikiara, Eberlei, & Abong, 2003). Two general concerns also stand out. One concern is that interim and finalized PRSP documents give relatively low priority to sectors that many development specialists regard as important for reducing poverty—agriculture, human health (Verhaul & Rowson, 2002), environmental conservation (<http://www.eldis.org/static/DOC10391.htm>), and water supply (Calaguas & McConnell, 2002). Another concern is that poverty reduction strategies are implemented in a top-down, technocratic manner, while governments in most countries are decentralizing administration and devolving authority to lower levels of government and public administration.

The appropriate roles for central, intermediate and local governance structures are unresolved issues in poverty reduction planning. In a few countries, such as the Philippines, there have been genuine citizen movements for decentralization. In general, however, decentralization is most strongly promoted by organizations such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Program and United Nations Capital Development Fund as a way of diffusing social tensions, increasing accountability, and reducing the role of inefficient state agencies. Skeptics, however, raise important counterpoints. First, national governments that embrace decentralization often do so as a means of off-loading expenditures from overstretched national budgets, with the result that service provision is shifted to local authorities without corresponding finances or other resources (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001). Second, experience has shown that it is difficult for local government units in most developing countries to generate effective and responsive delivery of public services. A number of factors contribute to this poor performance: weak local tax bases mean that local governments are overly dependent on central resources or overly extractive of local economic activity; weak mechanisms for monitoring the performance of local civil servants mean that their performance is variable and subject to corruption; difficulties for local

governments in remote rural areas to attract high-quality personnel reduces the quality of services provided; and weak political accountability means that local governments are subject to capture by local elites (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000; Francis & James, 2003).

This paper considers these two interrelated concerns of poverty reduction planning—the ways that PRSP processes reflect sector priorities and the case for decentralized planning and implementation of poverty reduction strategies. The focus here is on Kenya, a country where new procedures are being instituted for economic planning and where decentralization of governance is hotly contested. The situation is very dynamic: while the country's interim and revised PRSPs were developed under the KANU government of President Moi in 2000 and 2001, the finalized PRSP was submitted to the World Bank by the NARC government of President Kibaki in early 2004. In this paper I compare how priorities and budgetary allocations from the IPRSP of 2001 correspond with village-level priorities from 80 villages in Western Kenya. I discuss the implications of mismatches in those priorities for the design and implementation of poverty reduction strategies.

## 2. BACKGROUND ON THE CASE STUDY

### (a) *Poverty in Kenya*

The Republic of Kenya experiences levels of poverty that placed it at number 146 of the 175 countries that were ranked by the United Nations Development Program in terms of Human Development Index (HDI) in 2001. Kenya's economic and development performance has fallen steadily since 1990, with a growth rate in per capita income of  $-0.6\%$  and a drop in the Human Development Index from 0.535 in 1990 to 0.489 in 2001 ([http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty\\_f\\_KEN.html](http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty_f_KEN.html)).<sup>1</sup>

Jayne *et al.* (2001) have assembled the best set of evidence regarding multilevel determinants poverty in Kenya, using a Tegemeo/Michigan State University panel data from 1,500 agricultural households in 24 districts. They conclude that 6.4% of total variation in household per-capita income is accounted for between-province differences, 14.3% by between-district differences within provinces, 23.5% by between-village differences in districts, and

50% by between-household differences within villages. The main determinants of income per capita were land size (a nonlinear relationship), years of primary education, value of livestock assets, and sex of household head.

The analysis presented in this paper focuses on western Kenya, an area of high and deepening poverty and environmental degradation. Most of western Kenya north of the Winam Gulf of Lake Victoria lies in Western Province; most of western Kenya south of the Winam Gulf falls in Nyanza Province; and some of west-central Kenya lies in Rift Valley Province. The Kenya Bureau of Statistics estimated the percentage of households with expenditures below the absolute poverty line in 1997 to be 58.8% in Western Province, 63.1% in Nyanza Province, and 52.3% for the country as a whole. By the year 2000, Kimalu, Nafula, Manda, Mwabu, and Kimenyi (2002) estimated that the rate of absolute poverty had increased to 66% in Western Province, 71% in Nyanza Province, and 57% for the country as a whole.

(b) *The poverty reduction strategy paper process in Kenya*

Kenya's interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP) was adopted by the Government of Kenya in June 2000 on the basis of household data from the 1994 and 1997 Welfare Monitoring Survey as summarized in the reports entitled *Poverty in Kenya*. The IPRSP was then updated and revised during 2001 on the basis of national-level consultations held around key themes and sectors, district-level consultations held in all 70 districts, and participatory poverty assessments held in 10 districts. Centralized planning was conducted through nine sector working groups, each of which was chaired by a Permanent Secretary, and eight thematic working groups. Each working group prepared a report after a series of meetings. Decentralized planning focused on the district level, with consultations and consultation reports prepared for all 70 districts in the country. In 45 districts, the consultation report was based upon a one-day general consultation with stakeholders representing the private sector, public sector, women leaders, religious leaders and other special interest groups. Each district consultation was facilitated by a district secretariat and chaired by a nongovernmental organization (NGO). Between 80 and 160 people attended

the district consultations. In the other 25 districts, a more in-depth process was followed. In each of those districts, a number of facilitators were first trained, a first district consultative forum was convened with a cross-section of stakeholders, division-level consultations were held in every division (most districts have about six divisions), and division-level results reported and discussed at a second district consultative forum. Between 400 and 1,200 persons were consulted in each of the 25 districts included in the indepth assessment and planning process. Results from the working groups and districts were then compiled and used to prepare a revised Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. In September 2001, the Ministry of Finance and Planning of the Government of Kenya published consultation reports for all districts and reports for all working groups. A revised PRSP document for 2001–04 was produced in November 2001. The analysis in this paper focused on the 2001 revised version of the PRSP document. As noted below, a further revision of the PRSP document was approved by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in May 2004.

Kenya's National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper has been both praised and criticized. On the positive side, the PRSP is praised for: (i) broadening participation and increasing transparency of national planning; (ii) increasing the emphasis on poverty alleviation among various government agencies; and (iii) enhancing synergies between government and civil society organizations (Hanmer *et al.*, 2003). On the negative side, the PRSP is criticized for: reporting the incidence of poverty in a way that conceals important differences by region, population group, or gender; not clarifying the causes of poverty;<sup>2</sup> not providing information on the quality and quantity of public services provided to different groups or regions; concentrating on expenditure measures of poverty; restricting the final preparation of the papers to a few individuals in the government departments responsible for finance and planning; not providing adequate opportunities for the perspectives of poor people or Members of Parliament to be incorporated in the planning process; proposing expenditure priorities that do not match with the apparent needs of the poor; and poor implementation of some district-level consultations (Calaguas & McConnell, 2002; Kiringai & Manda, 2002; Maji na Ufanisi, 2002; Wilkes & Lefrancois, 2002).

(c) *Final PRSP approval and constitutional review processes*

In part because of the national election in December 2002 and the change of government that resulted from that election, the revised PRSP document was not formally submitted to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund until early 2004. In the interim, the new government put priority on the development of an Economic Recovery Strategy that integrated the NARC manifesto, the revised PRSP, the National Action Plan and other policy documents. In November 2003 the IMF approved Kenya's Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC), approving concessional loans of up to \$252 million over a three-year period. The Kenyan government then expanded the ERSWEC into a final Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. On May 10, 2004, the IMF announced its approval of Kenya's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IMF press releases numbers 03/201, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2003/pr-03201.htm> and 04/94 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2004/pr0494.htm>).

Kenya's decentralization process has not advanced as far as the PRSP process. In October 2000, the Government of Kenya passed The Constitution of Kenya Review Act, Chapter 3A of the Laws of Kenya (as amended) mandating a Constitutional Review Commission to spearhead a constitutional review process which would culminate in a National Constitutional Conference. The review process was suspended in the runup to the December 2002 general elections and was re-convened by the NARC government under President Kibaki. The National Constitutional Conference adopted "The Draft Constitution of Kenya, 2004" on March 15, 2004. The draft constitution can be viewed on the internet at <http://www.kenyaconstitution.org/html/draftconstitution.htm>. Chapter 14 of the draft constitution is entitled "Devolved Government." It proposes a four-tier government structure, with locations as the lowest tier, districts as the second tier, regions as the third tier, and the national government as the top tier. The district would become the principle level of government for devolution of powers from the national government, with regional governments responsible for coordinating projects and programs across districts, and location governments responsible for the efficient provision of services and other government functions devolved to them from districts.

(d) *Responding to community priorities through agricultural extension*

With the high levels of corruption that characterized Kenya in the 1990s (see note 1), many of the donors who still supported Kenya opted to direct resources through private and NGOs and to focus development efforts on particular regions of the country. One donor-funded program that continued to operate within the government structure is the National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Programme (NALEP) financed by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and implemented by the Kenya Ministry of Agriculture. NALEP is implemented in 42 of Kenya's most densely populated rural districts. The basis of the NALEP approach is the shifting focal area: extension staff concentrate on one or two focal areas of about 300 ha and 300 households in each division each financial year, shifting to new areas at the beginning of each new financial year. The goal is to engage with about 100,000 new households every year. The first four-year phase of the NALEP program was implemented in 2000–04.

The NALEP approach begins with a five-day participatory rural appraisal (PRA) involving Ministry of Agriculture subject-matter specialists, front-line extension workers and the rural communities. The PRA concludes with the preparation of a participatory appraisal of problems, a community action plan for addressing those problems, and the election of a focal area development committee. The matrix ranking procedure is used to prioritize problems in the community action plans. In the months that follow the preparation of the PRA, staff from the Ministry of Agriculture facilitate the implementation of the community action plan, the activities of common interest groups, and the preparation of farm-specific action plans for every farm. Staff from the Ministry of Agriculture provide specific information on technologies and enterprises, link community groups with other providers of material, technical and market support, provide training in technical and business skills, arrange cross-site exchange visits to other communities, and provide a few material inputs for community infrastructure. For the analysis presented in this paper I had access to community action plans for 80 focal areas in 10 districts in the western part of the country.

### 3. METHODS AND DATA

This paper uses simple approaches to analyze information generated and presented for other purposes. The information that is most difficult to deal with is the PRSP information. Kenya's national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for the period 2001–04 (Ministry of Finance & Planning, 2001) contains: a narrative listing of sector priorities; a 32-page implementation matrix of objectives, activities, outputs, costs and implementing agencies; 180 pages of priorities and suggested actions by sector, thematic group and district; and most importantly, a five-page annex showing how the sector priorities were re-mapped into resource allocation priorities. For the purposes of this analysis, I focus on the implementation matrix and the table of sector priorities.

In addition to the overall report, the Government of Kenya also published Consultation Reports for every district and for every thematic group. Because these consultation documents varied in content, size and quality, I relied on a more holistic and qualitative assessment of each district document.

MOARD staff from eight districts in Western Kenya were requested to provide copies of the focal area development plans for 10 focal areas initiated in 2000–01, 2001–02, and 2002–03, two in each of five divisions. Staff in all districts agreed and willingly provided the data. The eight districts represent a range of biophysical and socioeconomic circumstances. Two districts (Nyando and Bondo) are located in the Kano plains immediately adjacent to Lake Victoria. Two districts (Siaya and Migori) cover a range of conditions from the Lake Victoria shoreline to highland areas. Four districts (Vihiga, Kisii, Kericho and Nyamira) are wholly within the Western highlands—with consider-

able variation in population density. Three districts—Siaya, Vihiga and Nyamira—were among the 25 districts that had division level consultations in addition to the district level consultations. Table 1 provides some additional information about the districts. More information about the focal area communities is presented in Appendix A.

The number of local residents involved in the focal area PRAs in Western Kenya ranged from about 30 persons to about 120 persons, with an average of 60 persons representing between 200 and 400 households. About 60% of participants were men and 40% were women.

The NALEP Focal Area PRA exercises generated lists of priority problems. The 80 groups varied considerably in the number of problems they identified, from a maximum of 15 to a minimum of four. In order to summarize and compare priorities across the focal areas, I assigned a score of 12 to the highest priority, 11 to the second highest priority, and so on to 1 for the 12th highest priority. Issues listed as lower than 12th priority were not given a score. About 130 individual priorities were mentioned in the 80 focal areas. I aggregated the individual priorities into categories that matched with the national PRSP document. As an informal check on the validity of the NALEP focal area results, I also compiled data from 13 other PRAs that were conducted in one of the districts, nine by a NGO called ViAgroforestry and four by a government programme called Community-Based Nutrition Programme.<sup>3</sup>

### 4. RESULTS

This section of the paper presents data on village level priorities that were articulated in the 80 NALEP focal areas and how those compare

Table 1. *Profiles of districts included in the NALEP PRA analysis*

District	District size (km <sup>2</sup> of landmass)	Population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	% rural residents below absolute poverty line in 1997	Elevation range (meters above sea level)	Number of persons involved in PRSP consultations
Nyando	1,164	270	66	1,135–1,300	159
Bondo	972	246	74	1,135–1,350	118
Nyamira	879	566	63	1,500–1,800	Approx. 1,300
Siaya	1,523	315	67	1,135–1,400	488
Vihiga	563	886	53	1,300–1,500	Approx. 1,500
Kisii Central	649	758	63	1,600–2,000	140
Migori	2,030	229	70	1,135–1,700	233
Kericho	2,111	222	58	1,600–2,500	152

Sources: District PRSP Consultation Reports for each of the eight districts.

with the priorities emerging from the district and national-level PRSP processes.

(a) *Focal area priorities*

Table 2 shows the 113 distinct priority problems listed in the 80 focal areas and how I aggregated those problems into major groups. To facilitate easy comparison with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, I attempted to group problems according to the subsectors and sectors listed in the PRSP. One result to note from this table is that 63 of the 113 priority problems fall under the category of agricultural and rural development in the PRSP. This is not surprising; all 80 focal areas were rural communities and the planning process was facilitated by the Ministry of Agriculture. The results do imply that detailed and location-specific planning is needed to prioritize investments in the agriculture and rural development sector. A second result to note is that different community groups had different ways of articulating shared problems and linking those problems to priority community actions. Some communities tended to express problems as the converse of the specific service or intervention they wanted the government or another external agency to help them to address, while other communities expressed problems in more general terms even when they had specific activities in mind. This was especially the case, for example, in communities that noted unemployment, poverty and low income as problems. Typical solutions for such problems were specific common interest groups for income generating activities. A third result to note is that most problems are general for all or most households. It appears that the needs of particular groups of households or particular demographic groups have not emerged from these exercises at the village level.

Table 3 shows the number of focal areas in which each of the subsectors was mentioned, the total priority score given to those subsectors across the 80 focal areas, and the percentage of times mentioned and scores comprised by that subsector. The results show that low crop production tops the list of priorities. Together, low crop production, agricultural extension, better crop marketing and better inputs into crop production add up to a total of 29.3% of the total score and 28.2% of the total number of priorities mentioned. Livestock disease, low livestock production and livestock inputs are a clear second priority, comprising 13.4% of the total

score and 14.1% of the total number of priorities mentioned. Next in order are three concerns that are given relatively equal weight across the 80 villages: water and sanitation, human disease and health care, and degradation of soils and other local resources. Three more subsectors are indicated in a fourth level of priority: transport and communication, availability of wood products, and culture, norms and community organization. Insecurity, education facilities and general government services were given the lowest level of overall priority. People in these 80 focal areas clearly see the links between their welfare and the environment: while 29.3% of the total score relates to improved crop agriculture, 27.0% of the total score relates to improved management of water, soils, trees and the natural environment.

Table 4 presents a further aggregation of the focal area priorities into the sectors of the Kenya Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Both the scores and the number of times mentioned indicate that agriculture and rural development is the top priority sector, followed by human resource development, followed by physical infrastructure. It is not surprising that the 76.4% of the total score falls under agriculture and rural development. After all, the priority setting exercises were conducted in 80 rural communities and led by Ministry of Agriculture extension staff. What may be more surprising is the relatively high emphasis given to human resource development, particularly human health.

As a followup to the original analysis, I conducted an informal check of the extent of bias that resulted from having such a large involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture. As suggested by an anonymous reviewer, I compared the priorities emerging from different PRA planning processes in Nyando district: the eight NALEP focal area PRAs described above, nine PRAs conducted by the NGO ViAgroforestry (Vi) in 2003, and four PRAs conducted by the Community Based Nutrition Programme (CBNP) in 2003 and 2004. The results show Pearson correlation coefficients of 0.901 between the NALEP and Vi, 0.754 between NALEP and CBNP, and 0.844 between Vi and CBNP. These results indicate no obvious discrepancies between the priorities emerging from the three separate processes.

There are clear differences in priorities between districts. Table 5 presents information on the scores for each subsector for each of the eight districts, in which the score for each district is derived by adding the scores for each

Table 2. *Priority issues raised in the community ranking exercises in 80 NALEP focal areas*

Specific issues raised in the focal areas	PRSP subsector	PRSP sector
Food shortage, poor diets, low crop yield, lack of balanced diet, lack of food security crops, poor crop husbandry, poor choice of crops, lack of cash crops, weeds, pests, crop pests and diseases, striga infestation, wildlife pests, inadequate vegetables and fruit	Crop production	Agriculture and rural development
Poor veterinary services; lack of AI service; high costs of veterinary services; lack of cattle dips; low quality livestock breeds; lack of dairy animals; lack of draft animals; lack of improved layers	Livestock disease and production	Agriculture and rural development
Lack of clean water; poor sanitation	Water and sanitation	Agriculture and rural development
HIV/AIDS; human diseases; inadequate medical facilities; inadequate knowledge of human health; poor health; lack of mosquito nets; malaria outbreak	Human disease and health care	Human resource development
Soil fertility; soil erosion	Soil degradation	Agriculture and rural development
Low income; lack of employment; high poverty levels; high dependency ratio	Poverty and income	Physical infrastructure
Poor roads; poor communication; poor infrastructure; inadequate bridges; poor transport and communication	Transport and communication	
Inadequate knowledge of agriculture, Lack of technical knowhow, Lack extension services	Agricultural knowledge and extension	Agriculture and rural development
Lack of fuelwood and tree products; inadequate trees; low agroforestry practices	Trees and agroforestry	Agriculture and rural development
Mismanagement of community groups; poor leadership; dormant self-help groups; lack of cooperation; lack of cooperation; lack of community cohesiveness; inadequate community groups; orphans; traditional and cultural practices; cultural order; laziness; few youths in farming; widows have little help; men are decision makers; drug abuse; gender bias; land succession problem; poor home management; school dropouts	Culture, norms and community organization	Human resource development
Flooding; unreliable rainfall; poor land management; eucalyptus on farm boundaries; high population; poor farm planning; communal grazing; inadequate pasture/fodder; small land sizes	Resources and environmental management	Agriculture and rural development

Table 2—continued

Specific issues raised in the focal areas	PRSP subsector	PRSP sector
Problems with sugar cane marketing; poor market for farm produce; lack of market for cotton and sisal; low prices for farm produce; poor marketing; lack of processing for horticulture; low coffee payments	Product marketing	Agriculture and rural development
Poor veterinary services; lack of artificial insemination service; high costs of veterinary services; lack of cattle dips; low quality livestock breeds; lack of dairy animals; lack of draft animals; lack of improved layers	Livestock inputs and services	Agriculture and rural development
Poor quality seeds, lack of credit facilities, inadequate farm labour, inadequate land preparation equipment, inadequate farm inputs, no stockist for inputs	Inputs into crop agriculture	Agriculture and rural development
Cattle theft; theft of farm produce	Insecurity	Public safety, law and order
No nursery school; lack of learning facilities; education facilities; low education standards; high illiteracy	Education services and facilities	Human resource development
Lack electricity; poor government services; inadequate cooperation from administration	General government services	Public administration

Source: Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.



Table 3. *Priority problems across the 80 focal areas, grouped according to major subsectors of the Kenyan PRSP document*

Subsector	Frequency (number of times that elements of the problem area were identified as a priority in the 80 focal areas)	Percentage of times elements of the problem area were identified as priority in 80 focal areas	Total score (sum of scores across 80 focal areas)	Percentage of total score across all subsectors in the 80 focal areas
Crop production	101	16.4	899	17.9
Livestock disease and production	66	10.7	505	10.1
Water and sanitation	53	8.6	500	10.0
Human disease and health care	52	8.5	479	9.6
Soil degradation	46	7.5	444	8.9
Poverty and income	38	6.2	346	6.9
Transport and communication	39	6.4	276	5.5
Agricultural knowledge and extension	23	3.7	224	4.5
Trees and agroforestry	33	5.4	213	4.3
Culture, norms and community organization	30	4.9	203	4.1
Resources and environmental management	32	5.2	191	3.8
Product marketing	27	4.4	184	3.7
Livestock inputs and services	21	3.4	165	3.3
Inputs into crop agriculture	23	3.7	159	3.2
Insecurity	14	2.3	107	2.1
Education services and facilities	12	1.9	92	1.8
General government services	4	0.6	23	0.4

*Source:* Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.

Table 4. *Priority problems across the 80 focal areas, grouped according to sectors of the Kenyan PRSP document*

Sector	Frequency (number of times that elements of the sector were identified as a priority in the 80 focal areas)	Percentage of times elements of the sector were identified as priority in 80 focal areas	Total score (sum of scores across 80 focal areas)	Percentage of total score across all sectors in the 80 focal areas
Agriculture and rural development	463	75.4	3,830	76.4
Human resource development	64	10.4	571	11.4
Physical infrastructure	39	6.4	276	5.5
Trade, industry and tourism	0	0.0	0	0.0
Public safety, law and order	14	2.3	107	2.1
National security	0	0.0	0	0.0
Public administration	4	0.7	23	0.4
Other	30	4.9	203	4.4

Source: Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.

Table 5. *Priority problems across the 80 focal areas, grouped according to major subsectors of the Kenyan PRSP document (scores)*

Subsector	Nyando	Bondo	Nyamira	Siaya	Vihiga	Kisii	Migori	Kericho
Crop production	114	129	69	119	151	105	123	89
Livestock disease and production	108	81	33	20	62	59	49	93
Water and sanitation	66	87	58	36	0	103	84	66
Human disease and health care	90	92	78	52	0	60	45	62
Soil degradation	49	43	42	44	79	58	77	52
Poverty and income	25	48	19	47	62	39	52	54
Transport and communication	43	11	37	37	41	28	21	58
Agricultural knowledge and extension	11	5	54	41	24	25	22	42
Wood products	54	28	12	25	48	0	23	23
Culture, norms and community organization	20	25	52	26	49	5	15	11
Resources and environmental management	25	46	33	17	3	9	27	31
Product marketing	30	14	15	33	0	22	25	45
Livestock inputs and services	0	0	35	0	12	59	45	14
Inputs into crop agriculture	11	5	54	41	24	25	22	42
Insecurity	27	19	13	11	13	8	16	0
Education services and facilities	0	15	19	11	0	0	21	26
General government services	0	0	12	0	8	3	0	0

Source: Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.

of the 10 focal areas in the district. Some districts gave scores of zero for subsectors that were given high scores in other districts. For example, in Vihiga total scores of zero were recorded for human diseases and water, while these two problem areas were given very high priority in Bondo, Nyando and Kisii. Product marketing was also given a zero score in Vihiga, but a score of 45 in Kericho. Lack of trees and wood was given a zero score in Kisii, but a score of 54 in Nyando. From these data it is difficult to determine whether these differences resulted in overall differences in priorities across districts, large differences in priorities between villages that are not evened out by large sample size, or differences in the methods used to generate the priorities.

In order to better determine the reasons for differences between districts, a set of correlation analyses were conducted. In each of the eight districts I generated correlation coefficients for the scores given to each subsector between the 10 focal areas in the district. This produced 45 bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients for each district, a total of 360 for the eight districts. In addition, I generated bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients for the total scores given to each subsector between the districts. The results, presented in Tables 6 and 7, illustrate that there is less correlation in priorities between focal areas in a district than there is between the eight districts. Table 6 shows that while there are some pairs of focal areas in each district that have quite similar priorities, there

Table 6. *Results of correlation analyses of problem groups between focal areas within eight districts of Western Kenya*

District name	Minimum correlation between priority scores in the 10 focal areas	Maximum correlation between priority scores in the 10 focal areas	Percentage of statistically significant correlations between priority scores in the 10 focal areas
Nyando	-.088	.900	47
Bondo	-.184	.824	26
Nyamira	-.371	.623	13
Siaya	-.063	.818	36
Vihiga	-.078	.864	20
Kisii	-.188	.833	24
Migori	-.288	.712	24
Kericho	-.429	.762	16

Source: Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.

Table 7. *Correlation coefficients for priority weights by category of problem in the PRAs conducted in 2000–02, summed for 10 focal areas per district*

	Nyando	Bondo	Nyamira	Siaya	Vihiga	Kisii	Migori	Kericho
Nyando	1.00							
Bondo	.890**	1.00						
Nyamira	.544	.640*	1.00					
Siaya	.663*	.723*	.636*	1.00				
Vihiga	.558*	.523*	.287	.740*	1.00			
Kisii	.679**	.760**	.680*	.644*	.440	1.00		
Migori	.676*	.799*	.589*	.781*	.649**	.914**	1.00	
Kericho	.824**	.775**	.537*	.683*	.513**	.739**	.710**	1.00

Source: Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.

\* Significant at the 5% level of confidence.

\*\* Significant at the 1% level of confidence.

also are pairs of focal areas with very different priorities. As examples, there is a pair of focal areas in Nyando that have a +0.90 correlation in priorities and another pair of focal areas in Kericho that have a –0.42 correlation in priorities. Of the 360 bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients calculated, only 26% were significantly greater than zero. On the other hand, Table 7 shows that the correlation coefficients for the subsector scores in each district were much higher. As examples, total scores in the lakeshore districts of Bondo and Nyando had a correlation coefficient of 0.890, while scores in the southern highland districts of Migori and Kisii had a correlation coefficient of 0.914. The only insignificant correlations were between Vihiga and Kisii and between Vihiga and Nyamira.

Two issues should be noted regarding the interpretation of the results. First, correlations will tend to be higher for more aggregated scores than for community scores. Second, the correlation in priorities between pairs of focal areas or districts depends upon the way that specific problems are grouped. A previous version of this paper that used somewhat different grouping resulted in different correlation coefficients for the pairs of villages and districts. But the overall results—for example in which districts appeared to have most similar priorities—were not affected by this re-grouping.

(b) *Matches between village, district and national PRSP priorities*

Table 8 presents a comparison of the focal area priorities for each district and the corresponding district-level priorities emerging from the district PRSP consultations. Agriculture,

water for domestic use and livestock, and human health services emerge as clear priorities from both exercises. Livestock diseases, fuelwood, and soil degradation are priorities in many of the focal areas, but do not appear as priorities in the district PRSP consultations. Education and roads are the main priorities emerging from the district PRSPs that do not emerge as priorities from the focal areas.

There appears to be considerable variation in the match between the District PRSP priorities and the focal area priorities. The correspondence appears to be worst in Nyando district, where many of the top priorities from the focal areas are not included in the list of 57 problems identified in the District PRSP consultation. On the other hand, the correspondence appears to be reasonably good for Bondo district.

The national PRSP implementation framework lists seven priority sectors, 106 objectives and 539 activities. From highest to lowest priority, the key sectors were identified to be: (i) agriculture and rural development, (ii) human resource development, (iii) physical infrastructure, (iv) tourism, trade and industry, (v) public safety, law and order, (vi) public administration and (vii) information technology. As indicated in Table 4, the overall priorities from the PRSP match quite well with the priorities emerging from the 80 focal areas.

The greatest mismatch between the national PRSP and community priorities occurs with the proposed budget allocation. The PRSP implementation matrix indicates the amounts of funds that are envisaged for each sector and subsector. The number one priority, agriculture and rural development, was to get 12.9% of the funds. The number two priority, human resource development, was to get 6.7%

Table 8. *Relation between priorities from NALEP focal areas to district PRSPs*

District	Focal area priorities (top 6/district, listed in order of priority from highest at the top to sixth at the bottom)	District PRSP (listing of top priority problems for the documents that indicated clear priorities, up to six priorities per district)
Nyando	Low crop production Livestock diseases Human diseases (esp. HIV/AIDS) Lack clean water Lack fuelwood Soil degradation	57 problems listed, but no priorities stated. No mention of HIV/AIDS, domestic water supply, soil degradation or fuelwood given in document
Bondo	Low crop production Human diseases Lack clean water Livestock diseases High poverty Soil degradation	Food insecurity Safe water supply High morbidity and death rate High school drop out rate Lack of infrastructure
Nyamira	Human diseases Low crop production Lack of clean water Inputs into crop production Lack agricultural extension Transport and communication	Poor road network Agricultural decline Inadequate health services Low education standards Lack of safe drinking water Inadequate energy supply
Siaya	Low crop production Human diseases High poverty Soil degradation Poor extension services Transport and communication	Agriculture (knowledge, inputs, irrigation, marketing, land tenure, cash crops, soil conservation)  Water and sanitation Education Health
Vihiga	Low crop production Soil degradation Poverty and income Livestock diseases and production Culture, norms and organization Lack fuelwood	Agriculture (lands, crops, livestock, low yields, inadequate water, environment, cooperatives)  Education Roads improvement and maintenance Security Trade

Table 8—*continued*

District	Focal area priorities (top 6/district, listed in order of priority from highest at the top to sixth at the bottom)	District PRSP (listing of top priority problems for the documents that indicated clear priorities, up to six priorities per district)
Kisii	Low crop production Lack of clean water Human diseases Livestock production and diseases Inadequate agricultural inputs Soil degradation	Roads Agriculture Education Health Security Credit facility
Migori	Low crop production Lack of clean water Soil degradation Poverty and income Livestock diseases Livestock inputs and services	134 problems listed, but no priorities given. All FA priorities mentioned
Kericho	Livestock diseases and production Low crop production Lack of clean water Human diseases Transport and communication Poverty and income	Agriculture (food security, horticulture, industrial crops, youth projects, farmer training)  Water supply Roads Energy Gender

*Source:* Author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts.

of the funds. The number three priority, physical infrastructure, was to get 61.2% of the funds. The number four priority, tourism, trade and industry, was to get 1.8% of the resources. The number five priority, public safety, law and order, was to get 6.3% of the resources. The number six priority, public administration, was to get 11.1% of the resources. All in all, the issues of agriculture, rural development and human resource development that were given 87.8% of the priority score by farm communities in Western Kenya would be allocated only 19.6% of all PRSP resources.

It is important to note that the revised PRSP from 2001 was never formally approved by the World Bank or IMF. In its *Status Report on Preparatory Activities and Way Forward for the Economic Recovery Strategy Paper*, September 2003, the Government of Kenya proposed that the development budget in its Medium Term Expenditure Framework would give highest priority to physical infrastructure (39% of the budget share in 2004–05), second priority to agriculture and rural development (18% in 2004–05) and third priority to human resource development (11% in 2004–05). In that document, the Government of Kenya notes that the highest shares of the recurrent budget during the same period will go to human resource development (especially to support free primary education), public safety, law and order, and agriculture and rural development (Government of Kenya, 2003).

Environmental issues are far less visible in the district and national PRSP documents than they are in the focal area priorities. Water was the third highest priority across the 80 focal areas (10.1% of the total score), especially in the focal areas in Kisii, Migori, Bondo and Nyamira districts, but was generally given low priority in the district PRSP documents and the national implementation plan. While water is mentioned in most of the district documents, the solution is most often framed in terms of public investments in large-scale irrigation or large-scale domestic water supplies. Soil degradation is a high priority across the 80 focal areas (8.9% of the total score), especially in Vihiga and Migori Districts, but was only mentioned as a low-priority issue in some of the district documents. None of the district documents mention the problem of shortage of fuelwood and tree products, although this was given 4.3% of the total score in the focal areas, and was a moderately high priority in the focal areas in Nyando and Vihiga Districts.

The national PRSP document addresses environmental issues in a more thorough and consistent manner. Under the Forestry subsector, the plan mentions the need to strengthen community involvement in forest management and farm forestry. Under the Environment subsector, the plan focuses on the implementation of the Environment Management and Co-ordination Act (1999), local environmental management, and environmental research. Under the water subsector, the plan proposes a miniscule allocation of resources to augmenting rural water and a much greater amount to transferring existing public water schemes to rural communities and the private sector.

### (c) *Characterization of proposed investments and services*

Table 9 presents a summary and characterization of the major activities that are proposed by communities in the NALEP focal areas, by the district PRSP consultations, and in the national PRSP document for the issues of highest priority in the 80 focal areas included in this study. I have attempted to characterize activities in three ways that can help to clarify the public interest, the appropriateness for poverty reduction investment, and the appropriateness of planning and delivery of the services at different levels of social organization and administration:

- (i) type of investment or action proposed—recurrent input or output price subsidy (subsidy), investment in infrastructure construction or revitalization (capital), recurrent provision of a public service (service), or a change in policies or procedures at various levels of administration or organization (policy);
- (ii) primary beneficiaries of investment—individual residents (private), members of local groups (clubs), all members of local communities (village), or the greater Kenyan society (public); and
- (iii) appropriate level of implementation—local group (local group), local government or local offices of central government (local offices), or national offices of central government (national offices).

Several results stand out. First, the activities proposed in the focal area groups are a mixture of services, capital investments and local social policies; the activities proposed in the district PRSP documents are a mixture of subsidies and capital; while the activities proposed in the national PRSP document are a mixture of

Table 9. *Summary and characterization of proposed activities at the village, district and national levels*

Priority area	Proposed focal area activities	Characterization of focal area activities	Proposed district PRSP activities	Characterization of district PRSP activities	Proposed national PRSP activities	Characterization of national PRSP activities
Low agricultural production	Diversify crops; exchange visits; seek extension services; crop demonstrations seek improved seeds and tree germplasm; access credit; access inputs	(a) Service (b) Private/clubs (c) Clubs; groups and local offices	Subsidize input prices; avail credit; subsidize output prices; expand cash crop outlets; strengthen marketing societies; establish irrigation schemes; establish processing factories	(a) Subsidy (b) Private/clubs (c) National/district offices	Pluralistic extension; modalities for credit provision; early warning system; strategic food reserves; market reforms for cash crops	(a) Service (b) Private/local/public (c) Local/national offices
Human diseases and health care	Construct latrines and local health clinics; roof water harvesting; HIV/AIDS awareness; change cultural practices that increase risks; kitchen gardens for nutrition	(a) Capital/service/policy (b) Local/public (c) Local groups/local offices	Free medical services; encourage private medical services; support people living with AIDS; construct health clinics; train community health workers	(a) Capital/subsidy/service (b) Private/local (c) Local offices	Increase funding to rural health facilities; immunization coverage; HIV awareness programmes	(a) Capital/service/subsidy (b) Private/local/public (c) Local/national offices
Livestock diseases and production	Bull scheme; cock scheme; training in drug administration; training in napier growing; make dip operational; vaccinations; construct dip; group agrovet store	(a) Service/capital (b) Private/clubs (c) Local groups/local offices	Provide extension services; subsidize livestock disease and vector control; provide credit for new livestock enterprises	(a) Subsidy/service (b) Private/local (c) Local offices	Revitalize KMC; review livestock and dairy policies	(a) Policy (b) Private/clubs/public (c) National offices



Safe drinking water	Boil water; rehabilitate wells; roof water catchment; construct dam; desilt dams; resilt dam; protect springs	(a) Capital/policy (b) Private/local (c) Local group/local offices	Piped water network; protect watersheds; desilt dams; construct boreholes; rainwater harvesting; enforce pollution laws	(a) Capital/policy (b) Private/local/public (c) Local offices/national offices	Hand private schemes over to communities and private sector	(a) Policy (b) Private/public (c) Local offices/national offices
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*Sources:* Proposed focal area activities from author's analysis of data from 80 NALEP focal areas in 10 districts; proposed district PRSP priorities from the district PRSP reports for the eight selected districts; proposed national PRSP activities from the national PRSP report; characterization of all activities from author's analysis of focal area and PRSP actions.

Key for characterization: (a) type of investment or action proposed: subsidy = recurrent input or output price subsidy; capital = investment in infrastructure construction or revitalization; service = recurrent provision of a public service; policy = change in policies or procedures at various levels of administration or organization; (b) primary beneficiaries of investment: private = individual residents; clubs = members of local groups; village = all members of local communities; public = greater Kenyan society (public); (c) appropriate level of implementation: local group = all or subset of village community; local offices = either local government or local offices of central government; national offices = national offices of central government.

services, capital and national policy changes. There is a high consistency in approach between the focal area groups and the national PRSP, but an unrealistic overemphasis on subsidies and infusions of capital in the district PRSP documents. Second, among the proposed focal area activities, some would only be of benefit to individuals who individually engaged in the activity, some to the members of particular local groups or clubs who jointly engaged in the activity, and some would be of benefit to all members in the greater community. Much the same can be said for the activities proposed for the district and national PRSPs, except that the input and output subsidies and services proposed by the district PRSP actions would be of greatest benefit to the individuals who were most able to undertake the productive activities. Third, the appropriate level of intervention was quite different between the proposed focal area activities and the activities in the national PRSP. The focal area activities would most appropriately be done through a combination of local individuals, small groups of community residents, all community residents and local government agencies. This follows the design of the NALEP program which generated the data. The activities in the national PRSP would most appropriately be implemented through national government offices, especially for policy and institutional changes, and through local government offices following nationwide geographic targeting. What is more surprising is that many of the activities detailed in the district PRSP documents would require national-level actions, for example, national programs for subsidization of input and output prices.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Kenya's PRSP process has been generally endorsed by the World Bank and IMF, criticized by some international observers, and given somewhat mixed reviews by local experts. After considerable delays, the PRSP document has been recently approved by the IMF. The assessment in this paper suggests that the national-level PRSP process of 2001 and 2002 was successful in revealing sector issues and priorities of relevance to village residents in Western Kenya, but that many of the activities indicated in the implementation matrix would have relatively little direct relevance to those priorities. For example, road construction was given very high priority in the implementation matrix, but

relatively little priority in the villages of Western Kenya. On the other hand, subsectors that were given higher priority in the villages include water, local health clinics, HIV/AIDS preventions, soil degradation and fuelwood. Overall, these results suggest the need to re-assess the allocation of funds to agriculture, rural water, rural health, HIV/AIDS awareness, soil degradation and fuelwood to achieve Kenya's poverty reduction targets.

The results also suggest that the priorities among subsectors vary considerably from community to community and district to district. The NALEP PRA results presented in this paper provide some insight into priorities in eight districts in western Kenya, but other sources of information and more analysis would be needed to support a more effective implementation plan. Clear limitations of the NALEP PRA results discussed here is that they only covered the western part of the country, they only addressed concerns of rural communities, and they only considered issues that could be addressed by the local communities in partnership with local extension and service providers. Compilation and analysis of data from the NALEP focal areas in the other districts in Kenya would provide a more comprehensive analysis of rural priorities. Such an analysis would still not address the question of how different investments would affect the overall performance of the rural economy, nor would it clarify the appropriate mix of national, district and local-level investments. Additional data and analysis would be necessary to address these issues.

A challenge with addressing issues that vary from one community to the next is that they would require effective implementation at the community and district levels. Kenya's PRSP implementation framework now focuses primarily on actions that would be taken by the central offices of the Kenyan government. The analysis presented here suggests that information from the district consultations was used in setting national level priorities, but did not result in district implementation plans. Indeed, other results in this paper indicate relatively poor connections between the outcomes of the district consultations, the priorities expressed by village residents in the selected districts, and the type of public good investments or services that could be justifiably undertaken as part of a poverty reduction strategy.

In Kenya, the district level is already an important center of resource allocation and

service provision and this role would be strengthened according to the Kenya Draft Constitution of 2004 (<http://www.kenyaconstitution.org/html/draftconstitution.htm>). The results presented in this paper however suggest cause for concern with district-level implementation of poverty reduction plans. The district level PRSP consultations produced priorities out of step with community realities and implementation plans inconsistent with the appropriate roles for government. If the Government of Kenya proceeds with greater devolution of authority to the district level, it will need to give careful attention to the integration of targeting, planning and delivery of infrastructure and services to locations and communities. As a first step toward that integration, governmental and nongovernmental district service providers—agriculture, health, water, education, roads—should be involved in the NALEP focal area development planning. In the longer term, much more serious and considered input would be required to develop and implement district poverty reduction plans. Those plans would need to reflect both national priorities for alleviating poverty and stimulating economic growth and local priorities for public services, infrastructure and information. Studies of the effects of devolution on forest management show how the values, incentives, resources and communication networks of local government authorities affect local-level outcomes (Andersson, 2003, 2004). An unpublished study of elected district-level councils in three districts of western

Kenya suggests large variability in the incentives, values and resources of district councils regarding improved environmental management.

Effective involvement of location-level authorities would represent a further challenge for implementation of poverty reduction plans. As of 1999, the average location in Kenya contained approximately 10,000 persons, including perhaps 5–10 of the NALEP focal areas. The results presented in this paper indicate that there may be large differences in community priorities between focal areas within a community, implying the need to balance priorities among different groups within a location. The NALEP focal area approach facilitates the formation of specific common interest groups within locations. A new phase of the NALEP program will use locations as focal areas.

The results of this study show that the NALEP PRA process would have utility for soliciting local priorities. The results also indicate that the current processes are not effective in identifying the needs of particular subgroups of the poor. Fortunately, additional methods for participatory identification of the poor and their needs are being explored by the NALEP program, the World Bank office in Kenya, and Kenya's Ministry of Planning and National Development. Additional sources of information would also be needed to determine the national and district-level public services of greatest interest to local populations.

## NOTES

1. The poor economic performance that Kenya experienced during 1990–2002 can be traced in large part to high levels of corruption, that in turn has led to a deterioration of public infrastructure, withdrawal of support from bilateral donors and financial institutions, and high levels of borrowing from the domestic market (Hanmer *et al.*, 2003; Kiringai & Manda, 2002). The international database on quality of governance that is compiled by the World Bank shows that over 1996–2002, Kenya ranked worse than the mean for all African countries in terms of voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption. Kenya ranks particularly poorly regarding rule of law and control of corruption (Source: own calculations based on World Bank Governance Indicators; 2002 found on the internet at [http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/gov-](http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/gov-data2002/index.html)

[data2002/index.html](http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/gov-data2002/index.html)). The newly elected NARC government has pledged to control corruption and improve governance and by November 2003 had already taken important concrete steps in this direction.

2. These first two concerns are being addressed by new studies being undertaken by the Central Bureau of Statistics, with support from the World Bank, the Rockefeller Foundation and the International Livestock Research Institute. Location-level poverty data are presented in a new report, *Geographic Dimensions of Well-Being in Kenya: Where are the Poor*, published by the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2003.

3. This additional analysis was kindly suggested by an anonymous reviewer.

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# APPENDIX A. NAMES AND LOCATIONS OF THE 80 FOCAL AREAS INCLUDED IN THE NALEP FOCAL AREA PLANNING ANALYSIS

District	Division	Percent population below rural poverty line in 1997	Focal areas
Nyando	Miwani	60.1	Obago, Kango
	Muhoroni	52.1	Orego, Kipsamwe
	Nyando	63.7	Holo-Angoro, Kawandola
	U. Nyakach	63.1	Siany, Nyamaroka
	L. Nyakach	58.6	Olwalo-Nyabola, Asao
Bondo	Maranda	Not reported	Kowino, Nyabenge
	Madiany	73.4	Got Okola, Migowa
	Rarieda	69.2	Rambugu, Onyata
	Usigu	66.8	Ragak, Uhasi
	Nyang-oma	Not reported	Ndwara, Gombe
Nyamira	Nyamira	70.6	Ogango, Ramba
	Ragoma	65.0	Nyatieko, Nyaisa
	Borabu	63.8	Ensakia-Nyandoche, Itumbe
	Manga	66.2	Esaro, Mokubo
	Ekerenyo	72.8	Iyonga, Ibara

APPENDIX A—*continued*

District	Division	Percent population below rural poverty line in 1997	Focal areas
Siaya	Boro	62.4	Komolo, Nyalgunga
	Yala	67.2	Maliera, Marenyo
	Wagai	68.1	Sirembe, Kayieye
	Karemo	68.4	Pap- Nyadiel, Lower Ulafu
	Ukwala	58.3	Yenga-Gama, Ndenga
Vihiga	Tiriki-West	60.2	Ivola, Gisambai
	Vihiga	56.3	Kerongo, Chambaya
	Tiriki-East	59.1	Musudzu, Maganda
	Luanda	59.7	Esirulo, Ebusiekwe
	Sabatia	59.0	Wangulu, Nadanya
Kisii	Keumbu	56.7	Nyataro-Corner, Mwembe
	Marani	65.9	Nyankanda, Nyakome
	Masaba	57.8	Nyanturago, Kerema
	Suneka	71.8	Gesero-Kerina, Nyabinwa
	Mosocho	69.9	Bototo, Nyandiba
Migori	Rongo	44.7	Opapo-Winyo, Siala
	Urii	48.8	Thim-Jope, Stella
	Karungu	43.6	Otati, Gunga
	Suba West	45.3	Mukuro, Waseta II
	Suba East	49.7	Kakrao, Manyatta
Kericho	Sigowet	53.0	Chemursoi, Kapkeburu
	Londiani	41.5	Kiptenden, Setek
	Kipkelion	51.3	Lesirwo, Macheisok
	Ainamoi	52.3	Komelilo, Kiptegen
	Chinchila	53.4	Koisagat, Kapkoros

*Sources:* Author's analysis of NALEP focal area reports and Central Bureau of Statistics (2003).

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