

Agricultural Extension Services and Food Security in Abim District

**OSCAR BURTON OKENGO
2010/HD14/1190U**

**A Dissertation submitted to the Directorate of Research and Graduate
Training in partial fulfillment for the award of Masters of Arts degree in
Rural Development of Makerere University**

September 2015

Statement of Declaration

I, **Okengo Oscar Burton**, hereby declare that the work presented in this dissertation is original and is a result of my own study, and has never been presented to any University for any academic award whatsoever.

SIGNATURE _____

DATE: _____

This work presented in this dissertation has been guided to completion and finally presented with the approval of my supervision – **DR. ANDREW ELLIAS STATE**, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) Makerere University

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my lovely wife, Omiike Jillian and my children, Ayugi Abigail and Engorok O. Jayden for their patience during my studies.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the almighty God who has made me sail through this journey of academic struggle. Thank you, the Lord God. Above all, I thank God for the gift of Life.

Special thanks go to my supervisor—Dr. Andrew Ellias State, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) Makerere University for his guidance, positive criticism, continued encouragements during this study. In the same department, I would like to thank all my lecturers, that is Dr. Achilles Ssewaya for building my skills and deepening my interest and confidence in community development, Dr. Neema Stella who nurtured me into building competences in social research. In a special way, I thank Dr. Kabumbuli Robert (Chair), Assoc. Prof Atekereza Peter, Dr. Waiswa Daudi for their guidance and creating a favorable environment during my studies. Special thanks to Mrs. Ruth Mbonera, the MA program co-coordinator for coordination and motherly encouragement. Thank you all.

Secondly, I thank my friends, relatives, colleagues and classmates. Special thank to you the following: Mr. Bikomuhangi Everist, Ndozherio Miriam, Ariko Onyait and many others who supported me during this study. Special thanks to all those classmates in our discussion group, God bless you all and wish you success in all your endeavors.

Finally, I want to thank Abim district Local Government for supporting me during this study, particularly Mr. Jino Ogwang, Dr. Oluge Peter and all the extension staff of Morulem and Alerek for supporting me during the data collection. May God bless you all.

Abstract

Agriculture is one of the most important means of livelihood for the majority of the population in developing countries, since it acts as a source of employment to nearly ninety percent of the rural poor. However, in order for agriculture to achieve its desired objective of increasing productivity and hence food security, it needs to be supported by an efficient extension service system. This study aims at examining this relationship between extension services and food security in Abim District, Karamoja region. The study combined ethnographic research design with descriptive surveys to explore the linkage between agricultural extension services (availability of improved husbandry practices, disease and pest management, post harvest handling and marketing of agricultural products) and food security. Random samples of 126 farmers were selected for the interview. In addition, four Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and six Key Informants (KI) interviews were also conducted. A correlation analysis was done to ascertain the level of relationship between availability, access and quality of extension services and food security, in addition, a multi-linear regression was conducted to determine the extent of the relationship. The key findings were, one there was a direct relationship between agricultural extension and food security. Two, incidences of food insecurity were too rampant within the community due to limited access to extension services as only 27.8 percent of the respondents reported having access to extension services, limited livelihoods assets such as livestock holdings, land resources as well as farming implements. The result showed that, most farmers appreciate the importance of extension since most of them indicated interest in embracing the program, except that, there were no personnel providing these services. Finally, there was a clear relationship between agricultural extension services and food security since improvement in the three key aspects of extension (availability, access and quality) would lead to a 75 percent chance improvement in food production. In conclusion, the research confirmed that, food security, though directly linked to agricultural extension, is a multi-dimensional in nature, in that it is affected by both food consumption related factors and non- food related factors. This therefore implies that, for any intervention to succeed there is dire need to integrate all these factors in order to achieve success.