



AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

MACERATA 17 -20/09/2014

TITLE: AVERTING DESERTIFICATION IN THE DRYLANDS OF KENYA: A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

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ABSTRACT:

The drylands of Kenya make up about 80% of the total land area and are defined by aridity, thermal stress, soil moisture deficiency and general human want. The poverty bedeviling ASALs leave their inhabitants without a sustainable livelihood, compelling them to rely on physical environmental resources. Indeed, the exploitation of natural resources in these areas has led to the manifestation of the Tragedy of Commons hypothesis. For example, official documents show that about 80% of households in these areas use charcoal and firewood as fuel leading to deforestation. The foregoing is not accompanied by reforestation, leaving more land bare annually and therefore risking desertification. This is compounded by overstocking and encroachment of human settlements in the drylands, leading to destruction of other resources including wetlands. Flowing from the foregoing, this paper analyzes literature and roots for a paradigm shift in the exploitation of dryland resources to avert possible desertification. As a panacea, the paper proposes a public-private partnership to avert this trend and augment livelihood in the drylands of Kenya.

AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:

Ezekiel Mbitha Mwenzwa, holds MA (Sociology) and BA (Social Work) from the University of Nairobi, Kenya and is currently a PhD Candidate in Human Ecology at the University of Eldoret, Kenya. He teaches sociology and Community Development at Karatina University Kenya and has widely published in the areas of Dryland Development and Gender.