Ministries of Agriculture at District Level in Kenya and Malawi

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Eldoret West (2009)  
Rift Valley, high potential; maize, livestock; Home of Minister

Rachuonyo (2007)  
Medium potential, remote

Nyerei South (2009)  
High potential, dairy, tea, coffee; Home of President

Mwingi (2007)  
Semi-arid Livestock, food aid
Rumphi (2009)
Maize, tobacco, relatively plentiful land; home to senior northern politician

Dedza (2007)
Maize, tobacco; Home to Opposition leader

Thyolo (2007)
Land scarce, Maize; Home of President
The limits of decentralised governance: the case of agriculture in Malawi

Decentralisation reforms and the new policy environment in Malawi have led to an increased role for district-level decision-makers. This has increased the demand for agricultural services, such as inputs and extension services. However, decentralisation has not always led to better delivery of services. There are several challenges that need to be addressed, such as poor governance, lack of resources, and low levels of capacity.

Kenya Agricultural Services Policy Brief

Kenya will see a new constitution in August 2010. The government is proposing to transform the agricultural sector, with a focus on smallholder farmers. The new constitution will provide a constitutional framework to support this transformation. The new constitution will also provide a enabling environment for the agricultural sector, including the establishment of a new ministry of agriculture.

Democratic Politics and State Capacity Building: Ministries of Agriculture in Malawi and Kenya

The roles of the Ministry of Agriculture at the District Level

Kenya has a decentralized system of agricultural administration. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Cooperatives is responsible for the overall policy and strategic direction of the agricultural sector. The ministry is divided into four main areas: policy development, policy implementation, technical assistance, and research and development. The minister is assisted by the deputy minister, who is responsible for the implementation of the ministry's policies. The ministry also works closely with the National Agricultural Advisory Service, which provides extension services to farmers.
Context

• Renewed interest in agriculture as a driver of poverty reduction and growth
• Maputo Declaration 2003: agricultural spending as 10% of national budget by 2008
• Effective Ministry of Agriculture needed for:
  - Policy (national)
  - Coordination for service delivery (local)
  - Productive investment: research, extension, irrigation etc
• Contrast with Ministries of Education and Health?
What Role for the MoA at District Level? Stakeholder Views in Kenya

• It depends on the level of market development!

• Nyeri South:
  – dairy, tea, coffee, horticulture chains well-established;
  – also input supply, even some credit;
  – But soil fertility (cross-cutting) neglected

• Rachuonyo:
  – Who will facilitate links to input, output and financial markets if not MoA?
  – Need for strategy to combat striga!

• c/w standardised approach (heavily focused on information / extension) in MoA charters
Neo-Patrimonial States

- Technocratic push for increased MoA budget in Kenya
- Reallocation of staff across districts 2006
- Competent and motivated DAOs
- But proliferation of “agriculture and rural development” ministries (3 • 9)
  - Inefficiency in resource allocation across ministries
- Also proliferation of districts ahead of new constitution
## Inefficiencies in Resource Allocation: Personnel (Kenya)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Office-based Professional</th>
<th>Administrative</th>
<th>FEWs in post (posts vacant)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rachuonyo (2007)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 (31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyeri South (2009)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldoret W (2009)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** = data for 2/5 divisions
Malawi

- Imbalance in staff across districts: 3 times more graduates in Rumphi than in other two districts combined
- Increase in resources, but staff preoccupied with administration of fertiliser subsidy (esp. at critical planting time)
- Low wages: “go native”, wait for work on NGO projects
Approaches to Reform

• Farmers’ views of Ministry performance over time dominated by national policies and accessibility of extension staff
  – “demand-led” extension, focal area approach etc judged on this latter point

• Fundamental change in performance will require greater staff accountability and rewards:
  – District “managers” given greater authority to reward hard work (hiring, promotions etc currently handled centrally, based on qualifications)
  – Decentralisation to increase stakeholder voice over budgeting and planning (likely to raise efficiency, but not equity?)