

Opportunities and barriers to mango production and upscaling activities in the context of climate change in Elgeyo Marakwet County, rural Kenya

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Climate change continues to expose rural communities in Kenya to more vulnerable living conditions. Kenya contributes approximately 1.7% of global mango production and is the leading mango producer in the East Africa region. In rural Kenya mango farming supports over 60,000 rural households. Mango farming is a climate sensitive agricultural activity since it depends on rain fed cultivation. This study contributes to the limited empirical evidence on communities which depend on rain fed agriculture and their experience of, and responses to, climate change. This study investigated the opportunities and barriers to mango production and upscaling activities in the context of climate change in Rokocho community, Elgeyo Marakwet County Kenya. Household surveys and focus group discussions were used to capture data on socio-economic farmers' profiles, opportunities, barriers and challenges. Results indicates that mango farmers have access to quality seedlings, market, cheap labour and group membership. Pests and diseases, water shortages and limited arable land were identified as the main barriers to mango production. The findings suggest that there is need to address the constraints reported by households to ensure that the advantages from mango farming are utilized and a continued resilience to future climate change is assured.

Keywords: Climate change, Rural community, Barrier, Opportunity