

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF INVASIVE SPECIES OF CACTUS *OPUNTIA*
STRICT:A CASE STUDY OF EWASO NYIRO AREA IN NAROK COUNTY

BY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate and come up with the socio-economic impacts of the invasive cactus species. The cactus family (cactaceae) is one of the most popular horticultural plant groups all over the world. Hundreds of cactus species have been introduced outside their native range, a few of them are among the most damaging invasive plant species in the world. Only 57 of the known 1922 cactus species have been recognized as invasive. The invasive taxa recipients are an interesting subset of the total species pool. This study was guided by the following objectives;

- 1) To identify the challenges faced by residents as a result of *Opuntia Stricta* invasion.
- 2) To investigate the factors that contributes to the spread of *Opuntia Stricta*.
- 3) To recommend ways to control the spread *Opuntia Stricta* and reduce new invasions

The study applied a descriptive survey design. It is appropriate as it describes the state of affairs as it exists. The researcher then reports the findings which may result to formulation of important principles of knowledge. It involves the collection of information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample rather than the entire population at one point in time which may range from one day to a few weeks. The study employed this design to establish: the economic and social impacts as a result of cactus spread; identify the challenges encountered and also some of the strategies that may be used to reduce spread of cactus .The information gathered was summarized and interpreted to meet the purpose of the study.

Impacts caused by *Opuntia Stricta* invasion were identified. They include; denied access to land, injury to livestock and humans, reduced grazing land and also farming land. The study was able to clearly show that the *Opuntia Stricta* is causing more harm than good to the residents of Ewaso Nyiro.