

# Reliant on Relationships: environmental and working conditions among Kenyan smallholder farmers

CASE STUDY, NOVEMBER 2019

*"The thing is, if they misbehave today their contract will end."*

Veterinary inspector, Dagoretti slaughterhouse cluster, Nairobi, Kenya. Key informant interview by Jesuit Hakimani Centre, March 2019

This is an internal learning paper for CAFOD staff members who are interested in the overlap between policy and ordinary Kenyans' livelihoods, or as a reality check for economic policy formulation. It shows very clearly the gap between our concept of a green, decent job and the situation that agricultural workers are experiencing.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case study is a report about ordinary Kenyans' experiences of decent and green work in small-scale Kenyan agriculture and livestock keeping. It is based on exploratory field research by CAFOD and partner organisation Jesuit Hakimani Centre<sup>1</sup> from March-April 2019<sup>2</sup>. It is part of CAFOD's policy work on decent and green jobs, and Jesuit Hakimani Centre's (JHC) work on agricultural policy and food security. CAFOD's thinking on decent and green jobs has developed over several years<sup>3</sup>, grounded in integral ecology. It is based on the urgent need to address environmental degradation and climate change while creating sustainable livelihoods for poor and marginalised people.

We conducted desk research, six group interviews in the field, and several key informant interviews<sup>4</sup>.

Decent and green work means **work that is good both for the worker and the planet**. A green and decent job means that people have access to full and productive employment, rights at work, social protection, the opportunity for social dialogue in the workplace and that the environment and the climate are preserved or restored through this work.<sup>5</sup> This is based on the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) four "pillars of decent work". In the best cases, decent and green jobs can also be transformative: have positive social ripple effects<sup>6</sup>.

Only one of the 56 persons we interviewed, the veterinary inspector at Dagoretti slaughterhouse cluster, has decent work according to the ILO definition – and her job is not green. Most of our respondents don't have "employment" in the sense of being hired by another person for a permanent job. Instead, they make a living by farming and selling produce or by trading livestock. Because of this, we adapted our interviews to ask about the *principles* of the four pillars of decent work, rather than the literal



Only the veterinary inspector at the slaughterhouse has a decent job in the formal sector. Despite the raft of Kenyan planning, visions, legislation and regulation on labour and environment, the law is largely irrelevant in the countryside.



<sup>1</sup> Jesuit Hakimani Centre based in Nairobi, Kenya, is a research, formation and social action institute that works to promote the study and action on issues linking faith and justice in Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> The field team consisted of Yvonne Kuntai (team leader), Cornelius Ngala, Caroline Otieno and Daniel Njoroge from JHC, with Linda Lönnqvist from CAFOD, with support from colleagues at JHC HQ and CAFOD Kenya and London.

<sup>3</sup> See CAFOD's work on [human rights in the private sector](#), [the informal economy](#) and [decent and green jobs](#).

<sup>4</sup> A longer report has been written by Hakimani for use in Kenya.

<sup>5</sup> CAFOD, January 2019, based on ILO definition of a green job. ILO on decent work indicators:

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_100335.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_100335.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Lukka & Montgomery 2019

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meanings: whether work is available and brings a satisfactory income; whether it is stable; and what happens when the workers are in a vulnerable situation. Even then, their livelihoods don't fulfil the criteria for decent work. Their livelihoods are typically not green either – among our interviewees, only the villagers of Kakumuti in Kitui use some conservation agriculture methods, like terracing. But these rural livelihoods have lots of potential to become green with some effort and investment.

In practice nearly all the work we heard about is **informal**. To understand the case study, we need to make it clear that Kenya as a country is still struggling with corruption, and **there are gaps in good governance, rule of law and applying regulations**. During the validation conference organised by JHC on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019, Hon. Ledama Olekina- Senator, Narok County, underlined that there are many good policies and regulations that are not being implemented. State institutions only back up their own legislation selectively.

Among the respondents, **the “decency” of their work is based on social relationships, not rule of law**. People organise income and social security for themselves in social enterprises and savings and loans groups (known as “merry-go-rounds”).

Some of the “green” aspects of people’s work are also based on outside support from local government, NGOs or UN agencies. We found that support for green and decent work **can't be expected from an unregulated private sector**.

When the state is not able to implement law, guarantee rights and provide social security, **development agencies can step in** and support green and decent work in their enterprise development initiatives.

We recommend that, **when they support rural and livelihoods enterprises**, states and development agencies should:

1. **Cushion people against crises**. Savings and loans groups are organised by people themselves so they can save – but if those savings are needed to cover everyday events like illnesses and school fees, there is nothing left over for improvements or new opportunities. **Supporting government provision of free public services** should be part of enterprise development strategies even though it is considered part of another branch of development.
2. **Recognise and engage with informality**, for example by accepting informal associations as negotiation partners, recognising an employment relationship even when there is no signed contract, and helping informal enterprises to formalise gradually<sup>7</sup>. Informality is not only a regulation and law enforcement issue. Recognise the power of patron-client relationships both for good and for ill.
3. **See your intervention as one piece of a livelihoods puzzle**. People need diverse livelihoods. Our respondents have a mix of incomes (farming different crops, keeping livestock, working for wages, group savings, trading, owning land, renting out assets).
4. **Support existing informal social safety nets**. Recognise that for most people, real-life social protection is largely family- and community-based and hence invisible in economic measurements.
5. **Support social enterprises and the solidarity economy**. The most stable and well-paid jobs in our research (aside from formal jobs) were in the solidarity economy: ethnic or religious-based enterprises and a social enterprise factory.
6. **Plan despite policy, not relying on policy**. Recognise that good legislation and policy are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for positive change to happen. Kenya's policies on labour and environmental standards are good, but other priorities are stronger at

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<sup>7</sup> WIEGO: Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy in the interests of workers in the informal economy

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the local level. We shouldn't ignore the regulations or stop trying to improve them, but we need to keep in mind that just because something is the law doesn't mean it's happening.

Based on our research we can also make **recommendations for states and development actors who fund international and formal enterprises** in Kenya:

7. **Enforce international labour and environmental standards** in the initiatives they support. Foreign direct investment, especially when it's funded by ODA, should provide a living wage and decent work using stringent labour and environmental standards. One way to achieve this is to enforce the OECD-FAO Guidance on Responsible Supply Chains (instead of allowing it to be optional).

8. Use a **range of strategies to ensure that jobs in all kinds of workplaces is green and decent**. This can mean promoting local economies and conservation agriculture that help rural areas thrive; ensuring that there's no unfair competition between large and small enterprises; providing specialised informal-sector business support; giving priority to green and decent job creation in enterprise development etc. Decent and green work should be the norm both in formal workplaces and in smaller and informal enterprises.

9. **Provide social protection in supported enterprises** where the state fails to do so, for example by paying into pensions, arranging daycare for the workers' infants and paying a living wage.

10. **Prioritise green:** Invest primarily in environmentally sound sectors and businesses, while supporting a just transition. Invest in greening existing enterprises, including agricultural enterprises. Promote agroecology and food sovereignty, the circular economy and minimising waste and pollution. Support green enterprise clusters at the local level.

11. **Don't support counter-productive subsidies and market distortions that harm the environment and labourers.** Use full-cost accounting and monitor GHG emissions in supported enterprises. Avoid investing in environmentally damaging activities such as producing artificial fertilisers<sup>8</sup>; applying pesticides that harm wildlife; transport-heavy logistics chains; exploitative contract farming and standards that outlaw local seeds.

**Our group interview cases** are a range of local economic actors in marginal areas of Kenya<sup>9</sup>. They are small-scale farmers who have benefited from CARITAS and CAFOD programmes in Kitui; meat and livestock traders at a municipal slaughterhouse in Kajiado; chicken and dairy farmers and processors in Isiolo and a small locally-run agro-processing factory in Gatundu. Most of our respondents can be classed as family farmers, self-employed or micro-entrepreneurs. We also interviewed key informants: two county government officials, and the veterinary inspector at Dagoretti slaughterhouse cluster in Nairobi.

| Location and focus groups                                    | Type of agriculture   | How decent is the work?   | How green is the work?                               |
|--|---|---|--|
| Kakumuti, Kitui<br>12 farmers, two of whom are also traders. | Diversified crop farming and livestock on small farms (maize, | Low. Casual farm work is supported by the tight-knit community, and the village | Moderate. Some conservation agriculture practices in |

<sup>8</sup> See DEFRA greenhouse gas emissions calculation tool

<sup>9</sup> Kitui, Kajiado and Isiolo counties are all classed as ASAL, or arid and semi-arid lands, and were deliberately left out of government agricultural investment in the early days of independence. Because of this they are considered marginalised. Our focus groups did include some prosperous people with resources, though, so not all of them are "marginalised" in the more common sense of the word.

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|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Five men, seven women.   | vegetables and fruit, chickens and goats).   | headman mediates disputes.  | use: terracing, composting.   |
| Kakululo, Kitui<br>Five participants.<br>Four farmers – a family of two women and two men; and one NGO liaison person, female. | The main income is from selling farm produce and eggs. Goats can be sold to cover large expenses.                              | Low. People both employ casual labour and take jobs as casual labour. Good workers get hired again. The employer takes no responsibility beyond paying a daily wage.                  | Good. Some conservation agriculture practices in use: Zai pits, locally adapted breeds of goat and chickens thanks to the CAFOD-Caritas Integrated Food Security Programme.             |
| Sampu slaughterhouse, Kajiado<br>12 participants: 10 men, two women.   | Livestock herding (cattle, goats, sheep).  | Mixed. A mix of reliable jobs (such as herding and slaughtering), trading, and informal casual day labour.  | Low. The slaughterhouse has waste pits to keep blood and waste away from the local river.   |
| Isiolo,<br>12 participants, four men, eight women.   | Poultry, livestock, vegetables. Two social businesses in eggs and camel milk. Two commercial medium-sized farms employ people. | Moderate. Social enterprises run by their members give a level of security. On commercial farms employment can be dependable, but social security depends on patronage from the boss. | Mixed. Mostly industrial farming, battery chickens, artificial inputs. The medium-scale farmers use several environmental practices. The camels have a low impact on the environment... |
| Gatundu, Kiambu  | Processing local fruit and vegetables. Strengthens the local economy with value-addition.                                      | Yes. The factory is owned by the farmers who supply fruit. Reliable work for 5 of them. Consistent wages, but not entirely fair ones.   | Moderate. Waste is used as mulch and compost, packaging is biodegradable.   |





Figure 1: Focus group in Kakumuti, Kitui

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## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH: JOBS FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

Work is central to individuals' lives – not only to our incomes but to our dignity, community and sense of worth. Job creation is also a key goal of economic development programmes, both for countries and development agencies. CAFOD has been working on sustainable economic and enterprise development for the past several years<sup>10</sup>, as well as striving to ensure that businesses respect human rights in their operations and supply chains<sup>11</sup>. We work towards integral ecology: development that prioritises human and environmental wellbeing in equal measure. Hence, we advocate for green and decent jobs: jobs that are good both for the worker and the planet.

Decent and green work means that people have access to full and productive employment, rights at work, social protection, the opportunity for social dialogue in the workplace; and that the environment and climate are preserved or restored through this work. **Trade-offs between decent and green are not necessary, especially in official development assistance where development, not return on investment, is the paramount priority<sup>12</sup>.**

CAFOD promotes enterprise development and impact investments that follow these criteria, as listed by Raworth, Wykes & Bass<sup>13</sup>:

- Pro-poor returns
- Local investment<sup>14</sup>
- Create jobs
- With low financial, resource and energy costs
- Alternatives or complements to capital-intensive, nationally-driven (or aid-driven) investments.
- Job opportunities throughout product lifecycles (sourcing, assembly, installation, maintenance, reuse, recycling)
- Optimise job creation – labour-intensive is good
- Promote and enshrine skills upgrading and decent work in law
- Include the informal economy
- Interventions to be co-designed with end users.

Still, most peoples' work does not come from development interventions, but **is typically informal self-employment<sup>15</sup>**. In order to find out more and propose ways to link development interventions to peoples' realities, CAFOD and partner organisation Jesuit Hakimani Centre studied relevant Kenyan legislation, and interviewed persons working in agriculture and livestock in three counties in Kenya during March-April 2019.

We chose agriculture because it is one of the five sectors that CAFOD research has shown to have high potential for providing decent and green jobs<sup>16</sup> – as long as the **agriculture is environmentally sound**, i.e. regenerative agriculture or agroecology, and linked to healthy local markets.

The people we interviewed in Kitui are NGO beneficiaries: the villagers in Kakumuti have a relationship with Caritas Kitui, and those in Kakululo took part in the first phase of the CAFOD-Caritas Integrated Food Security Programme that ended in 2018. The Gatundu factory was set up by a local person, benefiting from USAID funding. The others did not mention being part of

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<sup>10</sup> See CAFOD's resource page on economic justice: <https://cafod.org.uk/About-us/Policy-and-research/Economic-justice>

<sup>11</sup> See CAFOD's resource page on business and human rights: <https://cafod.org.uk/About-us/Policy-and-research/Private-Sector> Lau 2017

<sup>12</sup> Raworth et al. 2014, p.35

<sup>14</sup> Also stressed in Lambrecht & Lau 2016, p. 12

<sup>15</sup> E.g. James Gatungu, Director of production statistics at the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, quoted in AfricaCheck (2017).

<sup>16</sup> The others are public transport, waste and recycling, forestry and renewable energy.



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any development programme, and hence the research gives a glimpse of how ordinary people make a living.

This paper reviews relevant Kenyan laws and regulations and compares them to what we saw on the ground (section 2); describes the “decency” of work we found (section 3) and its “greenness” (section 4). It ends with recommendations and three detailed case studies. There are also boxes on “cartels” vs social enterprises, and options for reusing slaughterhouse waste.



“

We asked whether they have paid work; what happens when they are ill, have babies, have an accident at work or grow old; whether they have a written contract and how reliable their job is; and whether they are organised. ”

## 2. ON PAPER: KENYAN LEGISLATION

There is no shortage of labour and environmental legislation, policy and strategy in Kenya. Kenya has ratified 50 ILO conventions, including seven of the eight fundamental conventions<sup>17</sup>. The latest presidential vision, the Big Four, includes employment as one of its four “big” pillars . Kenya has ratified its compromise to deliver Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, including SDG8 on economic development and decent work<sup>18</sup>. There is even a green economic growth strategy, GESIP, which has created a programme which aims to, among others, integrate green growth and job creation at the county level<sup>19</sup>. SDGs? However, these big initiatives don’t necessarily influence everyday life very much. Nearly all the work and business we heard about is informal, and customs and human decency are what back up peoples’ working conditions. Devolved government also means that the policy environment varies from county to county.

<sup>17</sup> Convention 102 on Social Security is one of the ones it has not ratified.

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Devolution and Planning 2017, pp. 33-34

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources: *Thematic Programme for Green Growth and Employment Development Engagement Document*. Output 3 states that the “Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Authorities and the Royal

## 2. Relevant Kenyan legislation for green and decent jobs

The only government social protection scheme that our informal-sector respondents mentioned are healthcare provisions. In Isiolo respondents mentioned NHIF and universal healthcare benefit, as delivered under the Big Four. In Kitui the respondents mentioned that the governor had put in place simple healthcare access, where an annual payment of KSH500 gives you access to the Kitui general hospital.

Table 1 gives an overview of Kenyan labour, agriculture, environmental and climate change legislation, and whether we saw its effects implemented in the field. We have noted when a policy was mentioned by respondents or we saw that it is followed.

“ We keep hearing about policies left right and centre but none of us is affected by those policies either positively or negatively in any way. Again, Kenya is very rich at formulating policies but extremely poor at implementation. Farmer, Gatundu

”

| <b>Table 1: Key Kenyan legislation and policy on labour rights and environment</b> |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Policy name  | Policy details   | Visible in our research?   |
| <b>Strategic documents</b>   |  |  |
| The Big Four Agenda, 2017 and the Third Medium-Term Plan 2018-2022                 | Part of Kenya Vision 2030, Kenya’s strategic development plan. MTP III is titled <i>Transforming lives: Advancing Socio-Economic Development through the "Big Four"</i> . Priority areas for the Third Medium-Term Plan. President Kenyatta outlined his Big Four Agenda (BFA) for his last term in office: manufacturing, universal healthcare for all Kenyans, affordable housing and food security. Job creation is a central component of the BFA and it aims to create 1.3 million jobs in the manufacturing sector (including in agro-processing). | Yes – universal healthcare coverage is available in Isiolo county thanks to the Big Four Agenda. |
| Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP) 2016-2030                   | The GESIP focuses on economic growth – but includes green and decent jobs as (its last) priority. It’s wide-ranging and ambitious, and formulated by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. It recognises that it won’t function without good governance. Funded by DANIDA, Danish ODA.  | No   |
| Blue Economy plan  |  |  |

Danish Embassy is ‘enhanced enabling environment for green growth and sustainable environment and natural resources management.’  
“P.11



## 2. Relevant Kenyan legislation for green and decent jobs

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| The Kenyan Government's SDG plan (Voluntary National Plan)  | <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/15689Kenya.pdf">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/15689Kenya.pdf</a>  |  |
| <b>Labour legislation</b>   |  |  |
| The Labour Institutions Act 2007 and the Regulation of Wages (Agricultural Industry) (Amendment) Order 2018 | Minimum wages for different occupations, differentiating city, town and rural wage levels. Agricultural minimum wages range from KSH 283 per day for unskilled labour to KSH 514 for farm clerks and foremen. Herdsmen's minimum wage is KSH 329 per day.  | To some extent: our interviewees earn or pay 200-400 KSH per day.  |
| Work Injury benefits Act  | Fellow group members, bosses or family members cover emergency healthcare. Employers in Isiolo do cover medical care in case of injuries – but it's not clear whether this is because of the Act or because it's the custom.   | To some extent   |
| Labour Act 2007   | Other linked laws include the Labour Relations Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Sector Plan for Labour and Employment 2013-2017,   | Yes, occupational health and safety was considered in the slaughterhouses.   |
| Kenyan Employment Act 2007  | Provides for rights of employees and it addresses the following areas: sexual harassment, forced labour, discrimination, right to inform employees of their rights and fair wages. The other entitlements an employee must have include reasonable working hours, leave, reasonable housing and medical attention. | To some extent. Our informants do have reasonable working hours. The focus group discussion format didn't lend itself to talking about sensitive issues like discrimination. |
| NHIF, National Hospital Insurance Fund  | A national health insurance scheme. Provided by the employer for formal sector employees, free for older persons, costs KSH500 monthly (about £4) for informal sector/self-employed persons.   | Yes, used by several respondents – but only when it's free.  |
| National Social Security Fund Act 2013  | Provides for old age pension, survivor's pension and invalidity benefit.   | No   |
| Unemployment benefit  | There is no provision in law for unemployment benefit.   | N/A  |
| <b>Environmental and agriculture legislation</b>  |  |  |
| Agricultural Sector Transformation and  | The 10-year blueprint (2019-2029) seeks to increase small-scale farmer incomes, increase   |  |

## 2. Relevant Kenyan legislation for green and decent jobs

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Growth Strategy (ASTGS) 2018 -2030  | agricultural output and value addition and promote knowledge and skills, research and innovation  |  |
| Maputo Protocol and Malabo Agreement  | Signatory governments commit to spending 10% of GDP on agriculture.   | No   |
| 40% export duty on hides and skins  | One of the Sampu respondents mentioned a policy that made the bottom fall out of the skins market and means that the skins can't be profitably sold – and become waste. The policy is designed to boost Kenyan tanneries (local value addition) but there aren't enough tanneries to buy all the available skins.   | Yes – this is one of the few policies where our respondents named a specific cause and effect. |
| National Climate Change Response Strategy 2010 And the National Climate Change Action Plan NCCAP 2013   | “As a policy issue, climate change gained national status with the launching of the National Climate Change Response Strategy NCCRS (Government of Kenya, 2010) which created a framework that elaborated plans on how to tackle climate change across key economic sectors by featuring methods for adaptation and alleviation of the impacts of climate change”. (Government of Kenya, 2010; Nyangena et al., 2017) |  |
| Subsequent plans, strategies and legislations like the Environmental Management and Co-Ordination Act (Republic of Kenya, 1999), the National Climate Change Framework Policy (Government of Kenya, 2016b) and the Climate Change Act (Republic of Kenya, 2016) have since been put in place for adaptation mechanisms. |   |  |
| Sources: WageIndicator 2019: <a href="http://Africapay.org/Kenya">Africapay.org/Kenya</a> ; and government websites.  |   |  |

## 2. Relevant Kenyan legislation for green and decent jobs



Figure 2: FGD participants in Kakululo, Kitui

### 3. HOW DO PEOPLE DESCRIBE DECENT WORK IN RURAL KENYA?

Our respondents in all the focus groups say that a good job is one that allows them to make a living and send their children to school. To this we should add weathering emergencies – both their own and those of dependants and extended family. And there are some “emergencies”, like paying school fees, that are recurring. But that is the bare minimum that we should expect.

There are some alarming figures for Kenyan unemployment, putting the figure at up to 55% nationwide. But the latest Kenya Bureau of Statistics survey, for 2016, finds an unemployment rate of only 7.4%<sup>20</sup>. However, that is a “strict” definition, counting only those who aren’t employed or working on their own account. As AfricaCheck points out, this doesn’t capture the whole employment issue. They cite “The director of production statistics at [KNBS], James Gatungu, told Africa Check in an earlier report that statisticians struggle to collate accurate data on unemployment, because ‘in [the] African context, people don’t just stay idle. They do something... like hawking. They are engaged in some form of economic activity. So while they are not employed, they are doing what we call ‘indecent’ jobs; jobs that they were not trained for to eke [out] a living,’”<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> AfricaCheck 2019 (a), KNBS 2018 p. xiii

<sup>21</sup> AfricaCheck 2018

#### 4. How do people describe green work in rural Kenya?

We asked our interviewees about working conditions according to the ILO's four pillars of decent work: employment creation, social protection, rights at work, and social dialogue<sup>22</sup>. According to the ILO: "Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. The ILO's

Measuring Decent Work project measures decent work in certain countries<sup>23</sup>. The Tanzanian report – the closest to Kenya - monitors statistics such as the unemployment rate, women in high-status occupations, injuries and deaths at work, precarious work, informal work, public social security expenditure and proportion of over-60s with pensions, and trade union density<sup>24</sup>. Hence, we tried to find out what the "four pillars" might actually look like for a rural worker, and asked:

1. Do you have paid work?
2. What happens when you are ill, have babies, have an accident at work or grow old?
3. Do you have a written contract?
4. How reliable is your job?
5. Are you satisfied with your income?
6. and (if it was relevant) Are you organised in some way?

On the environment we asked:

- What is the environmental impact of your work?
- What is the climate change impact of your work?

And in order to find out whether the work is transformative:

- What is the positive impact of your work?

This is what we found out.

##### **a) Paid and productive work**

Our respondents are mostly not employed, but rather own-account workers – they live off what they sell. Sometimes they hire people, typically as casual labour (*kibarua*), or buy one-off services like motorbike transport. Here, we could classify them as rural micro-entrepreneurs, self-employed persons, traders or simply as peasants. For the farmers, livestock traders, meat processors and farmers who supply fruit to the Gatundu factory, their income depends on what they sell. The rains make a big difference in what they grow, and whether the livestock thrive. People usually have a range of income options: eggs and milk can be either sold or eaten, goats, camels and cows are a drought-resistant alternative to crops. Most respondents have kitchen gardens and fruit trees. Some weave baskets and trade goods or produce.



"We feed our children and send them to school. We can't go to bed saying we don't have work."

Maryamu, member of a women's camel milk processing group, Isiolo.



<sup>22</sup> ILO website, <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm> accessed on the 2.2.2019

<sup>23</sup> In Africa those are Zambia, Senegal, Ethiopia and Tanzania. We chose Tanzania as an example because it's the closest to Kenya.

<sup>24</sup> ILO 2012: Tanzania Decent Work Factsheet. The ILO's measurement excludes agricultural wages from its low-pay rate calculation, implying that rural incomes are in a different category than urban ones.



#### 4. How do people describe green work in rural Kenya?

“When it rains I usually have enough to feed my family for a whole year and some for selling but when it doesn't rain it becomes difficult and the salary goes down because I am employed through my farm. Informant in Kakululo, Kitui.

”

Their selling prices of products depend on demand and competition, the bargaining power the seller holds against middlemen (see box 2), whether they can sell through social relationships, and more abstract issues like Kenyan trade and subsidy policy.

We didn't conduct a cost-benefit analysis so can't say what profits (if any) people make, but Table 2 gives a sense of the relevant prices and wages.



Figure 3: Chicken farmers and farm workers in Isiolo.

| Table 2: Examples of respondents' incomes  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Product, place   | Typical income (exchange rate 1 GBP = 130 KSH)  | Notes  |
| Kakululo, Kitui.<br>Maize and beans, pulses (githeri, mbaazi, nzenga, dengu), cassava, plantains, millet, sukumawiki and other greens, sweet potato, | In Kakululo, one farmer has 10 acres which gives her an income of KSH 300,000 per year. | Most of the people in the group can't bargain for the best price for their maize because they sell into a glut, either after the harvest, or when everyone needs money (for school fees in January, or Christmas). |

#### 4. How do people describe green work in rural Kenya?

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| fruit, small livestock and feed crops.   |  |  |
| Kakumuti, Kitui  | An "improved" goat sells for KSH 15,000 (ordinarily KSH 8,000). A large rooster for meat sells for KSH 1000. Improved breed eggs can be sold for hatching at KSH 20 each. Day labour is paid at KSH 300 per day. |  |
| Sampu, Kajiado   | A cow sells for KSH 40,000, which means a profit of KSH 2000-5000 per cow.   | The traders complain that cows from Tanzania flood the market.   |
| Isiolo<br>Poultry for meat and eggs, dairy, camel milk and meat, beekeeping, fruits, vegetables, cotton, turkeys and guineafowl. | Milk: KSH 80 per litre. (Pastoralists in Kajiado only get KSH 40/litre).<br>A tray of eggs KSH 300.<br>A day labourer can earn KSH 500 per day.  | Good quality milk fetches a premium price.<br>Eggs from "outside" (from other counties or even EAC neighbouring countries) sell for KSH 250 a tray – considered unfair competition.<br>Depending on experience and workload. |
| Gatundu<br>Bananas, avocados   | KSH 200 per day wages, KSH 5 per avocado.  | Official agricultural minimum wage is KSH 283 per day.<br>Middlemen pay as little as KSH 2 per avocado.  |

Some of the smallholders also take jobs as day labour themselves, meaning that the categories "employer" and "employee" are blurred and overlapping.

According to the Regulation of Wages (Agricultural Industry) (Amendment) Order 2018, minimum wages in Kenyan agriculture range from KSH 283 per day for unskilled labour to KSH 514 for farm clerks and foremen. Herdsmen's minimum wage is KSH 329 per day. Our research wasn't detailed enough to calculate to what extent respondents earn or pay this. Respondents mention wages between 200-500 KSH per day – higher for skilled positions where the employer doesn't want to keep retraining people<sup>25</sup>, so some of the wages do fall above the minimum wage.

**However, the minimum wage is not the living wage.** According to WageIndicator, a living wage for a typical Kenyan family in 2018 is KSH 36,900 a month, equivalent to KSH 1,845 per working day<sup>26</sup> (from all household breadwinners). Assuming there are two working adults in a typical family, each one would have to earn KSH 922 per day to reach the living wage.

**Nobody that we spoke to earns or pays this level of wage** – although livestock trading profits might possibly reach it.

Nonetheless, the veterinary inspector in Dagoretti is positive about the slaughterhouses employing local people and paying acceptable wages, although she estimates that they only earn 400-500 KSH per day: "We need a workforce of people who live around. So at the end of the day they will get something for the work that they do here. And **I see this positively**

<sup>25</sup> Isiolo FG

<sup>26</sup> <https://wageindicator.org/salary/living-wage/kenya-living-wage-series-december-2018> accessed on 11.9.19. The living wage covers day-to-day expenses and a 10% margin for unexpected costs.

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**because they'll take their children to school, they dress well, they eat well**, it's able to sustain their living. But anyway you talk to the majority of them, they will tell you "*Watoto wamesoma mpaka university*" [My children have studied until university]". But does it allow people to save for the future and improve their lives?

### **b) Social protection**

Social protection covers a person's livelihood when they're unable to work. The most widespread practices are payments during illness (sick leave), after childbirth (maternity leave) and during old age (pensions). Less common provisions cover absence while caring for a family member, parental leave for men, long-term support in case of disability, and unemployment benefits<sup>27</sup>. Among our respondents, the bulk of these situations are covered by family members, colleagues, savings, or the patron. Savings and loans groups (known as "merry-go-rounds") are also an important resource mentioned by the camel-milk processors in Isiolo, farmers in Kitui and agro-processors in Gatundu. The savings can be used by members for emergencies (or celebrations).

“Eggs can pay for school fees – they are the ATM of the home. Medium-scale farmer, Isiolo”

The only government social protection schemes that our informal-sector respondents mentioned are in healthcare. In Isiolo people mentioned NHIF (national hospital insurance fund) and universal healthcare coverage (UHC) as delivered under the Big Four<sup>28</sup>. In Kitui the respondents mentioned that NHIF payments, at KSH 500 per month and with steep fines if you miss a payment<sup>29</sup>, "is expensive for the common man". But the Kitui governor had put in place simple healthcare access, where an annual payment of KSH 1,000 gives you access to the Kitui general hospital.

In case of accidents at work, it pays to have a prosperous employer. The small farmers in Kitui take no responsibility for accidents: "for example if [the casual labourer] is bitten by a snake – that snake is not mine." But the medium-scale chicken farmer in Isiolo does cover accidents – and personal emergencies – of her employees. Such a patron-client relationship is not uncommon in places without public safety nets.

Anti-discrimination and social protection are especially important decent work pillars for women according to Womankind Worldwide<sup>30</sup>. In the pretty much unregulated workplaces of rural Kenya, we found that extended family support is fundamental. And within that context, women shoulder the bulk of the unpaid care burden of having children and looking after ill or elderly family members. Services that are taken care of by the state or employer in formal contexts are here shouldered by families and women in their "spare" time.

On maternity, the veterinary inspector at Dagoretti told us "You see for us, because it's more of a formal job, you get maternity leave of course. But for them [women doing casual work at the abattoir], they have to get some money every day, every day they have to come. So you see maybe they will take some leave, but of course no-one will pay them. Because the work

<sup>27</sup> ILO Convention 102 – Social Security (minimum standards).

<sup>28</sup> The Big Four strategy put in place UHC in four counties, one of them Isiolo.

<sup>29</sup> NHIF website accessed August 2019

<sup>30</sup> Saalbrink 2019

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they [women] will do, it's small work. At the end of the day they will wash some clothes maybe. So it's not like someone is there to support their maternity leave."

The inspector is the only one of our female respondents who mentioned having maternity leave. Among the respondents in Kitui and Isiolo, family members (including husbands) and colleagues take over the work of a woman when she has a small baby: "Tunasaidiana" (we help each other). "In the Somali culture a woman has 40 days off after giving birth. Then she comes back and does lighter work."

For the prosperous medium-sized farmers in Isiolo childbirth creates an employment opportunity: "You hire someone to look after the baby".

What is clear is that social protection among our respondents is not delivered through claiming a right. Instead it's nearly always a family and community issue – meaning it is personalised and depends on your good standing and respectability. Without a levelling mechanism such as redistribution through taxation, people are also vulnerable to the "Matthew principle" where the poor grow poorer with each crisis.

#### **c) Security in the workplace**

Some informal work relationships *are* reliable and longer-term, despite not having written contracts or the other trappings of formal jobs. For example livestock traders in Kajiado mentioned that they hire the same herder for many months; the skilled slaughterhouse workers at Sampu are hired and their contracts reviewed once a year (at Dagoretti they can also be hired longer-term but the informant didn't know for how long); the larger Isiolo farmers employ staff for months or years at a time; and the five Gatundu factory workers are permanent.

Kitui farmers rely on trust instead of rule of law: "No one has written agreements. We don't follow the law so much so we are not aware of the dangers involved; we just trust each other. And another thing, we don't take people from far; we only take people from our locality". As we see, this works because of the "social capital" inherent in living in a small village.

But most employment that was mentioned is casual: "the thing is, if you misbehave today their contract will end" (Dagoretti veterinary inspector). "Misbehaving" can cover a wide range of behaviour, from not working hard enough to insisting on receiving your full pay. This is clearly a risk for both employer and employee, but more so for the employee, who is in a weaker bargaining position in a country with widespread underemployment<sup>31</sup>. The situation is wide open for exploitation. We weren't able to interview any employees without their employers being present, but Kitui farmers describe what can happen when they work as day labourers: "Sometimes you can go work and the person fails to pay you or he/she pays you in instalments but never completes the pay in full until you stop asking for your pay."

#### **d) Social dialogue**

When we asked "how do you organise yourself to negotiate for better prices or conditions?", none of our interviewees mentioned trades unions or collective bargaining, or even economic organisation like co-operatives. The research team hadn't expected this either, but we did think people might have been members of other informal associations that organise themselves for better incomes – maybe a market traders' association. What we did come across were:

- Three social enterprises (two in Isiolo, one in Gatundu), see box 2
- The Sampu slaughterhouse committee – which negotiates as the employer
- Savings and loans groups.

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<sup>31</sup> AfricaCheck 2018



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Although there's a dearth of rights-based negotiation, the prevalence of savings and loans groups is a good sign for future development engagement. CAFOD experience shows that enterprise development interventions work best with groups that already have the experience of organising themselves in savings and loans groups<sup>32</sup>.

##### **Box 2: Marketing: cartels and social enterprises**

The farmers in Kitui portray themselves as being at the mercy of produce buyers – known as middlemen, traders, brokers or even cartels. The Gatundu farmers explicitly say that they receive better prices for their avocados from the factory they co-own than from the “cartels”: where the middlemen pay as little as KSH 2 (or 1.5 pence!) for an avocado, the factory pays KSH 5 (nearly 4 p). Meanwhile, the Sampu meat traders – middlemen – state that they are unhappy about their incomes and blame flagging retail demand for sluggish sales.

Traders themselves state that they have to cover their costs. It is also recognised that without middlemen to transport produce to market, there would be no sales of produce outside the very local markets – their services are needed.

The problem of farmers selling at low prices is also linked to poverty: without resources to store their produce and sell at a better price later, poorer farmers have no choice but to be price-takers. Better-off farmers can also process their harvest or choose to grow and sell more innovative, higher-value crops: one prosperous Kitui farmer suggests selling maize for seed, or as sweetcorn when it's fresh, rather than for milling.

In such a dog-eat-dog marketplace, the role of development interventions becomes more important. Storage silos, either individual or community-run, remove the urgency to sell grains before they rot. Governments and development agencies can also keep this in mind when piloting new crops: are they perishable or not, can they be moved and sold quickly enough? Savings and loans schemes can provide money for school fees and make it possible for parents to wait for better prices before selling their harvest. And social enterprises, co-operatives or other businesses in the solidarity economy allow producers to keep more of their cut. For example, the Isiolo camel milk processors use their community connections to sell to fellow Somali Kenyans in Nairobi, and the church youth group have a ready market in the congregation for their eggs, using community links for a preferential market.

<sup>32</sup> Personal communication with Gisele Hernandez, CAFOD livelihoods Adviser.

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Figure 4: Tea seller at Sampu Slaughterhouse.

#### 4. HOW DO PEOPLE DESCRIBE GREEN WORK IN RURAL KENYA?

The six group interviews concern livelihoods activities that are very close to the natural environment: farming, livestock herding and small-scale agro-processing.

We came across a contradiction between the understanding of “good farming” and environmental sustainability. Many policy- and research documents use phrases like “modern agricultural practices” and “technology” which usually mean extensive farming (of a monocrop) farmed using a combination of hybrid seeds with artificial fertilisers and pesticides. Such technological packages are very popular with decisionmakers worldwide, but the synthetic nitrogen fertilisers they contain are highly damaging to the climate<sup>33</sup> and soil health, and the pesticides in them can, perversely, accelerate pest resistance, damage animal, insect and human health<sup>34</sup>, and contaminate surface water<sup>35</sup>. There is work to be done to reorient the idea of “progress” to a sustainable version, especially to inspire young people in the countryside. These are the responses from our group interviews:

In our field research we asked people about the environmental and climate impacts (positive or negative) of their work. The responses, described below, tended to be about the immediate effects on the physical environment.

##### a) Pollution

For the meat processors (Sampu, Dagoretti and Isiolo) the waste question was mainly about containing effluents such as blood, stomach contents and leftover milk. The formal abattoirs have waste lagoons where wastes are broken down to keep them away from water sources. But the women’s camel milk processing group pours waste milk into the municipal drains. Several egg and chicken farmers in Isiolo depend on purchased inputs from start to finish:

<sup>33</sup> UNFCCC Land Use summary report, para A3.5: Application of nitrogen (in fertilisers) is the main source of soil emissions of the greenhouse gas nitrous oxide: Anthropogenic N<sub>2</sub>O emissions ... from soils are primarily due to nitrogen application including inefficiencies (over-application or poorly synchronised with crop demand timings)”

<sup>34</sup> See e.g. WHO IARC monograph on the carcinogenicity of glyphosate, 2015

<sup>35</sup> DiBartolomeis et al 2019

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they may be clients of e.g. Kenchick and buy chicks, runs, feed, medicines, vitamins and vaccines without much influence over how they apply the inputs (although some of the smaller farmers supplement the shop-bought feed with sunflower and maize). The medium-sized egg farmer in Isiolo raises battery hens on an industrial model. She is very aware of runoff from her farm, and the importance of minimising evaporation from the soil for her crops.

##### **b) Climate change**

This topic is not well known among the respondents. Our interviewees think about climate change mainly in terms of the effects on the rains: they all depend on rain for their crops or animals, and hence for their income. The rains are absolutely fundamental to their livelihoods and droughts mean poverty.

When the respondents considered their own contribution to climate change, they mention tree planting. There was almost no reflection on fossil fuel use for transporting the produce or on the fossil fuels embedded in their inputs. The Sampu livestock traders also didn't reflect on whether their cattle and goats might cause deforestation<sup>36</sup>.

##### **c) Circular economy**

Many of the respondent farmers use compost quite naturally and sell manure for fertiliser where it has a market value. In Kitui there may be some credit to CAFOD and Caritas here, since the interview participants have been involved with Caritas livelihood- and food security projects that promotes alternatives to artificial inputs.

Some of the Isiolo farmers make use of their outputs as inputs for others: they sell chicken manure, chicken entrails for pig feed, and the medium-scale diversified farmer uses her own cotton seed as cattle feed.

There is much more that could be done, however, especially with the nitrogen-rich slaughterhouse wastes. It doesn't seem to be economically profitable, but there may be a good case for development actors to step in and offer catalyst funding to set up processes to make e.g. blood meal for fertilizer, leather, or biogas. It appears that UNIDO set up a biogas plant at Dagoretti slaughterhouse cluster in 2011<sup>37</sup>. However, our informant at Dagoretti didn't mention this initiative and UNIDO Kenya didn't get back to us. Biodigestors can be very productive and profitable, as well as avoiding problem waste (manure) and turning it into clean fuel instead – they are development initiatives worth considering.

| <b>Table 3: Environmental practices in our fieldwork</b>            |  |
|---|--|
| Some or no environmental efforts?                                   | By which respondents   |
| <b>No</b> efforts to alleviate impacts on environment and climate   | Youth group chicken farm – Isiolo; livestock traders taking cattle to Sampu slaughterhouse.                          |
| <b>Some</b> efforts to alleviate impacts on environment and climate | Smallholder farmers in Kitui (make compost).<br>Sampu slaughterhouse (divert waste to lagoons instead of the river). |

<sup>36</sup> Camels, on the other hand, are a good species adapted to arid areas, and the camel meat group is making use of them.

<sup>37</sup> UNFCCC: Project inception document available on <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/activity-database/momentum-for-change-converting-waste-from-slaughter-house-to-energy-for-productive-use> with a link to a news item on the biodigestors.

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|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Dagoretti slaughterhouse cluster (waste lagoons, considering making fuel briquettes from soiled sawdust, possibly a biodigestor).<br>Isiolo medium-sized farms (selling chicken manure for fertiliser, making compost, recycling cotton seed cake as cattle feed).<br>Gatundu processing factory (making compost from waste; biodegradable packaging). |
|--|--|

It is a large undertaking to convert a “conventional” farm into a sustainable one, but it doesn’t have to be an immediate undertaking: farmers can do it gradually, starting with practices that they find easier (an approach known as the agroecological transition). The economics of agroecology are favourable for peasants – c.f. the Zero Budget Natural Farming movement in Andhra Pradesh in India, supported by the state government<sup>38</sup>. Many sustainable farming methods fulfil Raworth, Wykes & Bass’ criteria for sustainable local development: they are labour-intensive; with pro-poor returns; low financial, resource and energy costs; with jobs throughout the production cycles, incorporating the informal economy. Hence there is promising scope for creating decent and green jobs in sustainable farming, supported by good markets in local economies.

#### **d) GESIP – Kenya’s green economy strategy**

Kenya’s green economy strategy GESIP reads as an important if uneven plan for both material prosperity and environmental sustainability. It mentions increasing employment in green jobs, in agro-processing among other industries. On paper, clauses such as Objective 4.3.v, “Develop functional markets for secondary raw materials and recycled products through end-of-waste criteria and recycled content”<sup>39</sup> sound like they could do much to improve the environmental impact of rural enterprises. However, some of the instruments that are proposed are mutually exclusive for example on the one hand, a voluntary standard; on the other, extended producer responsibility for waste<sup>40</sup>. The GESIP document proposes a complex steering group structure and this author was unable to find traces of the proposed thematic working group or governing summit online<sup>41</sup>.

The first “challenge” on the strategy’s list is “Inadequate compliance and weak enforcement of laws and regulations”<sup>42</sup>, recognising that Kenyan regulation implementation is dependent on good governance. Additionally, its aims remain abstract. It’s also not clear whether the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources has the political clout to drive through the wideranging reforms across many ministries that would be needed to make GESIP a reality. The plan contains another structural weakness<sup>43</sup>: a business-as-usual logic where the already dominant businesses make money for economic growth, only with tweaks as to the nature of their inputs. It doesn’t promote unorthodox types of enterprise or recognise micro-level production or employment patterns.

Undoubtedly it is better to have a green economy implementation plan than *not* having one. GESIP may yet deliver decent and green development to Kenyans such as our focus group discussion participants, assuming it overcomes its weaknesses. Reflecting on the experiences in this snapshot research, there are still significant barriers that would need to be addressed for GESIP to be implemented on the ground. They include more participatory policymaking,

<sup>38</sup> Official Website of ZBNF Programme of Rythu Sadhikara Samstha, Government of Andhra Pradesh <http://apzbnf.in/>

<sup>39</sup> Under Thematic Area 4: Promoting Resource Efficiency

<sup>40</sup> GESIP p. 42; implementation matrix.

<sup>41</sup> Web search on the 23.9.19. There are, however, many hits for “Kenya Blue Economy Summit”.

<sup>42</sup> GESIP p. 13

<sup>43</sup> E.g. objectives on GESIP page 32



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extending social security and recognising informality. The academic Carlos Oya has written about African rural labour markets in 2010 and gives more insights. He recommends (among others) promoting labour-intensive agro-industry in rural areas, improving rural infrastructure, providing credit for fresh rural investment, strengthening labour market organisations for unorganised workers' collective action, and having an enforceable agricultural minimum wage<sup>44</sup> – recommendations that resonate with our findings.



*Figure 5: Kakululo farmer*

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<sup>44</sup> Oya 2010, pp. 32-33

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**5. ANNEX 1 KAKUMUTI, KITUI: THE VILLAGE PROVIDES**

The farmers in drought-prone Kitui grow a wide range of staples, vegetables and fruits, keep livestock and make jokes about farming cats: “Do you eat them or sell them?” “No, they are to keep the mice away!” In this village where everyone knows everyone, farmers (both women and men) have between 2-10 acres of land each. Perhaps encouraged by NGO partnerships, they use terraces and soil conservation to counteract erosion. They hire casual labour (*kibarua*) during the harvest and for weeding – and work as casual labour themselves when they need extra income.

Nobody here signs a written contract, and in fact insisting on contracts seems suspicious: “Yes, if you tell someone to have a written agreement then the person might think you don’t have faith in him/her.” “If you trust someone then the person will be able to do the work well but if you tell the person about having a written agreement, then the person will not do his best.”

The way to make sure you have a job tomorrow is to do a good job today: “If I have called someone for a job and if he/she does not do the work to my satisfactory then I will not call him/her the next day. Or I can call and tell the casual labourer that I am busy somewhere else but really I have looked for someone else to do the job so in short I have fired him/her. So it is a must he/she does the work well so that you continue.”

It can be a downside when you are the labourer: “Sometimes you can go work and the person fails to pay you or he/she pays you in instalments but never completes the pay in full until you stop asking for your pay.” Clearly, the employer holds all the power in these relationships but the traditional leader, or village headman, can mediate conflicts in a reliable way.

The people of Kakumuti have access to the National Hospital Insurance Fund, NHIF. For self-employed or informal workers, the monthly fee is KSH 500<sup>45</sup> which the villagers consider expensive: “[Healthcare coverage] wasn’t there but the Governor is now trying to introduce it. We used to use NHIF but it was expensive on the common man. The Governor’s scheme is that you pay 1,000 shillings at the beginning of the year so when you go to hospital you don’t have to pay a cent. It covers treatment in the Kitui General Hospital.”

Other social security is taken care of by family and neighbours. Elderly people are looked after by their children, sick people by their families, and when women have small babies their husbands take up their heaviest work. If someone has an accident while working for a farmer, they have to take care of themselves: “Most of the time they cater for themselves since I pay them. And whatever has hurt him/her, like a snake, does not belong to me either way.”

“If you tell someone to have a written agreement then they might think you don’t have faith in them.”

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Decent work? | No.             |
| Green work?  | To some extent. |

<sup>45</sup> NHIF website accessed 16.8.19, <http://www.nhif.or.ke/healthinsurance/>. But there is a KSH250 fee for each late payment.

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### 6. ANNEX 2: GATUNDU SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' PROCESSING FACTORY

Our Gatundu case is a community-owned small business that adds value to local produce: the Gatundu Small-holder Farmers' Banana Processing Factory in Kiambu County. They produce flour from bananas and avocados, dried banana chips and banana and avocado powder that allegedly has medicinal value.

The factory is owned by 30 members: 10 females and 20 males. They all come from the same community. They registered a community-based organisation first (under the Ministry of Social Services) and later this became a banana processing factory. They however have a chairman; Mr. Mundia Kinuthia who hosts the factory in his land. The idea to start such a factory originated from him. They have attracted funding from USAID and the County government of Kiambu. There are no other agroprocessing employers in Gatundu.

Out of the 30 members only five active members work in the factory. The rest of the members take their produce to the factory and sell it at a decent price. When the end products are sold, 90% of the income goes to the group account while 10% goes to the chairman (who hosts the factory).

The workers are paid KSH 200 per day. Those who supply the factory are paid based on the amount of produce they bring. A bunch of 10 bananas goes for KSH 100 while 1 avocado is sold at KSH 5. The members say it is a much better price compared to the KSH 2 paid by middlemen from Nairobi. However, it is still not close to the official agricultural minimum wage of KSH 283 per day for unskilled work.

Since the factory is owned by the group, they take collective effort to take a person to hospital in case of an accident. From their kitty (money received from flour, banana chips and powder) they get the money to handle the case as of and when it arises. Because it is a group of 30, they step in for the active employee's in case of emergency or when a lady goes for maternity. They have also gone beyond the factory and formed a merry go round (group savings scheme) where they contribute money per week and each member has a turn to receive the '*chama*' money. Consequently, when one of the members falls ill or has an important ceremony, a certain amount of money (they declined to say how much) is contributed from the group's kitty. Theirs is collective effort.

In terms of environmental effects, the factory creates good waste that is poured back on their gardens as manure. They use water from the County government. Most households around the factory and its environs are supplied with piped water by the government and are rarely affected. Their raw materials are environmentally friendly. They are biodegradable. They also package their products in brown paper packages that have been accepted by the government of Kenya and are biodegradable.

The interviewees are aware of the numerous policies that should affect them – but mentioned that so many policies have been formulated and are not being implemented.

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Decent work? | For the 5 workers, yes: informal but reliable. |
| Green work?  | Yes.   |

Gatundu case study written by Yvonne Tanin Kuntai, Jesuit Hakimani Centre.

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## 7. ANNEX 3: SAMPU SLAUGHTERHOUSE: POTENTIAL ANCHOR ENTERPRISE

Sampu slaughterhouse in Kajiado County is the municipal abattoir where livestock are brought for slaughter. It is a focus for employment and income for slaughtermen, livestock sellers, meat traders, one veterinary inspector and three tea ladies who sell breakfast. The abattoir processes cattle, goats and sheep. Our focus group comprised of the slaughterhouse chairman, eight meat traders, two tea sellers and one slaughterhouse worker.

Nine of the ten men in the focus group employ one or two others as herders, drovers, farmhands, butchers or BBQ chefs. These employees don't have written contracts, only "an understanding". The employment relationships typically last between two months and five years.

The traders who buy and sell livestock and meat based at Sampu are also in the informal economy, although they sell their meat to butchers' shops in Kajiado town. They trade using verbal agreements both for their employees and their clients. They are businessmen with assets, livestock, contacts and trucks and it seems that they can prosper. Four members of the focus group don't think that they earn enough (the tea sellers and two of the men), but eight are satisfied with their income, even though the income fluctuates and isn't predictable. Hardly anyone who works in the abattoir is formally employed or has decent work according to the ILO definition. However, despite being only verbally agreed, the slaughtermen's work is reliable (they are hired by the 12-person slaughterhouse committee for up to a year at a time), and according to one informant, it is "a good job" (although, since his employer was sitting next to him at the time, that statement may not be 100% reliable). Since the abattoir is a municipal entity, it should in theory be governed by known regulations and laws, and it is evident that they follow health and safety regulations at least in terms of physical structure, waste disposal and meat transport – raising the possibility (at least in theory) of influencing to improve labour conditions of the abattoir staff. In practice, the social norms between actors appear to be stronger than legal norms, and the ingredients for patronage are present in the way the slaughterhouse is run.

The two women in the group just earn a meagre living selling tea and bread to the slaughterhouse workers. They have no income security, legal rights, or even physical infrastructure for their stalls: they sell from tables in the open. They are at the bottom of the hierarchy and can't really assert their rights: they mention non-payment from clients as a problem.

There may be scope for making abattoir jobs more decent through the municipality, but that is very difficult for the wider livestock and meat economy where hierarchy combines with low education levels.

There might be potential in using the slaughterhouse as a hub for environmental interventions and local processing (see box 3).

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Decent work? 2/5 | In the slaughterhouse, yes. Around it, no.  |
| Green jobs? 2/5  | Not as bad as it could be – the abattoir has structures to stop the blood and effluents polluting local rivers. |



#### 4. How do people describe green work in rural Kenya?



Figure 6: Livestock traders in Sampu

### Box 3: Biomass, not waste

At the moment Sampu slaughterhouse is efficient according to regulations: it is clean and all the waste products (liquid ones like blood and stomach contents, and solid ones such as skins, horns and rejected carcasses) are channelled into closed concrete pits on the grounds, where solids are broken down quickly using “*dawa*” - unspecified chemicals. But if we use circular economy thinking, these could be inputs, not waste.

The same animal parts could be used as raw materials or, as a last resort, as fertiliser. It would “green” the abattoir while creating an income for enterprising locals. Skins could be tanned and processed (currently, the Kenyan 80% tariff on exporting unprocessed skins and hides has crippled the skins and hides business<sup>46</sup>, because the Kenyan leather industry it was supposed to support, is weak or non-existent.) Blood could be dehydrated and used as fertiliser for local crop farmers. Stomach contents could be composted, also becoming fertiliser for farming.

With careful investment and policy support similar medium-scale rural agro-processing centres could become hubs for circular economies supporting local businesses and farms, increasing food sovereignty, strengthening the local economy and creating more employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

<sup>46</sup> Daily Nation, 9.7.2019 <https://www.nation.co.ke/video/news/4146788-5189330-2au2hz/index.html#>

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Figure 7: Research team leader Yvonne Kuntai (left) with women from the camel milk and meat group, Isiolo

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