2

THE KENYA COAST IN NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Henk Meilink

ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a concise review of the process of regional development and the concomitant growing regional inequalities in Kenya. By focusing on Coast Province, it aims to verify statements which stress that the province has gradually moved to a marginal position in Kenyan society. Examining the post World War II period, findings indicate that a successful rooting of (smallholder) marketed production took place elsewhere in Kenya but such a development largely bypassed Coast Province. In the second section statistical sources are analysed which permit insight into the regional distribution of important welfare indicators such as education, health, water supplies and especially food security at household level. The overall conclusion is that large disparities have grown between provinces. Most serious poverty is located in the west of the country, in Western and Nyanza Provinces in particular. Average incomes at the Coast are not the lowest in the country. Also with regard to 'food poverty', the relative position of coastal households is not unfavourable compared to other regions in Kenya. Nevertheless, reviewing other basic household welfare indicators including child nutrition, child mortality, educational participation, health facilities and access to safe water leads to the conclusion that the Coast indeed finds itself in a disadvantaged situation.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of regional inequality is essentially part of the broader question of the distribution of production and income between population groups in a country. Economic activities cannot be spread over a country's surface in such a way that all will equally benefit. Growth is bound to induce inequalities between people as well as between regions. Especially in a country like Kenya, with its wide variations in ecological and climatic characteristics, regional disparities are likely to grow as economic development gets under way.

Already in the 1950s, Myrdal noted the tendency towards increasing regional inequalities in underdeveloped countries, emanating from the "free play of economic market forces" (Myrdal 1957: 34). His argument is still relevant today and refers to the forces determining the allocation of production factors, in particular capital and labour. Capital moves to places where already some development has taken place (usually industrialising areas and export crop regions) and where 'return to investment' is highest. In a similar vein, labour (usually the more educated) tends to move away from the 'backward areas' into regions where a market of paid employment has already emerged. And finally, through the 'advantages of the economies of scale' (which leads to reduced costs per unit of output), production tends to be concentrated even more in certain areas (Myrdal 1957: 26-27).

However, authors differ in their interpretation of the phenomenon of regional disparities in Kenya. Hazlewood, for example, is most outspoken in his notion that the greatest regional inequalities "are the work of nature" and that "the existence of provincial inequalities in Kenya does not necessarily imply that they all should — let alone could — be diminished. Some inequalities are simply differences" (Hazlewood 1979: 175). Killick & House hold a different view. Admitting that "inequality has been built into the country's rural economy by the forces of nature", they nevertheless blame the Kenyan government for their inaction when it comes to 'correct nature'. "Government policies have done little to alleviate the 'natural' inter-province disparities" (Killick & House 1983: 31, 60). Bigsten, who thoroughly studied Kenya's regional inequality patterns, reminds us that, at Independence, there were already large inequalities between regions and population groups and that most of these had evolved during the period of colonial domination: "Kenya inherited a disintegrated economic structure with enormous inequalities between different regions" (Bigsten 1981: 181). Concerned with the consequences of these large regional inequalities, he stressed that "a balanced regional development pattern is necessary, in order to stave off interregional (which in Africa usually means tribal) conflicts, often having very disruptive consequences" (Bigsten 1981: 180).

Yet, in Kenya's policy making after 1963, issues of 'balanced regional development' and 'income distribution' have never been granted priority. As Migot-Adholla (1979) has pointed out, the Kenyan government was from the outset in favour of a ***growth***-oriented development strategy. The 'Sessional Paper' of 1965 unequivocally formulated that "to make the economy as a whole grow as fast as possible, development money should be invested where it will yield the largest increase in new output" (Kenya 1965: 46). Migot-Adholla (1979: 163) concludes that as a result of this policy, "communities with relatively fewer local resources are likely to have their underdevelopment compounded, while those with more resources will grow and prosper as these inequalities become cumulative." Hence, the question of 'cumulative forces', creating growing inequalities between regions and between population groups is reason for concern and merits continued attention from both policy-makers and academics. Especially in the case of Kenya, which is often portrayed as a country where inequality is deeply rooted (see e.g. ILO 1972), the issue of regional diversity is very relevant and has important implications for the welfare distribution among its population.

The present chapter reviews available regional statistical information from various sources in an attempt to assess the relative socio-economic position of Coast Province in the wider Kenyan society. Thus, it is a 'situation analysis', not an evaluation of Kenya's regional policies. In particular, it serves to verify statements which claim that "the Coast has moved to a marginal position" (Geist 1981: 405-6) and "appears the most deprived province, especially as regards health services, education and (dry season) water supplies" (Livingstone 1986: 327).

There are two main sections. First, a concise historical background is presented, illuminating the pattern of regional growth of marketed production in Kenya since colonial times, and focusing on the question to what extent Coast Province has actually place (usually industrialising areas and export crop regions) and where 'return to investment' is highest. In a similar vein, labour (usually the more educated) tends to move away from the 'backward areas' into regions where a market of paid employment has already emerged. And finally, through the 'advantages of the economies of scale' (which leads to reduced costs per unit of output), production tends to be concentrated even more in certain areas (Myrdal 1957: 26-27).

However, authors differ in their interpretation of the phenomenon of regional disparities in Kenya. Hazlewood, for example, is most outspoken in his notion that the greatest regional inequalities "are the work of nature" and that "the existence of provincial inequalities in Kenya does not necessarily imply that they all should — let alone could — be diminished. Some inequalities are simply differences" (Hazlewood 1979: 175). Killick & House hold a different view. Admitting that "inequality has been built into the country's rural economy by the forces of nature", they nevertheless blame the Kenyan government for their inaction when it comes to 'correct nature'. "Government policies have done little to alleviate the 'natural' inter-province disparities" (Killick & House 1983: 31, 60). Bigsten, who thoroughly studied Kenya's regional inequality patterns, reminds us that, at Independence, there were already large inequalities between regions and population groups and that most of these had evolved during the period of colonial domination: "Kenya inherited a disintegrated economic structure with enormous inequalities between different regions" (Bigsten 1981: 181). Concerned with the consequences of these large regional inequalities, he stressed that "a balanced regional development pattern is necessary, in order to stave off interregional (which in Africa usually means tribal) conflicts, often having very disruptive consequences" (Bigsten 1981: 180).

Yet, in Kenya's policy making after 1963, issues of 'balanced regional development' and 'income distribution' have never been granted priority. As Migot-Adholla (1979) has pointed out, the Kenyan government was from the outset in favour of a *growth*-oriented development strategy. The 'Sessional Paper' of 1965 unequivocally formulated that "to make the economy as a whole grow as fast as possible, development money should be invested where it will yield the largest increase in new output" (Kenya 1965: 46). Migot-Adholla (1979: 163) concludes that as a result of this policy, "communities with relatively fewer local resources are likely to have their underdevelopment compounded, while those with more resources will grow and prosper as these inequalities become cumulative." Hence, the question of 'cumulative forces', creating growing inequalities between regions and between population groups is reason for concern and merits continued attention from both policy-makers and academics. Especially in the case of Kenya, which is often portrayed as a country where inequality is deeply rooted (see e.g. ILO 1972), the issue of regional diversity is very relevant and has important implications for the welfare distribution among its population.

The present chapter reviews available regional statistical information from various sources in an attempt to assess the relative socio-economic position of Coast Province in the wider Kenyan society. Thus, it is a 'situation analysis', not an evaluation of Kenya's regional policies. In particular, it serves to verify statements which claim that "the Coast has moved to a marginal position" (Geist 1981: 405-6) and "appears the most deprived province, especially as regards health services, education and (dry season) water supplies" (Livingstone 1986: 327).

There are two main sections. First, a concise historical background is presented, illuminating the pattern of regional growth of marketed production in Kenya since colonial times, and focusing on the question to what extent Coast Province has actually taken part in these developments. The second section offers an up-to-date statistical review of 'development indicators' on a provincial basis, comparing Coast Province with Kenya's other provinces.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The colonial period

Initially, the British focused their interest on the western part of the 'Protectorate of the East African Territories', i.e. present Uganda. The Protectorate came under British rule in 1895 and in order to exploit its riches, it was soon decided to construct a railway from the Coast (Mombasa) to the shores of Lake Victoria (Kisumu). The line was completed in 1902. However, the exportable mining and agricultural produce at that time could not assure a viable economic exploitation of the railway line. As a consequence, the colonial government was faced with a large financial deficit. To ease the problem, a policy was pursued to develop the area between the Lake and the Coast (nowadays Kenya) through the creation of (white) farmer settlements (Hazlewood 1979).

Before the completion of the railway, efforts had been made to develop the coastal area. However, the intended plantation agriculture (cotton and sisal in particular) did not meet expectations due to a combination of unfavourable ecological conditions and labour shortage (Waaijenberg 1993). In addition, there were numerous conflicts over land titles which were largely related to the diversity of population groups living in the coastal strip (Arabs, Bantus, Indians and Europeans). As a result, in the beginning of the twentieth century, most planters at the Coast did not fare well. The decision by the colonial government in 1907 to move the capital inland (from Mombasa to Nairobi) and the concomitant switch in policy focus towards up-country settlers aggravated their situation even further.

Pioneering farmers were white South Africans and British immigrants, later followed by 'soldier settlers' after World War I. The highlands of Kenya, located in what later became Central and Rift Valley Provinces with ample rainfall and rich volcanic soils, held out a promising prospect of gainful commercial farming. It was in this area that by 1923 over 3 million hectares of 'scheduled lands' were 'reserved' for around 3000 settler families. They took up about 20% of Kenya's arable land leaving the remainder for the 3 million Africans in the so-called non-scheduled areas (Hinga & Heyer 1976). White farming expanded rapidly during the 1920s, reaching over 250.000 hectares at the beginning of the 1930s. Coffee, sisal and maize were the leading crops. Especially maize cultivation drew ahead, as production was extended to districts such as Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu in Rift Valley Province. Livestock production was also flourishing in the 1920s with meat, milk, hides and wool contributing significantly to the marketed output of settler farms.

Policy wise, white farmers enjoyed a highly privileged position in the first decades of the twentieth century. Important incentives such as infrastructural provisions (roads, in particular), agricultural research and the delivery of agricultural inputs (credit and extension) were exclusively concentrated in the region of the 'White Highlands'. Settlers were also protected against competition from imports and enjoyed heavily subsidised freight rates for railway transport of their produce to the Coast.

In contrast, the development of indigenous agriculture was seriously hampered as African farmers were officially denied the cultivation of cash crops (such as coffee and tea) that might compete with the settlers' products. First and foremost, the African areas were expected to provide sufficient labour to satisfy existing needs on the 'white' farms. To this end, taxes were levied on the indigenous population, forcing them to work for wages on 'white' plantations often to the detriment of their own subsistence production. In short, according to some writers, the nature of British colonial rule in Kenya during the first three decades of the century "offers a textbook study of racial exploitation" (Killick & House 1983: 44; see also Heyer 1975; Smith 1976).

In the 1930s, the dominant role of white settler farming waned as the Depression years in Europe lowered the demand for their products suddenly and substantially. From that time some drastic changes took place. As demand for African labour on white farms slackened, more labour became available in African areas, which allowed for growth of the indigenous production. The colonial government began to support African market production in their search for alternative sources of tax revenues, as the decline in European output had also resulted in a lower state income. Not only cash crops, also food production received more attention, partly as a response to the serious famine of 1933-34. African market production began to expand and for the first time coffee growing by Africans was allowed, be it on a small scale. Moreover, the government began to develop a growing concern for the problems of soil erosion and the deterioration of natural resources in the African areas (Smith 1976). Thus, colonial policy making was slowly moving to take account of the interests of African producers.

In regional terms, most growth took place in three provinces: Nyanza, Central and to a lesser degree Coast. Nyanza Province in particular experienced a rapid development in cotton production in the lower areas around Lake Victoria and the Ugandan border. Other rapidly expanding products in this province were hides and skins, maize, sim sim, ghee, millets and rice. In Central Province, the dominant products were maize, wattle, hides and skins and legumes. Coast Province also saw increased African (smallholder) marketed production, although in much smaller quantities. Cotton and copra were the most important products, mainly grown in Kilifi and Lamu Districts. In the 1930s, cashew nuts were introduced as a cash crop (Heyer 1975: 150).

In spite of the depressed prices in those years, African agricultural output grew rapidly and strengthened its competitive position vis-à-vis European farming. In the 1940s, African market production was further encouraged.

During the Second World War there was much emphasis on the need to grow more food. As a result, maize cultivation became dominant among the white settlers in the highlands of Rift Valley Province which by 1945 had developed into a major food producing area in Kenya (especially Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu Districts). In this province maize quickly gained importance at the cost of previously important crops like cotton. But along with the growth of maize production, soil conditions deteriorated and land pressure increased in these highland regions.

In contrast, Central Province experienced a shift away from maize into a variety of (more perishable) products for the Nairobi market. Supplies of fruits and vegetables, milk, meat, potatoes, eggs, poultry, pulses and wattle rapidly expanded. Production of pyrethrum was begun in a number of districts in this province as well, especially in Kiambu which by the end of the 1940s supplied the bulk of the African-produced part of this crop. Later, in 1952, tea was planted in Nyeri District, where also the first tea factory started production. In the Coastal area, agricultural development (moderately) progressed as for instance producers in Taita Taveta District succeeded in quickly enlarging their supplies of vegetables for the Mombasa market.

More serious efforts to promote African smallholder agriculture came in the beginning of the 1950s with the introduction of the Swynnerton Plan. For the first time, programmes and policies explicitly aiming at African farming were designed. Essentially, the document was the government's response to the mounting problems of land tenure and land conservation, in particular in Central Province, as well as to increased acts of political resistance by the Mau Mau in their struggle for independence. The plan envisaged spectacular growth of African smallholder cash cropping, primarily in Central Province. And indeed, during the 'Emergency' years in the 1950s, the government provided this province with large amounts of development resources. This laid the foundation for the province's dominant economic position in the country, which it retained ever since (Hebinck 1990: 114). Since Nyanza did not have large areas with soils suitable for high-value cash crops, this province lagged behind.

Figure 2.1 shows the diverging pattern of development in the three provinces under discussion occurring in the period 1945-1962. In terms of the value of marketed output, there is a growing gap emerging between Central and Coast Provinces. In the latter area, the marketed value of agricultural produce hardly increased (even decreased in the later years of the period), while in Central Province it showed spectacular growth. This pattern tends to confirm Geist's conclusion that in post-war Kenya, there has been a successful rooting of smallholder cash crop orientation in Central Province and a failure of the same in the Coast (Geist 1981: 442).

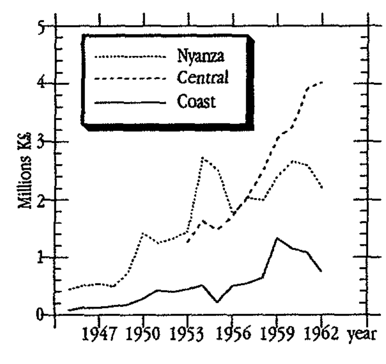

Figure 2.1 Marketed output of selected provinces, 1945-1962 (*Source*: Heyer 1975: 178)

The 1963-1982 period

In the 1960s and early 1970s, overall growth of African smallholder marketed output continued at a more rapid pace than in the 1950s. And from 1967 onwards, the value of marketed output originating from smallholders even exceeded that from large farms. However, one should take into account that in the 1960-1970 period about half a million hectares of large farm land were transferred to the smallholder sector (Heyer 1975). Leading cash earning products included coffee, pyrethrum, maize, tea and horticultural products, but also meat and dairy production contributed considerably. Total cash revenues accruing to small farmers increased with a factor eight between 1960 and 1974. In the latter year it represented 51% of total Kenyan gross marketed output (Heyer 1975: 164; Senga 1976: 89).

Heyer has made an attempt to estimate total African marketed agricultural output produced in the major contributing districts for the year 1969 (Table 2.1). What stands out clearly from the table, is the dominant position of Central Province compared with all other provinces. Eastern Province ranks second which is mainly attributable to Meru's (coffee, tea) and Machakos' (beef, coffee) substantial marketed quantities. In terms of volumes of marketed output, Coast Province was least developed, although measured in the more meaningful 'marketed output per head', the Coast stands out better. Clearly, the highland areas have developed at a faster pace than the lowland regions. This is closely related to the fact that government policies had most to offer to the high potential regions, and (for political reasons) to the Kikuyu areas in particular (Smith 1976: 143; Bigsten 1981: 184).[1]

1 For a brief evaluation of post-Independence government policies towards poverty-stricken parts of the

Table 2.1 Population, marketed output and marketed output per head in Kenya's major smallholder farming districts, 1969

Province* District	Population ('000)	Marketed output (K£'000)	Marketed output per head (K£)
Coast	625	1827	2.92
Kilifi	308	945	3.07
Kwale	206	396	1.93
T. Taveta	111	485	4.37
Eastern	1826	6682	3.66
Central	1676	9003	5.37
Rift Valley	847	2165	2.56
Nyanza	2122	3952	1.86
Western	1328	2247	1.69

* Province totals concern the sum of the selected districts, which are the main smallholder areas.
Source: Heyer & Waweru 1976: 196.

So far, the process of regional differentiation has been examined by focusing on African smallholder marketed output. However, to arrive at a more complete picture of regional development, large-scale farm marketed output should also be included in the analysis. This has been done by Bigsten (1977), who compiled provincial data on marketed output for small and large farms combined for the year 1971. Data include (gross marketed) production of cereals, industrial crops, permanent crops, livestock products, as well as the value of forestry and fishing production. The outcome of this exercise shows that Rift Valley and Central Provinces together took up almost 70% of total marketed output. All other provinces were far behind, including the Coast with 6% (Bigsten 1977: 21).

Unfortunately, no systematic analysis of regional development in later years is available. Case studies carried out in different districts[2] indicate that the pattern of regional disparities based on agricultural commodity production has not fundamentally changed in the 1980s (e.g. Hebinck 1990). Agricultural market production continued to expand, particularly in Central Province and in some districts of Eastern, Rift Valley, Western and Nyanza Provinces. In contrast, large parts of the latter two provinces and all the arid and semi-arid lands of the country's northern territory exhibited a clear trend towards marginalization and impoverishment (Hebinck 1990).

The next step in reviewing Kenya's regional development is to include (in addition to agriculture) the other economic sectors (industry, services, trade, etc.) which together constitute the 'aggregate income'. Arne Bigsten, whose pioneering work provides the most systematic analysis of Kenya's regional development patterns, undertook a brave attempt to calculate from the best statistical information available, the provincial shares in the output of each economic sector[3] contributing to Kenya's 'gross domestic product' (Bigsten 1977; 1980). Despite numerous methodological and statistical problems he concluded that the overall picture given by his estimates was correct (Bigsten 1981: 181). Analysing inequality trends in the 1967-1976 period, it was found that — apart from the 1976 coffee boom impact which benefited a number of farmers in Central Province and to a lesser extent in Eastern Province — "surprisingly little change" had occurred in the provincial shares in total GDP in the period under consideration (Table 2.2). Nairobi alone continued to contribute no less than one-third of total GDP, twice that of the second highest contributor (Central

country, see Ikiara and Tostensen 1995: 54ff.

2 The following studies are mentioned in Hebinck 1990 (p.131): Carlsen 1980 for Kisii, Kisumu, Taita Taveta and Kwale Districts; Lavrijsen 1984 for Western Province; Norwegian Aid Review 1987 for Bungoma District; Cowen 1981 for Central Province; Foeken and Hoorweg 1988 and van Oosten 1989 for Kilifi and Kwale Districts; Dietz 1987 for West-Pokot District; Raikes 1988 for Kisii District; Bevan et al. 1989 for Central and Nyanza Provinces; and Hebinck 1990 for Nandi District.

3 Sectors included agriculture, mining, manufacturing, construction, electricity and water, commerce and transport, and services.

Province) and almost three times that of Coast Province. In 1967, Nairobi and Central Province provided some 45% of total national income, which by 1976 had grown to more than 48%. In other words, about 20% of the country's population accounted for almost half of Kenya's total income generation.

Kenya's large regional inequality is also demonstrated in the more meaningful per capita income figures presented in Table 2.3. Now, Coast Province stands out much more favourable, which is mainly due to the contribution of Mombasa. Nevertheless, while Coast Province had the second highest per capita income, it was only 23% of Nairobi's. In 1976, the latter city's per capita income was six times higher than the national average. The lowest incomes were found in North-Eastern, Western, Nyanza and Eastern Provinces. Yet, as the other figures in Table 2.3 show, one is inclined to conclude that there has been a slight tendency of diminishing regional inequality in the period under consideration.

It is obvious that differences in per capita income between provinces are strongly related to the nature of the prevailing economic structures. In particular, access of the labour force to the more remunerative jobs in a well-developed modern sector makes all the difference. As more labour is employed in this sector, average per capita income for the province will be higher. Thus, in 1976, Nairobi Province had 66% of the labour force absorbed in the modern sector, much higher than the 15-20% in Coast, Rift Valley and Central Provinces and far higher than the 4-7% in the remaining provinces. Hazlewood (1979) analysed the distribution of total wage employment between provinces in the period 1964-1977 and concluded that "remarkably little change" had occurred during the 14 years after independence. Wage employment was particularly concentrated in Nairobi and Rift Valley Provinces (both 25%), Central Province (16%) and also Coast Province (13%).

Table 2.2 Provincial shares of Gross Domestic Product, selected years (%)

	1967	1971	1976
Nairobi	31.5	33.6	31.8
Coast	12.6	13.5	11.9
Eastern	8.9	8.5	9.6
N. Eastern	0.8	0.7	0.4
Central	13.3	13.2	16.3
Rift Valley	17.4	16.5	15.5
Nyanza	11.2	10.1	10.0
Western	4.3	4.0	4.6
Total	100.0	100.1	100.1

Source: Bigsten 1977: 56.

Table 2.3 Per capita income and per capita income relative to Nairobi by province, 1967-1976

	Per capita income (K£/year)			As % of Nairobi's per capita income		
Province	1967	1971	1976	1967	1971	1976
Nairobi	281	338	540	100	100	100
Coast	58	76	123	20.6	22.4	22.8
Eastern	20	24	52	7.2	7.1	9.6
North-Eastern	13	16	18	4.6	4.8	3.2
Central	34	42	96	12.3	12.4	17.7
Rift Valley	34	40	73	12.1	11.9	13.6
Nyanza	23	25	44	8.2	7.4	8.1
Western	14	16	33	5.1	4.7	6.1
Kenya	40	49	90	14.2	14.5	16.7

Source: Bigsten 1981: 182.

The 1982-1992 period

What has happened to the pattern of regional development in the 1980s and early 1990s? Unfortunately, Kenya's main statistical sources (*Economic Survey* and *Statistical Abstract*) do no longer provide data on production and income growth by province. What is available, though, is data from two household surveys: the Rural Household Budget Survey (RHBS) 1981-82 and the National Household Welfare Monitoring and Evaluation Survey (NHWMES) of 1992. These surveys have been extensively analysed by Mukui (1994) and enable us to acquire some notion of more recent developments.

The most appropriate comparison is by using the 'poverty line' concept as a welfare indicator.[4] Mukui's analysis shows that the overall prevalence of poverty in rural Kenya was 46.3% in 1992 (Table 2.4). This means that about half of the Kenyan population was unable to consume the minimal requirement of food and essential non-food commodities. Clearly, poverty remains to be most prevalent in the western parts of the country, with Western, Rift Valley and Nyanza having the highest figures. Central Province has the lowest poverty prevalence, although increasing in the period under consideration. Coast Province occupies a middle position, but has considerably improved its relative position.

Table 2.4 Rural poverty by province, 1982 and 1992 (% below absolute poverty line)

Province	1982	1992
Coast	54.6	43.5
Eastern	47.7	42.2
Central	25.7	35.9
Rift Valley	51.1	51.5
Nyanza	57.9	47.4
Western	53.8	54.8
Kenya	47.9	46.3

Source: Mukui 1994: 52, 62.

Judging from these data it would be difficult to suggest that Coast Province has experienced further marginalization within the Kenyan economy in the 1982-1992 period. Yet, due to the fact that there are no reliable data on regional GDP's, we still do not have adequate insight into each province's contribution to Kenya's total GDP. A 'second best' solution is to examine other meaningful development indicators for which provincial data are available. These include the provinces' share of wage employment and their share in total 'earnings' (Tables 2.5 and 2.6, respectively).

As Table 2.5 shows, three provinces — Nairobi, Rift Valley and Central — have the largest numbers of wage earners, followed by Coast Province. The last column in the table gives the percentage of the province population in wage employment.[5] Nairobi's leading position is once again conspicuous. However, in terms of employment growth the capital lags behind, while Coast Province occupies a middle position. Since wages may differ considerably from one economic sector (industry, public or trade) to the other (agriculture), earnings may be a better indicator of development. Therefore, in Table 2.6 "earnings"[6] by province for the year 1989 (for which also population data are available) are compared. The table once again illustrates the large inequalities prevailing in Kenya. Nairobi and the Coast (that is Mombasa) together representing 14.7% of Kenya's popu-

4 The poverty line is defined as the cost of food expenditure necessary to attain a recommended food intake (2250 kcal per adult equivalent) plus the expenditures on a certain number of necessary non-food items (Mukui 1994: v).

5 Relating it to the 'labour force population' (usually the 15-59 age group) would be more appropriate, but these data were not available by province.

6 Earnings (or wages) are defined as covering all cash payments, including basic salary, cost of living allowances, profit bonus, together with the value of rations and free board, and an estimate of the employer's contribution to housing. Earnings in the informal sector, rural small-scale agriculture and pastoralists are excluded (Kenya 1994b: 301).

Table 2.5 Wage employment by province 1989-1996 ('000)

Province	1989	1992	1994	1996	Growth 1989-96 (%)	% of population in wage empl. (1989)
Nairobi	367.8	375.2	393.4	405.9	10.4	27.7
Coast	170.1	186.3	189.5	201.3	18.3	9.3
Eastern	111.5	125.5	129.1	136.1	22.1	2.9
North Eastern	12.2	13.1	13.8	14.8	21.3	3.3
Central	199.3	206.3	212.2	227.7	14.2	6.4
Rift Valley	298.0	312.4	320.1	353.0	18.5	6.0
Nyanza	127.9	144.6	146.6	160.7	25.6	3.6
Western	81.6	98.7	99.7	107.3	31.5	3.2
Kenya	1,368.4	1,462.1	1,504.4	1,606.8	17.4	6.4

Source: Kenya 1995: 50; 1997: 66.

lation, take up no less than 50.7% of total (wage) earnings in Kenya. The least privileged provinces — Eastern, North Eastern and Western — have 12 to 14 times less the amount of money available per capita (originating from wage employment). And even Coast Province (including Mombasa) has an amount three times lower than that of Nairobi.

The overall conclusion is that populations in Nairobi, Coast, Rift Valley and Central Provinces enjoyed most of the 'fruits of past development' in Kenya. But it should be reminded that within these provinces, growth is concentrated in some districts and is less or even absent in others. For instance, in Kenyan agriculture, growth areas are to be found in Murang'a, Nyeri and Nyandarua Districts in Central Province; Machakos, Embu and Meru Districts in Eastern Province; Kisii District in Nyanza Province and the large estate farms of the Rift Valley in Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu and Nakuru Districts (Hebinck 1990: 117).

Table 2.6 Wage earnings by province, 1989

Province	Earnings (K£'000)	Population (1989)	Per capita (Ksh)
Nairobi	747,513	1,324,570	11,286
Coast	322,702	1,829,191	3,528
Eastern	149,692	3,768,677	794
N. Eastern	15,172	371,391	818
Central	219,326	3,116,703	1,406
Rift Valley	349,948	4,981,613	1,404
Nyanza	182,808	3,507,162	1,042
Western	121,731	2,544,329	956
Kenya	2,108,896	21,443,636	1960

Source: Kenya 1994a 20; 1994b: 327

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Food poverty

How does the Coast compare to the other provinces in terms of food security? In the early 1980s, Greer & Thorbecke (1984; 1986) carried out pioneering research on the degree of food poverty among rural households in Kenya. They constructed a 'food poverty line' indicating the costs of the daily required 2250 calories per adult equivalent member of the household. Using the data from the Integrated Rural Household Survey 1974/75, they calculated the food poverty line per province by taking into account regional food preferences and regional differences in food prices (first column in Table 2.7). The Coast had one of the highest percentages of food-poor households (second column). Moreover, the province's severity of food poverty (third column) was 35% higher than the national average. They concluded that Coast Province "is far and away the

Table 2.7 Rural food poverty by province, 1974 and 1981/82

Province	1974 Food poverty line[a]	1974 % hh's below food poverty line	1974 Severity of poverty[b]	1982 % hh's below food poverty line
Coast	330.9	41.5	0.0462	13.1
Eastern	357.7	32.4	0.0264	14.8
Central	404.3	32.7	0.0283	15.4
Rift Valley	347.7	44.7	0.0387	22.3
Nyanza	327.3	41.0	0.0386	35.8
Western	339.8	45.9	0.0374	23.5
Kenya	-.-[c]	38.6	0.0340	22.1

Notes: a. The food poverty line is defined as the cost of acquiring the recommended daily calorie allowance of 2250 calories per adult equivalent and is expressed in Kenyan shillings per adult equivalent per year.
b. The severety of food poverty is a measure to indicate the size of the gap between the food poverty line and the actual household income.
c. Since provincial poverty lines have been used here, there is no poverty line for Kenya as a whole.
Sources: Greer & Thorbecke 1984: 40 (1974); World Bank 1991: 50 (1982).

poorest province with a high percentage of poor people, many of whom are quite poor" (Greer & Thorbecke 1984: 39).

Later, the World Bank adjusted Greer & Thorbecke's calculations to the income and expenditure information provided in the 1981/82 Household Survey (World Bank 1991). This resulted in a remarkable decline of rural food poverty. The World Bank calculations reveal that problems of the incidence of food poverty were still concentrated in the western (poorer) provinces of Kenya, notably Nyanza, Western and Rift Valley (fourth column in Table 2.7), where, paradoxically most of the country's food is being produced ("the west feeds the rest" is a well-known saying in Kenya).

Especially for Coast Province, the figures regarding the food security situation of the rural population changed greatly. A study among a fairly representative sample of rural households in Kwale and Kilifi Districts in 1985, however, again revealed a figure of 37% of the households below the food poverty line (Hoorweg et al. 1995: 65); a figure which is in line with the findings of Greer & Thorbecke. Whatever the right figure may be, despite the 'chronic food deficit' position of the province, for the majority of the coastal households this does not translate into serious food shortage. Most families at the Coast are able to purchase enough food on the market to supplement their meagre own food production and thus upkeep their consumption levels (Hoorweg, Foeken & Klaver 1995). Such a conclusion is supported by the 1989 Unicef study stating that the Coast provided only 2% of Kenya's maize production, while it consumed more than 10% of the national production volume (Unicef 1989: 37; see also World Bank 1991). Mukui's analysis of the NHWMES[7] 1992 survey data confirms this as well (Mukui 1994: 61).[8]

Child nutrition

A meaningful indicator for household welfare is the nutritional status of its members. In Kenya, surveys

7 National Household Welfare Monitoring and Evaluation Survey.

8 Reflecting on these figures, one tends to conclude that (food) poverty is essentially an arbitrary concept. Esimates may vary significantly as methods of measurement and the definitions of the (food) poverty threshold are altered. As a result, up to now there are no unambiguous answers to such important questions as the magnitude, the severity and the location of food poverty in Kenya (and the prevailing trends over time).

on the health and nutritional situation of the (rural) population have been carried out in 1977, 1979, 1982, 1987 and 1993, using anthropometric measures to assess children's nutritional condition. Often, the degree of 'stunting' in young children between one and five years of age is used as an indicator of the degree of chronic undernutrition. The reported proportion of stunted children, nation-wide between 1973 and 1993, has shown fluctuations from 20 to 34%, averaging at 27% (see Klaver & Mwadime, Chapter 19). In absolute numbers, the World Bank estimated that in Kenya as a whole the number of stunted children rose from about 850,000 in 1980 to 1.26 million in 1990, implying a 50% increase during that decade (World Bank 1991: 35).

Provincial comparisons can be made with the help of data compiled by the World Bank for the year 1982 presented in Table 2.8. Coast Province compares unfavourably with all other provinces, having the highest rate of stunting and, related to that, also a high child mortality figure (number per 1000 of children dying before the age of five). The right-hand column of the table indicates that the more years of education mothers have enjoyed, the lower the percentage of stunted children. Recent (provincial) trends in children's nutritional status can be analysed by comparing the outcomes of the 1987 Nutrition Survey with those of the 1993 Demographic and Health Survey (Table 2.9). The Coast continues to show the highest prevalence of stunting among provinces.

Table 2.8 Child nutrition, child mortality and mothers' education, 1982

Province	Percentage stunted*	Mortality (1979)	% mothers without education
Coast**	36	206	77
Eastern	23	128	46
Central	20	85	30
Rift Valley	20	132	55
Nyanza	29	220	52
Western	26	187	46

* <=90% height-for-age, children 3-60 months
** Excludes Mombasa District.
Sources: World Bank 1991: 30; Unicef/Kenya 1989 75.

Table 2.9 Percentage stunted children (3-60 months) by province, 1987 and 1993

Province	1987	1993
Coast	49.6	41.3
Eastern	37.9	39.4
Central	25.5	30.7
Rift Valley	27.5	28.5
Nyanza	40.3	32.1
Western	22.7	30.0
Kenya	32.2	33.7

Sources: Kenya 1987, 1993.

Education, health and water supplies

It is widely acknowledged that access to such basic provisions as education, health and water is crucial for household welfare. Based on the data from the Integrated Rural Survey 1974, the International Labour Office analysed the distribution of these three public services between provinces in 1986 and concluded that Coast Province "appeared the most deprived", especially if we allow for the effect of Mombasa (Livingstone 1986: 327). This finding is supported in Bachmann's study on the effects of tourism on regional inequality in Kenya: "It is surprising that Coast Province with its regional centre Mombasa and its developed coastal tourism, is among the more neglected provinces. Tourist development along the Coast had little effect, if any, on social amenities in the rural hinterland" (Bachmann 1988: 167). Not unexpectedly, the province that stood out being well-supplied with regard to these three indicators, was Central which had also the highest per capita amount of government spending on each of these provisions.

The general pattern is that an overwhelming part of government's welfare and infrastructural expenditures is directed to the high potential agricultural zones (Bigsten 1981). But apart from economic considerations, political factors have also played an important role in the geographical distribution of government expenditures in Kenya. This is demonstrated in Barkan & Chege's study on 'the district focus in Kenya'. Analysing the budgetary data of the Ministries of Transport and Health (the only two providing data on the geographical distribution of their budget allocations), they concluded that the pattern of new road construction in the 1980s had "increasingly favoured the ethno-regional base of the President" (that is Rift Valley and Western Provinces) and that rural health expenditures had been disproportionally high in Rift Valley Province. The Moi regime has been successful in "shifting expenditures from the regions which constituted the core of Kenyatta's political base (Central and Eastern Provinces) to his own" (Barkan & Chege 1989: 449-450).

Turning to *education*, it should be first and foremost acknowledged that there has been a tremendous expansion of primary education in Kenya since the 1960s. The enrolment ratio for the primary age group rose from 50% in 1963 to 95% in 1991 (Unicef 1992). Progress was also achieved in the 'teacher to pupils ratio' in both primary and secondary schools. However, when disaggregated to the provincial level, it becomes clear that some areas have seriously lagged behind. A study by SIDA at the end of the 1980s revealed that Central, Nyanza and Western Provinces had the highest enrolment ratios and that especially North Eastern Province performed poorly. The Coast's enrolment ratios were "about one-third below that of the most advanced regions" (Bigsten & Julin 1989: 31). Indeed, most districts at the Coast have ratios below the 80% mark, a record which is considered "to leave a great deal of concern" (Unicef 1989: 109).

Moreover, Mombasa (and also Nairobi) appeared to have a surprisingly low ratio of 64%, far below the national average. According to Unicef, possible explanations are the insufficient number of schools and classrooms, the high drop-out rates and the large number of children who are expected to work in order to supplement household income.

Figures for secondary education show even more pronounced differences between provinces (Bigsten & Julin 1989). Enrolment rates in 1986 varied from a high 42% in Nairobi to only 4% in North-Eastern Province. Nation-wide, only 24% of the two million secondary school age population participated in this type of education. The Coast had the second lowest ratio (18%), 25% below the national average.

Data on literacy rates (from the Rural Household Budget Survey 1992) underline this outcome showing that in 1992 the Coast had by far the lowest rural literacy rate: 56%, compared with 70% nationally (Mukui 1994: 81). Although this applied to both males and females, especially the ratio among the latter (45%) compared unfavourably, being 13% less than the second-lowest province (Western) and 20% below the national average.

As for *health facilities*, progress in Kenya was also substantial. Between 1965 and 1985 the number of people per physician and per nursing personnel decreased from 12,820 to 7,037 and from 1,860 to 970, respectively. In 1992, about 77% of all Kenyans lived within a range of six kilometres from a health facility (hospital, health centre or dispensary). However, this applied to only 40% of the Kenyans living in the rural areas. In 1993, Kenya had 2,157 health institutions. The distribution by province is presented in Table 2.10.

The table shows that measured in number of health institutions per 100,000 people, Coast Province is rather well-provided compared with other provinces in the country. The same applies, be it to a lesser extent, to the number of beds and cots per

Table 2.10 Health institutions and hospital beds and cots by province, 1993

Province	Hospitals	Health centres	Dispen-saries	Total	Health inst./ 100,000*	Beds & cots	Beds-cots/ 100,000*
Nairobi	39	18	137	194	15	5,696	430
Coast	34	32	162	228	12	3,276	179
Eastern	43	42	224	309	8	4,745	126
N.-Eastern	6	6	31	43	12	414	112
Central	45	46	232	323	10	5,030	161
Rift Valley	64	63	455	582	12	6,330	127
Nyanza	47	48	252	347	10	4,259	121
Western	30	39	62	131	5	2,784	109
Kenya	308	294	1,555	2,157	10	32,534	152

* 1989 population figures.
Source: Kenya 1994b: 262.

100,000 persons. One should interpret these figures with care, however. First, the Coast figures include Mombasa, the second urban centre in the country, which accounts for about one-third of all health facilities in the province. Second, the quality of health provisions (adequate trained personnel, sufficient drugs etc.) may vary considerably between regions as well as between facilities.

Finally, the issue of *access to water* is considered. Availability of safe drinking water is an important determinant of household well-being. Water comes from a wide variety of resources, either surface water sources including rivers, springs, lakes, dams and ponds, or groundwater resources such as wells, boreholes and piped water. In Kenya, more than 80% of the land falls in the categories of arid and semi-arid zones. Households living in the medium to high rainfall areas have generally easier access to water than those in the drier regions. In most places, serious water problems arise during the dry season. But also in the water-affluent areas, the situation is quickly deteriorating as a result of increased soil erosion and greater use of herbicides and insecticides which contaminate water sources in these areas (Unicef 1992). Rapid population growth and poor environmental conservation practices are also contributing to the declining provision of safe drinking water in many parts of Kenya.

Data from the Survey of Basic Facilities in 1990 estimated that less than half (42%) of Kenya's rural population had access to safe drinking water. Again, provincial differences were considerable, ranging from 68% in Central Province to a low 25% in Coast Province (Unicef/Kenya 1992: 85).

CONCLUSION

When comparing Coast Province characteristics with other provinces, it is essential to be aware of two geographical characteristics of the area. The first concerns Mombasa's dominance in the province. Where the first town in the country, Nairobi, is treated as a separate entity, the second one, Mombasa, is included in Coast Province as a whole. Although figures at the sub-provincial level are not available, it is very likely that the figures on wage employment and wage earnings would be much less favourable for Coast Province without Mombasa.

The second characteristic is the ribbon-like population distribution (see Wakajummah, Chapter 6) along two axes, one being the narrow coastal strip, the other along the road and railway to Nairobi. Mombasa is located where the two axes meet. The remainder of the province is relatively sparsely populated. This places the seemingly favourable position of Coast Province regarding for instance health facilities in another perspective, because the people in the latter areas tend to live long distances away.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Coast Province did not fully participate in the rapid growth of lucrative smallholder export cash cropping as have other parts of Kenya, in particular Central Province. At the Coast, farming as a source of household income generation is not as important as in other regions of Kenya. Budget surveys reveal an 'a-typical' structure of income sources with non-farm employment activities providing the lion's share in total household income. Probably related to this is the finding that average household incomes in the region are not the lowest in the country. Economic poverty in Kenya is localised particularly in Western and Nyanza Provinces. Thus, the statement formulated at the beginning of this chapter that 'the Coast has moved to a marginal position' (Geist 1981) is not supported by the data.

However, in terms of food provision, the Coast is to be considered as a chronically food deficit area. Less than half of the households' food requirements comes from own production and the household money spent on food purchases is twice the national average. It appears that, although food production at the Coast is far from sufficient, people manage to buy food in the market in considerable quantities. Available information on the incidence of household food poverty is fairly contradicting. Data from the Integrated Rural Household Survey of 1974 and results from a rural survey in Kwale and Kilifi Districts ten years later revealed a very high percentage of food-poor households in Coast Province.

Reviewing other basic household welfare indicators such as child nutrition, child mortality, educational participation, and access to safe water, leads to the conclusion that Coast Province indeed finds itself in a disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the other provinces. It has the highest percentage of stunted children, a high child mortality rate and the lowest educational enrolment rates, while in terms of supply of safe water, households at the Coast are also worse off.

Finally, it is evident that once regional developments had 'settled' by the end of the colonial period, the pattern of Kenya's regional inequality in subsequent years underwent very little change.

References

BACHMANN PH. (1988). *Tourism in Kenya A basic need for whom?* Berne: Peter Lang.

BARKAN J.D. & CHEGE M. (1989). Decentralising the state: District Focus and the politics of reallocation in Kenya. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 27(3), 431-453.

BEVAN D., COLLIER P. & GUNNING J. (1989), *Peasants and governments. An economic analysis*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

BIGSTEN A. (1977). *Regional inequality in Kenya*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, Working Paper No. 330.

BIGSTEN A. (1980). *Regional Inequality and Development: a case study of Kenya*. Aldershot: Gowen.

BIGSTEN A. (1981). Regional inequality in Kenya. In T. Killick ed., *Papers on the Kenyan economy. Performance, problems and policies* (pp. 180-188). Nairobi: Heinemann.

BIGSTEN A. & JULIN E. (1989). *Kenya. macro economic studies*. Gothenburg: University of Gothenburg.

CARLSEN J. (1980). Economic and social transformation in rural Kenya. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

COWEN M. (1981). Commodity production in Kenya's Central Province. In J. Heyer, P. Roberts & G. Williams eds., *Rural development in Tropical Africa* (pp. 121-142). London: McMillan.

DIETZ A. (1987). *Pastoralists in dire straits. Survival strategies and external intervention in a semi-arid region at the Kenya/Uganda border: Western Pokot 1900-1986.* Utrecht: Royal Dutch Geographical Society, Netherlands Geographical Studies 49.

FOEKEN D. & HOORWEG J. (1988). *Seasonality in the Coastal Lowlands of Kenya, Part 2. Introduction to seasonality.* Nairobi / Leiden: Ministry of Planning and National Development / African Studies Centre, Food and Nutrition Studies Programme, Report No. 28.

GEIST J. (1981). *Coastal agrarian underdevelopment and regional imbalance in Kenya.* Berkeley: University of California.

GREER J. & THORBECKE E. (1984). *Patterns of food consumption and poverty in Kenya and effects of food prices.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University (mimeo).

GREER J. & THORBECKE E. (1986). Food poverty profile of Kenyan smallholders. *Economic Development and Cultural Chang,* 35(1), 115-141.

HAZLEWOOD A. (1979). *The economy of Kenya. The Kenyatta era.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

HEBINCK P. (1990). *The agrarian structure in Kenya. State, farmers and commodity relations.* Nijmegen: Nijmegen Studies in Development and Cultural Change, 5. Saarbrücken: Verlag Breitenbach.

HEYER J. (1975). The origins of regional inequalities in smallholder agriculture in Kenya, 1920-1973. *Eastern Africa Journal of Rural Development,* 8(1/2), 142-181.

HEYER J. & WAWERU J.K. (1976). The development of the small farm areas. In J. Heyer, J. Maitha & W. Senga eds., *Agricultural development in Kenya. An economic assessment* (pp. 187-221). Nairobi: Oxford University Press.

HINGA S. & HEYER J. (1976). The development of large farms. In J. Heyer, J. Maitha & W. Senga eds., *Agricultural development in Kenya An economic assessment* (pp. 222-254). Nairobi: Oxford University Press.

HOORWEG J., FOEKEN D. & KLAVER W. (1995). *Seasons and nutrition at the Kenya Coast.* Aldershot: Avebury.

IKIARA G.K. & TOSTENSEN A. (1995). *The political economy of poverty reduction in Kenya.* Tantoft-Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.

ILO (1972). *Employment, incomes and equality A strategy for increasing productive employment in Kenya.* Geneva: International Labour Office.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1965). *African socialism and its application to planning in Kenya.* Nairobi: Government Printer. Sessional Paper No. 10.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1969). *Kenya population census 1969.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1977). *Rural child nutrition survey 1977.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1979). *Rural child nutrition survey 1979.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1982a). *Rural child nutrition survey 1982.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1982b). *Rural household budget survey 1981/82.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1987). *Rural child nutrition survey 1987.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1993). *Demographic and health survey 1993.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1994a). *Kenya population census 1989, Volume 1.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1994b). *Statistical abstract 1994.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1994c). *Economic survey 1994.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1995). *Economic survey 1995.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1997). *Economic survey 1997.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KENYA REPUBLIC OF/UNICEF (1992). *National household welfare monitoring and evaluation survey.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

KILLICK T. & HOUSE W. (1983). Social justice and development policy in Kenya's rural economy. In G. Ghai & S. Radwan eds., *Agrarian policies and rural poverty in Africa* (pp. 31-69). Geneva: International Labour Office.

LAVRIJSEN J. (1984). *Rural poverty and impoverishment in Western Kenya.* Utrecht: University of Utrecht, Department of Geography.

LIVINGSTONE I. (1986). *Rural development, employment and incomes in Kenya.* Geneva: International Labour Office.

MIGOT-ADHOLLA S. (1979). Rural development policy and equality. In J. Barkan & J. Okumu eds., *Politics and public policy in Kenya and Tanzania* (pp. 154-178). New York: Praeger.

MUKUI J.T. (1994). *Kenya: Poverty profiles, 1982-1992.* Nairobi: Office of the Vice-President/Ministry of Planning and National Development.

MYRDAL G. (1957). *Economic theory and underdeveloped regions.* London: Duckworth.

RAIKES Ph. (1988). *Modernising hunger.* London: James Currey/Heinemann.

SENGA W. (1976). Kenya's agricultural sector. In J. Heyer, J. Maitha & W. Senga eds, *Agricultural development in Kenya. An economic assessment* (pp. 69-110). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SMITH L.D (1976). An overview of agricultural development policy. In J. Heyer, J. Maitha & W. Senga eds, *Agricultural development in Kenya. An economic assessment* (pp. 111-151). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

TOSTENSEN A. & SCOTT J. eds. (1987). *Kenya: country study*. Tantoft-Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.
UNICEF/KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1989). *Situation analysis of children and women in Kenya*. Nairobi: Unicef, Kenya Country Office.
UNICEF/KENYA, REPUBLIC OF (1992). *Situation analysis of children and women in Kenya*. Nairobi: Unicef, Kenya Country Office.
VAN OOSTEN C. (1989). *Farming systems and food security in Kwale District, Kenya*. Nairobi / Leiden: Ministry of Planning and National Development / African Studies Centre, Food and Nutrition Studies Programme, Report No. 30.
WAAIJENBERG H. (1993). *Land and labour in Mijikenda agriculture, Kenya, 1850-1985*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, Research Report 53.
WORLD BANK (1986). *Kenya: Agricultural sector report, Vol II*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
WORLD BANK (1991). *Kenya: Food and nutrition policy*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
WORLD BANK (1995). *Kenya poverty assessment*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.