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**EFFECTS OF FISHERIES CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES ON
HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN SUBA DISTRICT, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Award of
Degree of Master of Science in Disaster Management and Sustainable Development
of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology**

January, 2013.



DECLARATION

This thesis is my own original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award.

Signature: 

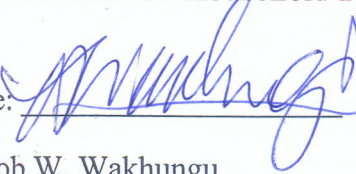
Date: 23/8/2013

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CERTIFICATION

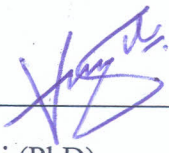
The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology a thesis entitled: **“The Effects of Fisheries Co-operative Societies on Household Food Security in Suba District, Kenya”**

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ABSTRACT

The role of co-operative societies in addressing the economic and social challenges faced in the whole world cannot be over-emphasized. The co-operative movement is one of the most effective vehicles for addressing the challenges of poverty, unemployment, marketing, transportation, servicing, distribution etc. These are issues of livelihoods and food security. The focus of this study was to examine the effect of fisheries co-operative societies (FCSs) on household food security in Suba District, Kenya. The District has high levels of poverty and food insecurity, this is the problem under study. The research objectives were to determine the effect of FCSs on household food security, examine the factors which influence the performance of FCSs and evaluate the strategic options for improvement of the contribution of FCSs to food security. By 31st December 2010 there were 7 active and 9 dormant FCSs in the District with a membership of 1733 people, share capital and turnover of Ksh.1,379,082 and 216,078,635 respectively. Payment to members in the year 2010 was Ksh.231,974,021. These figure represented a 5% rise from the previous year. The study adopted a conceptual framework where the effect of the FCSs was independent variable while household food security constituted dependent variables. A correlational research design was used because it shows relationship between variables under study. Multistage random sampling technique was used to select 192 members and 192 non members of FCSs. The research instruments were structured questionnaires, Focused Group Discussions, interview guides and observation checklists. The reliability of the instruments was tested after conducting a pilot test from the FCSs in Homabay County and the data was analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, accepted at $\alpha = 0.7$. The data collected were analysed using Chi Square tests and analysis of variances to show various associations between variables under test in the study. The study found that members of FCSs had more quantity of staple food, less months of serious food shortage, more number of meals per day, better nourished children as compared to those of non members. Furthermore the FCSs members, had more access to ready fish market, more income generation capacity to purchase staple food, offered employment opportunities and more access to fishing skills and seminars. The performance of FCSs were influenced by factors such as lack of fish marketing channels, limited cooperative knowledge and skills among leaders, mismanagement of funds, lack of cold storage facilities, limited market access, inadequate fishing equipment, low capital base, lack of access to finances, water hyacinth, exploitation by middlemen, pollution of the lake, poor attitude of fishing community towards the co-operative movement and poor management of FCSs. For FCSs to perform well, the following were strategic options: capacity building of stakeholders, expansion of markets, market information and access, better fishing equipment, provision of loans to expand business, reduce exploitation by middlemen, improvement of management skills and knowledge and provision of cold storage facilities for fish preservation. The study made the following recommendations: the community should be sensitized on the significance of FCSs; FCSs should seek funding from the government and donors to improve on their activities. Coupled to these FCSs should adopt the following strategic options to enhance their performance: build capacity of stakeholders, expand markets, use better fishing equipment, and seek development loans. The study findings shall be useful to stakeholders, academicians and policy makers in the Ministry of Co-operatives Development and Marketing and Agricultural sector ministries in developing policies that would revamp the FCSs and enhance their capacity to address food security. Members would benefit from loans, collective marketing and economies of scale among others.