

Fuel-Wood Energy Sector-Livelihood Nexus: Evidence from South Africa

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ABSTRACT Many transactions associated with fuel-wood value chain fall within the informal sector, and are undertaken illegally, hence, not recorded or captured in the economic analysis of developing countries including South Africa. This scenario increases the difficulty of examining the contribution of fuel-wood energy sector in the economic growth of South Africa. The non-existence of formal markets for fuel-wood energy services has reduced the visibility of the sector. This paper highlights the value addition the fuel-wood energy sector on the livelihood of South African fuel-wood traders. A two stage stratified random sampling technique was utilized to collect data from 200 fuel-wood traders using the demarcated enumeration areas (EAs) in Western Cape Province during the 2011 census. The findings show that fuel-wood traders in South Africa relied on the business to sustain livelihoods. The findings have implications for long-term development planning in energy and small business development planning by the government.