Local Community’s Perception, Assessment and Management of Food Insecurity Risks: The Case of Family Farming Households in South West Ethiopia

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Introduction

• Family farmers constitute over 81% of the total Ethiopian population and account for over 95% of total agricultural production (CSA, 2016).
• However, they are operating under continuous threat of risks (Von Braun & Olofinbiyi, 2009), which leads to structural food insecurity (Dorosh & Rashid, 2012).
• Family farmers perceive and assess these risks based on their experiences of different shocks in the past (Doss, et al., 2008).
• Based on how they perceived risks and the level of their resilience to the different risks, family farming households use diverse risk management strategies.
• The purpose of this study is to understand how family farming households perceive, assess and manage sources of food insecurity risks.

The study areas

• Three districts in Southwest Ethiopia (Figure 1):
  - Kersa
  - Omonada
  - Bako-Tibe
• Rain fed agriculture (crop and livestock)
• Main rainy season: March-September
• Mean annual rainfall: 900-1300mm
• Average temperature: 13-28 °C

Methods

• Mixed methods approach used for data collection (Creswell, 2014)
  - Qualitative data collected through Focus Group Discussions (34 groups, total of 210 people), in-depth interviews with 150 family farmers and observation of community practices
  - Quantitative data from random household survey with 228 households

Results

Risks perception by family farmers

Risk assessment

Figure 4: Community assessment of different sources of risk of food insecurity

- Climate variables, crop and livestock diseases, market and institution related issues are perceived as the most relevant risks to cause food insecurity of family farms.
- Family farmers perceive and assess risks based on their experience from exposure to similar risks in the past.
- The risk management strategies vary based on their perceptions and access to resources among others.
- Understanding the risk perception, assessment and management strategies could be important inputs in development of policies, strategies and plans to reduce food insecurity.

Conclusions

- Climate variables, crop and livestock diseases, market and institution related issues are perceived as the most relevant risks to cause food insecurity of family farms.
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- Understanding the risk perception, assessment and management strategies could be important inputs in development of policies, strategies and plans to reduce food insecurity.

References


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