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Traditional Strategies to Cope with Households Food Insecurity in Marginalized Quarters of Elobeid City, Sudan

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Abstract

The focus of the current paper is to identify traditional food strategies adopted by poor households to mitigate food insecurity in North Kordofan State (western Sudan). These comprise adaptive mechanisms, coping strategies and survival ones. The paper adopted descriptive, regional, political and historical approaches towards quantifying and analysing collected data in relation to food insecurity in the region. The approaches relied on primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected using questionnaire, focused group discussion and personal observation with the aid of digital devices. Stratified random sampling technique was performed. About 50 % of households (3820) were sampled from selected marginalised quarters that accommodate poor segments of population in Elobeid city- North Kordofan State. Results revealed important traditional strategies that were practised by targeted households to cope with food insecurity. These were expressed by reducing number of meals (50 %), changing food habits (26 %), accessing informal loans (12 %) and relying on reliefs or other in-kind donations (12 %). Furthermore, income earning strategies were exemplified by involvement of large proportion (81 %) of households in multiple jobs, migration to urban centres (8 %), dependence on relatives (7 %) and liquidation of household's assets (4 %). Therefore, all these traditional strategies have acquired partial (37 %) success in mitigating food shortage and in increasing households' income in the study area. Thus, most of the adopted traditional strategies by targeted households were categorised as coping strategies rather than adaptive mechanisms or survival ones. Ultimately, the current paper reached to some recommendations for strengthening household food security in the area. For instance, improving households storage facilities for local agricultural products will presumably help in establishing a nucleolus for buffer stock at the state level.

Keywords: Adaptive mechanisms, coping strategies, food insecurity, survival strategies