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## Enhancing Food Security in Traditional Food Value Chains of Tanzania

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### Abstract

Food security is among the most pressing challenges to humankind. Fluctuating market situations, droughts as well as related diseases are increasing and enhancing the unpredictability of regional food supply, especially in Africa. There is an urgent need for better integrated food system understanding and targeted linking of region- and site-specific innovations.

A number of recent international research and development projects have been focusing on increasing food security. To achieve positive impacts and sustainable solutions, the projects increasingly focus on integrated in-depth analysis of the food value chain (FVC) and its nexus elements. This encompasses a) natural and human resources, b) the use of production inputs, c) the safety and quality of food produced, d) the consumption patterns, and e) functioning of local and global markets. This analysis must include the specific cultural, political, social, ecological and economic environments, while only a broad participation by relevant stakeholders can ensure success.

We present the collaborative research project Trans-SEC “Innovating Strategies to safeguard Food Security using Technology and Knowledge Transfer: A people-centred Approach”. It is targeted to improve the food situation for the most vulnerable rural poor population in Tanzania.

The main features are: 1) a sustainable multidisciplinary German-Tanzanian R&D&I network; 2) in-depth analysis of present Tanzanian food systems; 3) the identification of successful upgrading strategies along local and regional FVC; 4) the testing and adjusting of upgrading strategies among FVC components under site-specific conditions through action research; 5) the tailoring of these strategies to be disseminated for regional and national outreach; 6) determining the transferability of our results to other areas of Tanzania.

**Keywords:** Food security, food value chain, Tanzania