



Tropentag, September 16-18, 2015, Berlin, Germany

“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:
conflicts, controversies and resolutions”

Tackling Food and Nutrition Insecurity in Tanzania: Farmers Perspectives on Kitchen Gardening as a Sustainable Approach

HADIJAH MBWANA¹, CHRISTINE LAMBERT², JOYCE KINABO¹, HANS KONRAD BIESALSKI²

¹*Sokoine University of Agriculture, Food Science and Technology, Tanzania*

²*University of Hohenheim, Inst. of Biological Chemistry and Nutrition, Germany*

Abstract

Under nutrition and food insecurity are major problems faced by most of the developing countries including Tanzania. Foods with high nutrient content are difficult to find in the poorer rural areas where most people are dependent on staple foods with little diversity. Kitchen gardens play an important role in fulfilling dietary and nutritional needs. This study sought to investigate the perceptions and practices by farmers on how kitchen gardening can be transformed into a sustainable nutrition and livelihood strategy in order to come up with information not only on socio-economic sustainability but also on the environmental sustainability of kitchen gardens in rural Tanzania.

Focus group discussions, key informant interviews, field observations and secondary sources of data were used. The researcher used observation guide to identify some of the issues that could not come out clearly during focus group discussions. The study was undertaken in Idifu village, Chamwino district in Dodoma. A total of 28 farmers were involved.

Only 18% of households practised kitchen gardening. It was regarded as the activity of women. About 80% of the respondents did not have indicated budget to buy seeds and inputs for kitchen gardening. About 85% of farmers indicated it has a potential to be a secondary source of income. Water was a limiting factor in 78% of the participants. About 80% of farmers did not possess radios, and 20% possessed radios but sometimes they lacked money to buy batteries. This constraints the spread of kitchen gardening information through media.

This study confirms that kitchen gardening can be changed into a sustainable nutrition and livelihood strategy in Chwamino district and other similar environments if the farmers have access to training on the sustainable use of natural resources such as water and land and can afford adequate access to resources.

Keywords: Farmers, kitchen gardening, rural, under nutrition