



Tropentag, September 17-19, 2018, Ghent

“Global food security and food safety:
The role of universities”

Analyzing Urban Household Food Security in the Cape Town Metropole of South Africa, with Reference to Urban Agriculture

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Abstract

Exceptional rural-urban migration took place into the Cape Town Metropolitan area during the past years, with the bulk of these migrants residing in the informal settlement areas. The rate of urbanisation is however not concurrent with the rate of economic growth and as a result, the rates of urban poverty is worsening. Food insecurity is a direct result of urban poverty, causing urban populations to depend on urban food production. Currently, measurements for food security are inconsistent and it is unclear whether urban agriculture systems are sustainable and whether it contributes to the general household food security. Empirical research regarding the actual contribution of urban agriculture to household food security may be limited as well as lacking in consistency.

Against this setting, it was important to analyse urban household food security in the informal settlement areas of the Cape Town Metro in South Africa, with focus on the contribution of urban agriculture towards alleviating food insecurity. The objectives to determine the required outcomes were:

- The measurement of the level of urban household food security of urban farmers and non-farmers;
- Factors that affect urban household food insecurity were identified;
- The contribution of urban agriculture to food security was determined;
- An optimal grouping of observations by utilising the identified critical factors that address household food insecurity were identified; and
- Policy recommendations made for government on the alleviation of urban food security by using the outcomes of the above analysis.

Very high levels of food insecurity were observed in all dimensions of food security in the informal settlement areas of the Cape Town Metro.

The results presented in the study indicated that urban agriculture had no indication of a significant positive contribution towards food security.

Three homogeneous clusters were characterised into the different levels of food security. These may serve as invaluable information for decision makers to identify destitute areas, make focused decisions and take specific supporting action.

Policy recommendations were made to contribute to the main goal of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy i.e. to ensure that all the dimensions of food security are met.

Keywords: Food insecurity, food security, Food security indicators, Hunger , Livelihood, Socio-economic indicators, Urban Agriculture, Urban Farming

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