



## Consumption Intensity and Production Constraints of Indigenous Vegetables: A Step in African Food and Nutrition Security

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### INTRODUCTION

- Food and nutrition insecurity is a major challenge in Africa.
- Farmers need to diversify food production in order to alleviate food and nutrition insecurity.
- With climate change at hand, indigenous vegetables can provide prospects to diversify production systems and improve food, nutrition and income security in many countries.
- Regardless of their potential, the extent of consumption and diversity of indigenous vegetables in lessening food, nutrition and economic insecurity are not fully exploited in Tanzania.

- Estimation of consumption intensity of these vegetables is important to understand how their utilization can be enhanced at the household level.

### OBJECTIVE

To evaluate consumption intensity and production constraints of indigenous vegetables



Indigenous vegetable *Mlenda* found in Kilosa, Morogoro-Tanzania

### METHODS

- To 600 farm households from four villages in Dodoma and Morogoro, Tanzania.
- A multi-stage sampling procedure to select districts, villages and households.
- Districts selected purposively based on their different agro-ecological characteristics
- Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, and focus group discussions



### RESULTS

- Mean consumption of indigenous vegetables was high (74%)
- Consumed quantities were below 80% RDI in 72-96%
- Mean intakes of vegetables were significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) different among the two agro ecological zones
- Age of household head, household size and distance to a water source influenced consumption intensity of indigenous vegetables.
- Identified production constraints were
  - ☐ lack of knowledge on the vegetables for example
    - production practices,
    - cooking methods,
    - utilization and preservation methods;
  - ☐ lack of seeds,
  - ☐ low yields and
  - ☐ competition with some exotic green vegetables

### CONCLUSIONS

The diets of these communities were somehow deficient in terms of different vegetables and amount consumed thus contributing to high prevalence of undernutrition and micronutrient malnutrition.

Strategies to promote consumption intensity of indigenous vegetables such as health and nutrition education and involving young and male decision makers, extension services and production of these vegetables in home gardens should be employed.

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