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Farmers’ and academia’s views”

Does urban farming increase access to diversified diets? A case study from urban households in Kampala, Uganda

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Abstract

Little is known about the effect of urban agriculture on the access to a variety of foods in low and middle-class urban households. As Africa is urbanizing rapidly, poverty and malnutrition hotspots are moving from rural to urban communities. This goes hand in hand with an increase in the consumption of unhealthy food. Especially cities are faced with the triple burden of malnutrition. Urban agriculture could play an important role not only to increase access to food but also in increasing the variety and diversity of current consumption patterns. Especially perishable products like vegetables can be easily produced in urban areas. Thus, this paper aims to identify if households that are involved in and or have access to urban agriculture have a more diversified diet. The study was conducted in the Kanyanya parish in Kawempa division in Kampala (Uganda). Kanyanya is a densely populated area with 28,000 inhabitants, mainly low and middle-income consumers. A survey among 450 households was conducted asking questions about urban farming and household food consumption over the past week. Dietary consumption and food variety was assessed through a 7-day food consumption recall to calculate different dietary diversity indicators, such as the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS). The research was conducted in the context of the Nouricity project, aiming to improve rural livelihoods and food and nutrition security in several African countries by addressing challenges that prevent access to healthy diets and nutrition in urban African food systems and identifying effective interventions jointly with local stakeholders. Preliminary results confirm the positive effects of urban agriculture at the household level with a high HDDS.

Keywords: Diets, household dietary diversity, Uganda, urban farming