

SP7: Market trends and consumption habits

Project partners:

Dr. Parto Teherani-Krönner and Prof. Dr. Christine Bauhardt, Division of Gender and Globalization, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (HUB)

Prof. Dr. W. Bokelmann, Division of Horticultural Economics, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (HUB)

Prof. Dr. D. Kirschke, Division of Agricultural Policy, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (HUB)

Dr. Susanne Huyskens-Keil, Division of Urban Ecophysiology/Research Group Quality Dynamics/Postharvest Physiology, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (HUB)

Dr. A. Opiyo, Dr. Hillary. K. Bett, Department of Crops, Horticulture and Soils, Egerton University, Kenya (EU)

Prof. Dr. John Msuya, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania (SUA)

Prof. Dr. Mary Abukutsa Onyango, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)

I. Objectives

a. Overall aim and objectives of the sub-project

A thorough analysis of recent publications considers access to markets as a major factor to create growth and reduce poverty. Despite this consensus, the opinion of how markets should work in favour of the poor is split. Especially the potential and pitfalls of linking smallholder farmers to higher-value markets are discussed widely (for Kenya see Neven et al. 2009; Bardhan 2006; Hazell et al. 2010).

Responses from practitioners often highlight one frequently constraining factor of production; that is, knowledge about market opportunities and requirements and about effective and acceptable production techniques (Henson et al. 2008). Market information should be part of every comprehensive intervention strategy. It is assumed that high transaction costs, lack of transparency, lack of standards, and insufficient access to markets for products is one of the reasons for the low income of small holders. Donor organizations are trying to improve the efficiency of markets by giving relevant market data into the hands of farmers and traders.

Socioeconomic changes and increasing urbanization contribute to a change of food systems. Finally cultural factors and the social embeddedness of value chains in local areas and ethnic groups influence the supply and consumption of indigenous vegetables in particular. This is due to the fact that food habits, and with them the nutritional situation of people, are culturally bound and socially constructed. Even in countries confronted with severe food insecurity, people's choices concerning meals seem to be driven by cultural factors, such as taste or gendered perceptions, rather than only economic factors (Duflo/Banerjee 2009).

A detailed understanding of the different population segments in a particular context can help identify opportunities for increasing incomes by upgrading and implementing a realistic supply chain adaptation strategy. To be able to derive successful strategies, information about consumption and market trends will be elaborated. Therefore, a thorough analysis of subsistence production systems, domestic consumption and market trends as well as the development of international markets will be completed.

b. Relevance of the sub-project to the objectives of the project (main outputs)

Knowledge about determinants of the consumption and use of fresh vegetables - especially indigenous vegetables - in urban and rural regions as well as in different ethnic groups is necessary to be able to promote the consumption. Markets are often the drivers of change. To derive a comprehensive strategy for improving the performance of value chains of indigenous vegetables related to food security this knowledge has to feed the analysis of value chains. Thus, the sub-projects' main relevance is to contribute to outputs 1, 2, 3, and 4.

c. Research and / or technical goals of the sub-project

The specific objectives of the subproject are:

- To broaden the concept of food systems to consider meal cultures as a determinant of vegetable supply and consumption of rural and urban households;
- To identify relevant socioeconomic factors, which will influence the market conditions for indigenous vegetables in the future and
- To determine the changes in international markets as well as their influence on the market conditions in Kenya based on multi-market partial equilibrium modeling as (Jechlitschka et al. 2007; Winkler et al. 2010)

II. State of knowledge

The food markets in Africa are changing dynamically. In recent years, domestic patterns of food consumption have become interconnected with global markets (Pretty et al. 2010). Climate change is expected to influence the production, export and import as well as the condition on the domestic market of vegetables in Kenya. The increased income, particularly in towns, the spreading of big supermarket chains, a changed consciousness of the consumers against environmental and food-safety issues (Freidberg/ Goldstein 2011) makes it extremely difficult to forecast the food market potential. The interconnection with global markets leads to large fluctuations of prices highlighting a long-term issue of food security - particular in poor households - which sometimes spend more than 2/3 of their income on food (Pretty et al. 2010).

In the debate on trade and poverty, it is argued that standards act as trade barriers and cause marginalization of the poor. With the spread of supermarkets, the implementation of those standards is also expected more and more on the domestic market. Tightening standards induce a shift from smallholder contract farming to integrated estate production, altering the mechanism through which poor households may benefit: through labour markets instead of product markets (Maertens/Swinnen 2009). AIV production systems are not uniform. The spectrum reaches from the subsistence production for private use, about the extensive production for private use as well as for local markets up to the production for the supermarkets.

Particular in the case of fresh vegetable, there is a poor supply of information about consumption in SSA. Based on the analysis of several studies, Weinberger (2009) argues that information on consumption and markets allows for more informed decision making and strengthens the bargaining power of small farmers leading to increase their share of the retail price.

Even if studies on food cultures have not yet become part of mainstream food security research and debate, there is a scope for change towards a more holistic view on food and nutrition in order to close this gap. With the interdisciplinary approach on 'critical food studies' and 'foodways' that cover the cultural, social and economic practices relating to the production and consumption, a new field of transdisciplinary research is emerging (Pottier 1999; West 2012). The concepts of meal culture and "meal security" have been coined because they enable us to develop a deeper understanding of human nourishment within the gender arrangement of social communication and symbolic interaction (Egger / Teherani-Krönner 2004; Egger/Pucher 2012; Teherani-Krönner 1999; 2004; 2011; 2012). Analyzing meal culture will help to grasp a more realistic view on people's nourishment and their social and cultural dimensions. This will broaden the food security concept in theory and in practice, taking strides towards improving food security. To date, evidence has been provided that men are more reserved in accepting vegetables as a proper meal (Indigenoveg 2007; Abukutsa Onyango 2007; 2010; 2012; Msuya with Umuhozariho et al. 2011; Ojiewo 2012; Profav 2011). It is apparent that preferences in indigenous vegetables (Indigenoveg 2007) need further investigation in order to find adequate ways to integrate them into the meal culture of the local communities and improve the local knowledge on processing with sophisticated local knowledge on fermentation (Dirar 1993).

IV. Detailed description of work plan

a. Planned milestones of the intervention

Activity	Milestone	Time frame	Responsible partner
Opportunities and risks of the sales of fresh vegetables in international markets should be identified			
M1: Representation of the international trade flows	Based on secondary statistical information (FAO, ministry of agriculture and export associations) current trade flows of fresh vegetables and the role of Kenya are highlighted	01/2013-12/2014	HUB, EU
M2: Description of the requirements for quality, safety and production processes in international markets	Current and anticipated requirements for products and processes in sales in international markets as part of a secondary analysis are presented.	01/2013-12/2014	HUB
M3: Scenarios of trade flows of fresh vegetables integrating possible effects of climate change	With the help of international trade flow modeling, possible scenarios are generated for changes of international trade flows	01/2014-12/2016	HUB
Analysis of the determinants for the consumption of fresh vegetables - especially indigenous vegetables - at local and regional markets			
M4: Economic determinants for the consumption of fresh vegetables	Questionnaires of about 400 households are conducted. Data are analyzed and reported.	01-2015 – 12/2017	HUB
M5: To describe the importance of different distribution channels for the marketing of fresh vegetables at local and regional markets should	Importance of different marketing channels are estimated based on expert interviews	01-2015 – 12/2017	HUB
To identify cultural determinants of the consumption of fresh vegetables			
M6. To develop a framework combining social and cultural science perspectives through literature review, expert interviews in cooperation with other subprojects.	A human ecological research framework with regard to indigenous vegetables has been elaborated. A theoretical concept of meal cultures in East Africa has been developed. A classification of vegetable consumers has been developed.	1/2014-9/2014	HUB, SUA, JKUAT
M7. To conduct empirical research through case studies in rural and peri-urban areas according to the human ecological framework with the following focus points in order to understand local foodways and consumption behavior: Utilized technologies for meal preparation. The division of labour. Documentation of the meal preparation processes. Collection of information on local knowledge systems. Collection of local knowledge about the traditional salt Lye. Analysis of the role of meals in social interaction and communication.	Social and cultural dimensions of food habits, foodways and meal culture, in particular in regard to preparation, processing and fermentation, have been discovered in order to identify their impact on the quality of nutrition. Knowledge about meal preferences and needs that are deeply embedded in local value systems has provided insights into consumption attitudes and patterns. Criteria and local preferences of indigenous vegetables in meal preparation and reasoning for priority setting have been distinguished. Changes in food and meal habits have been documented and assessed regarding acceptability and affordability of indigenous vegetables to the poor rural and urban dwellers.	Research: 10/2014 - 12.2014 Analysis: 01/2015 - 12/2016	HUB, SUA, JKUAT Associated partners: LUH
M8. To feed back results into scientific community and local value chains by publishing first articles and participating in international conferences and workshops.	Strategies to communicate the transdisciplinary meal culture have been produced; case studies presented and connected to the theoretical discussions on foodways and meal cultures. Consequences on food security debates have been presented.	01/2014 - 12/2017	HUB, SUA, JKUAT Associated partners: AVRDC, ZTG, TUB

V. Utilization

An analysis of the nature of demand - its size, tendencies, segments and potential, price tendencies, consumer preferences, current competitors, market access and quality requirement - is particularly important to promote consumption as well as to improve the performance of value chains. The generated knowledge about food habits and meal culture that includes processing, preparing, cooking, serving and sharing will help policy-makers and actors to look beyond the conventional lines of production and marketing by tackling the socially and culturally embedded aspects of food security and the impact thereof on nutrition. Thus, the sub-projects' main relevance is to contribute to outputs 1, 2, 3, and 4. Special information will be given on consumption patterns of the urban and rural poor and how this local knowledge on needs, preferences and attitudes can be used to support a comprehensive strategy for food security. The project will particularly help to develop consumer-oriented and affordable post harvest technologies and will deliver background information about the regional seed breeding and fermentation technologies as well as about the people responsible for these tasks.

VI. Internal division of labour and cooperation with other subprojects / third parties

The information on meal cultures and market trends will be collected and shared in cooperation with output groups 1, 2, 3 on rural, urban and peri-urban vegetable VCs. Joint research activities will help to improve the collection of information concerning local knowledge in indigenous vegetables and the preparation, fermentation and postharvest technologies. The local research partner JKUAT will support the development of the research framework in form of an expert consultancy as well as guide the comparative analysis and the rural-urban changes as well as the transmission to other VCs and subproject research activities. In addition, this subproject will closely cooperate with local institutions and NGOs as well as with farmers unions and extension service staff as they are most familiar with the every-day food diet and habits in their settings.