

44. Food (in-)security in times of changing land and ways of life

16198 - The macro-level of food security dimensions and indicators

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations defines Food Security as “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” (World Food Summit: Rome Declaration on World Food Security, 1996). The dimensions of Food Security are food access, food availability, food utilization and food stability which contain at household and individual level important determinants for the measure of well-being. Direct determinants of nutritional status are food intake and health status and underlying determinants are food availability, caring capacity, health services and environments.

In many countries, people face periods of new or recurrent food shortage resulting from a) natural factors, e.g. drought, floods, earthquakes, pests like locusts; b) human factors, e.g. armed conflict, insecurity, population displacement and c) economic factors, e.g. increases of staple food prices, availability of agricultural tools. Whilst these factors lead to food deficits and limits to food access and availability, parameters like food stability and food utilization play an important role in the definition of vulnerability and long-term evolution of food security situations.

Most households and entire communities have adapted to shortages and develop mechanisms and coping strategies to manage for example temporarily disturbances. Based on these factors have international organisations set in place monitoring tools and methods to define, classify and forecast food security situations. Indicators like food access and availability based on caloric food intake rank from adequate to unmet food needs or the productive assets at household level can vary from sustainable use to loss of assets. If the shortage persists due to for example a succession of poor harvests households exhaust their resources. They are impoverished, sometimes irreversibly (for example, loss of capital, loss of means of production), and may have to leave their area of residence in search of livelihoods.

The food security situation can progress from food secure to a food crisis and enter into a humanitarian crisis. In order to assess the food security and nutrition situation in the field, international and national actors have developed tools to classify food security criteria and its evolution.

16236 - Food insecurity in times of plenty

Presentation type: Oral presentation

Author(s): *Weichart, Gabriele (Department for Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria / Österreich)*

In this paper, I will discuss the complex meanings of food in past and present Australian Indigenous societies. While food security among pre-colonial hunter-gatherers largely depended on the natural environments they lived in, contemporary societies rely on other resources like money and social relations. Among Indigenous people who live under precarious economic conditions or in remote communities much of their daily preoccupation still revolves around food and feeding. However, it is less a lack of sufficient quantities than of good qualities in relation to the foodstuff they have easy access to and consume on a daily basis. 'Bad' nutrition is a major consequence of contemporary sedentary lifestyle and has very much affected Indigenous people's state of health. While traditional hunter-gatherers had to live with the risk of going hungry, present-day abundance of foodstuff bears the risk of overeating and eating the 'wrong' types of food. Although similar problems have been identified in many societies and frequently been linked to low income, education and generally lower social status, I will also address the question if today's eating behaviour of Indigenous people living in remote communities is still influenced by traditional hunter-gatherer food habits.

16032 - Biodiversity as food security: nutritional and social outcomes of declining wildlife on contemporary hunter-gatherers in protected Congo Basin Forests.

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Food (in-)security among contemporary hunter-gatherer groups is inextricably linked to crises of declining biological and cultural diversity. While researchers have called our attention to the ways in which indigenous communities and cultures are negatively affected by the creation of protected areas and industrial resource exploitation, many of these studies emphasize environmental justice and governance. Here, we address the indirect nutritional, biological, and cultural consequences of protected areas management for Congo Basin hunter-gatherers. We argue that conservation zoning coupled with declining biodiversity has exacerbated food insecurity for marginalized hunter-gatherer populations. Specifically, we examine how changing access to forest resources can impact subsistence, diet and health among the BaAka in the Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas (APDS), Central African Republic. APDS was zoned as a multi-use area, yet even before the current political conflict, socioeconomic changes and conservation management policies had negatively impacted the BaAka's efforts to maintain a hunting-gathering lifestyle. In this study, biological data and dietary recall surveys were collected from adult female (n = 77) and male (n = 64) volunteer participants. Standard anthropometric measurements for the assessment of short-term nutritional status were collected from each participant including: body mass index (BMI), sum of skinfolds (SS), mean upper arm circumference (MUAC). Results indicate that while there are negative health outcomes related to declining biodiversity and conservation zoning for all BaAka in APDS, these effects are not evenly distributed across villages. Further, the health of adult female foragers appears to suffer more negative consequences of the transition to agricultural foods and sedentism than their male counterparts. Poor nutritional status is common among study participants; however, 18% of women versus 6% of men were considered chronically energy depleted (BMI <18.49kg/m²). This is especially evident among older women who had the largest number of dependents to feed, while also being the least integrated into the market economy. Transitioning economies and reduced access to animal proteins has also reduced the likelihood of hunting and intensified increasingly gendered subsistence strategies; where men may work wage labor and women may work in the agricultural fields of their non-Aka neighbors to help provision their families. In this paper we connect social and physical health with various dimensions of well-being for contemporary forest hunter-gatherers. As BaAka and other hunter-gatherer groups continue to experience changing subsistence strategies within expanding global and local economies of wildlife, we must be aware of the nature and consequences of reduced reliance on animal protein and other forest resources as both material and cultural sustenance.

15998 - 'They want to sell the sea': Anticipatory scenarios of food insecurity and the politics of sensuous/affective attachments in Mexico

Presentation type: Oral presentation

Author(s): *Montesi, Laura (University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom / Vereinigtes Königreich)*

The Huave of Southern Mexico identify themselves, and are identified by other ethnic groups, as a fishing people; this fact differentiates them from other Mesoamerican communities and groups whose identities are largely corn-based. Anthropologists have defined the Huave as a "lagoon culture" (Bamonte 1979; Signorini 1982), whose cosmological, social, and cultural beliefs and practices have been moulded around the aquatic environment of the salt-water lagoons of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, on whose shores they live. Throughout history, fishing has not only assured the Huave a certain degree of food sovereignty, but has also been conceptualized as a constitutive element in personal morality and as the basis of communal ethical work, contributing to social cohesion. Over the last few decades, socioeconomic changes and the uneven integration of the Huave communities into the larger political economic system have increased their dependence on external markets and ways of consumption. Caught in an unprecedented food crisis, evidenced by the loss of fish productivity in the lagoons, the Huave are increasingly experiencing the double burden of malnutrition (undernutrition and overweight), and a rising impact of non-communicable diseases. Already in the process of making sense of the new challenges brought about by dietary changes, at present they are also fearing the complete loss of food sovereignty due to the impacts of a prospective transnational development intervention on their shores and lagoons. The Huave consider that this project, aimed at implementing a wind farm, not only violates territorial integrity but is also life-threatening. As a result, a political grass-roots movement in defence of the ancestral lands and of their 'traditional' economic activities has arisen. In the name of food sovereignty and through the mobilization of food-centred discourses, this movement is in the process of resisting such intervention and reconstituting the Huave ethnic identity. This paper seeks to address social perceptions of food (in)security based on anticipatory scenarios, and sensuous/affective apprehensions and engagements with the future. This paper explores the following questions: In what ways does food, being a constitutive element of physical and cultural survival, contribute to envisioning the future and to calling for political actions aimed at counteracting dystopic scenarios? Under which circumstances does food insecurity become tantamount to existential and ethnic insecurity? What is the role of sensuous and affective attachments to food in re-signifying communal/ethnic identities in the face of perceived existential threats? How do indigenous people view food insecurity and what does this tell us about their vulnerability and their political agendas? Why is it important to understand food insecurity from a sensuous and affective theoretical angle?

15994 - Melangun and its impact on food security for the Orang Rimba hunter-gatherer society in Sumatra, Indonesia

Presentation type: Oral presentation

Author(s): Margu Wardani, Ekoningtyas (*Anthropology Department Leiden University, Leiden, Netherlands / Niederlande*)

This paper is a part of my ongoing PhD research on food security among the Orang Rimba in Jambi Province, Sumatra, Indonesia. Orang Rimba are hunter-gatherer society, living in small colonies of tribal communities, eking a living by gathering and hunting forest products and wildlife. Jambi province itself used to have vast stretches of rain forests, which suffered severe degradation, attributed to rapid growth-focused development, poor forestry management practices since the 1970s, which promoted plantation crops (rubber, oil palm, and coffee, among others), increased accessibility through the construction of infrastructure, transmigrant settlements, logging practices (both legal and illegal), and slash and burn subsistence cultivation practices.

My focus of research is on the Orang Rimba living inside and surrounding areas of Bukit Dua Belas National Park or Taman Nasional Bukit Duabelas (TNBD). The park is the only national park in Indonesia that is designed for customary purposes and covers around 60,500 hectares in the central part of Jambi Province. Since the year of 2000, the park was granted to the Orang Rimba as their solid legal foundation for their living and livelihood. This paper presents a specific case study of Terab Group. While they originally live alongside Terab River, in the current circumstances of melangun they stay in the eastern part of TNBD.

One of the characteristics of the Orang Rimba is that they still preserve their tradition of melangun . Melangun is a ritual of mourning the deceased not just by indulging in sorrow but by making efforts to forget the misfortune of bad memories. The ritual involves leaving the location that used to be the dwelling place to a far away location as well as engaging in an activity aimed at merry making to erase memories of the deceased. This ritual has a precarious impact on their food security status.

Central of the analysis in this paper is using the household basis analysis, especially using the day-to-day food intake (diet) data of two households that have been recorded for the period of two months. The purpose of using this households unit based analysis is to look for the pattern and intake behavior. Important to be noted is that the focus in this paper is not on the quantity of respondents I have, rather on the variation of intake data on the specific period of times. The paper will present the dynamics of food security among the Orang Rimba during melangun , particularly on the specific issues of the movement of the group, the changing behavior and preference on food, the challenges to obtain the food as well as the strategies to cope the challenges. I hope that my findings will contribute to the current debate of food security dynamics for hunter-gatherer society not only in Indonesia but also elsewhere.

16141 - The Maintenance of Indigenous Food Systems in Border Regions of Northern Canada

Presentation type: Oral presentation

Author(s): *Natcher, David (University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada / Kanada); Jeans, Tobi (University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, USA); Kassi, Norma (Arctic Institute of Community Based Research, Whitehorse, Canada / Kanada)*

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) affirms the rights of Indigenous peoples whose lands are divided by international borders “to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders” (Article 36). Although Canada and the United States are now signatories of the Declaration, those indigenous peoples whose traditional territories span border regions of the US and Canada are being challenged to exercise this fundamental right. In this paper, I will discuss the challenges faced by the Vuntut Gwitchin (Old Crow, Yukon) whose traditional lands extend across the Yukon border into Alaska. Once the exclusive political domain of the Gwitchin, this territory is now under the administrative authority of two federal governments (U.S. and Canada), one territorial government (Yukon), one state government (Alaska), and two comprehensive land claims (ANCSA, 1971, and VGFNA, 1993). Arguably the Vuntut Gwitchin now find themselves with more territorial restrictions upon their lives and livelihoods than any other Indigenous people in North America. By focusing on the social and political dimensions of food production, this paper will explore: 1) how the enforcement of the U.S./Canada border has affected the Vuntut Gwitchin’s ability to exercise their territorial rights, as expressed through wildlife harvesting; and 2) how political and legal restrictions relating to cross-border travel have affected traditional/contemporary food sharing networks between the Vuntut Gwitchin and Gwich’in communities in Alaska.

16064 - Balancing commercial and subsistence hunting in High Arctic landscapes

Presentation type: Oral presentation

Author(s): Dresscher, Sarah-Jane (Arctic Centre, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands / Niederlande)

Under certain circumstances farmers are forced to adapt to a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. In the 12th century, farmers from the Novgorod area of central Russia, migrated to the White Sea region. It is believed that they moved here to maintain religious freedom. By settling down in the White Sea region, the Pomors, as they now called themselves, were forced to adopt an unfamiliar hunter-fisher-gatherer lifestyle in a northerly landscape. In order to maintain themselves, they started combining hunting for economic profits with the subsistence hunting for food. Through the economic hunt, they obtained trade goods that they could sell and with the money, they could buy southerly market products like grain, dried plums and metal items. They fished and hunted for marine mammals in the White Sea and the Barents Sea, and they went on expeditions to Siberia to hunt for fur-bearing animals. In 1619, the Tsar forbade travel from the White Sea region to the east, to Siberia. During the 18th and 19th century, the Pomors therefore went to Svalbard archipelago (74°-81° north latitude) to hunt marine mammals and polar foxes to earn money. But these expeditions lasted for over a year. Since they could only bring limited food from mainland Russia, for most of the their nutrition they were dependent on the subsistence hunting. To secure their food supplies and minimize the risk of food shortage in the High Arctic, they therefore had to manage a delicate balance between subsistence needs and the commercial hunting schedule. During their stay on Svalbard, they needed to survive the seasonal extremes and gain awareness of how to deal with these extremes. This must have been the key to their survival and success. How can we reconstruct the choices and strategies the Pomors employed to secure their food supplies? This can be done by collecting archaeological and historical information on Pomor activities and linking that to ecological data on animal behaviour. This way we can start to reconstruct how the Pomors were able to both survive and earn profits in the extreme environments of the High Arctic.

16052 - Our Changing Homelands, Our Changing Lives, Indigenous Food Security

Presentation type: Oral presentation

Author(s): *Kassi, Norma (Arctic Institute of Community Based Research, Whitehorse, Canada / Kanada)*

Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory Vuntut Gwitchin Elders of Old Crow, Yukon Canada have been advising the community for some time that hard times are coming and that it is time to plan for long-term changes related to food security. Over three years, the community worked in partnership with the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research on addressing climate change and food security issues and developed a food security adaptation strategy. The project was guided by the principles of community-based research and involved extensive youth engagement and capacity building. Key outcomes included recommendations for creating a long-term storage facility, exploring the feasibility of animal farming, developing land-based skills, increasing opportunities for gardening, promoting traditional value systems of sharing, and building health literacy. Outcomes from this project are now further supporting a Territorial-wide food system design project by Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the Yukon Agriculture Association, in which AICBR is contributing to the community engagement component.