



## **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN FOOD AND FOOD SECURITY**

An International Conference of the  
The Hungry Cities Partnership (supported by the IDRC and Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada) and the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau

Maputo, Mozambique July 4-5, 2019

### **FIRST CIRCULAR**

#### **Background**

Foods of many types and nutritional value are produced and consumed in varied ways and different amounts across the world. The patterns of the stability of both production and consumption are affected by a wide range of bio-physical and socio-economic drivers, and these are further conditioned by political and cultural contexts. Who produces and who consumes what types and amounts of food are reflections of existing levels of assets inequity at all scales – from the global and national to the community and household. The people with least assets and, therefore, the most vulnerable in terms of regular access to adequate food, are the poor in countries of the Global South. In some cases the vulnerability of poverty is compounded by prolonged military conflict, disease epidemics, as well as the inequitable competition for agricultural land and water in rural areas, and for affordable retailed food in urban centres.

The strategies employed by people to secure food further reflect variations based on gender roles, knowledge base, technological capabilities, perceptions and issues of governance. Additionally, a food transition is currently in process with traditional diets frequently being replaced by new options. The trend is towards higher consumption of calories, fats and animal products, as populations become influenced by the globalized marketing strategies of 'big food' which is changing food preferences, including those of the poor.

In light of global population growth, increasing levels of urbanization and changing patterns of migration, the robustness of food systems is of paramount importance. Although sufficient food is currently produced in the world for all, an estimated billion people go hungry, whilst another billion people over-consume. Both situations have significant implications for nutrition and health.

A household's food system incorporates all the food chains in which it participates to meet its consumption requirements and culturally-conditioned dietary preferences. Even in relatively simple food systems, there

is a need for some items that are produced outside the local area, and these have to be purchased or otherwise obtained through social networks. Urban populations, in particular, are highly dependent on the cash economy to secure food, which makes them vulnerable to the effects of rising food prices. It appears that a blend of formal and informal livelihoods and food systems in both rural and urban contexts increases the resilience of the poor to access food with limited assets. Vulnerability and resilience are manifest in a variety of situations, and the aspects of vulnerability to which populations fall victim tend to be location- and society-specific.

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## Conference Themes

Papers are invited on themes relating to food and food security, including:

1. Food production, global and local challenges and cases of good practice
2. Food consumption, rural and urban challenges and solutions
3. Food, nutrition and health
4. Gender roles in food systems
5. Food in the formal and informal sectors
6. The role of migration in food production and consumption patterns and preferences
7. Food security in the context of natural disasters and in the face of armed conflict and disease pandemics
8. The politics of food, food policy and governance.

## Accommodation

Hotels recommended for the conference are expected to be in the US\$100 - US\$150 range. There are options at around US\$50 as well. Further details will be provided as soon as these are available.

## Prospective participants are invited to submit abstracts of papers by April 26, 2019.

These should be sent to Professor Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, The University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, Jamaica: [elizabeth.thomashope@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:elizabeth.thomashope@uwimona.edu.jm) and Dr. Ines Raimundo, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique: [inesmacamo@gmail.com](mailto:inesmacamo@gmail.com)

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