

Household food insecurity and hunger is impacted more by Household demographics and asset-based wealth in Sidama Zone, Southern Ethiopia: Review of the findings of the studies conducted by Hawassa and Saskatchewan Universities

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Extended Abstract

Objective

The main objective of this review is to assess the contribution of household asset-based wealth and demographic behaviors on the high and persistent household food insecurity and hunger in Sidama Zone, the most populous zone in Southern Ethiopia.

Scope and Method

Sidama zone, one of the most populous districts of Southern Regional State (SNNPR), has a total population of 2,954,136 and an area of 6,538.17 km². More than 95% are rural inhabitants. The total households enumerated in 2007 were 592,539 (19.78% of the regional population) which resulted in an average household size of 4.99 persons (Central Statistical Authority, 2007). A substantial area of the Sidama land produces coffee, a major cash crop in the region. The bulk of the population of the area are known to heavily depend on ‘enset’ (*enset ventricosum*), a starchy food. Four separate studies were conducted in three districts of the Sidama zone.

This paper aims at bringing together food security/ hunger studies conducted in CIFSRRF project sites (Southern Ethiopia). The analysis is made based on the baseline data compiled by a total of ten independent baseline studies done by Hawassa University (Ethiopia) and Saskatchewan University, Canada (2012-2014) Many of the studies gathered data on multiple issues related to food security, nutritional status, and food consumption behavior of households. Inclusion in this

review was based on four criteria: (1) similarity in measuring household food insecurity and hunger (i.e. in all the individual studies, household food insecurity and hunger were measured by Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFAS) and Household Hunger Scale (HHS); (2) conducted in the region in a reference period of 2012-2014 (3) collected the data household heads (4) used random sampling and cross sectional study design 5) All included a range of variables including individual, household and community variables.

Results in brief

The findings indicated that both household food insecurity and hunger are unacceptably high in the zone ranging from 38.7 to 59.3 and 34.7 to 30.2 to 40.2 percent respectively. The study has also confirmed that food insecurity/ hunger is more a function of cluster of household demographic behaviors and asset based wealth indices such as size, composition, density, gender as measured by headship, wealth index and maternal education (adjusted R-square values ranging from 0.34 to 0.81).