

A close-up photograph showing a person's hands, with some flour on the fingers, pressing down on a stack of golden-brown, slightly charred flatbread. The bread is cooking on a dark, circular clay griddle (dab) which is placed over a traditional wood-burning stove. Bright orange and yellow flames are visible around the base of the stove. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor kitchen setting.

IN THEIR VOICES

LIVED EXPERIENCES WITH FOOD INSECURITY AMONG THE URBAN POOR

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KIBERA

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The right to food is not
a right to be fed, but
primarily the right to feed
oneself in dignity.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

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FOREWORD

Ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition by 2030 is one of the UN sustainable development goals. Access to food is a fundamental, inalienable human right recognized internationally, and enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya. However, we cannot achieve the goal of zero hunger and the right to food in Kenya and in Africa as a whole without targeted policies and actions. We also cannot have these policies and actions without the involvement of the people for whom they are developed.

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) has dedicated itself to transforming the lives of Africans through research. Operating in multiple countries across sub-Saharan Africa, APHRC has made strides in bringing to the fore critical policy and practice recommendations for the myriad of health and development issues facing the region.

Our policy engagement efforts have for many years focused on policy actors in government and while this has resulted in significant policy wins, we haven't stopped there. We are continually learning and this has meant embracing different ways of achieving policy and programmatic impact. We have developed a wider range of methods that better articulate the circumstances, needs and concerns of our target populations, including the communities we work with.

Public engagement as a methodology is one such innovative approach: matching societal problemframing with the scientific work that the Center does, and not the other way around. It is a new way for APHRC – ensuring that the research we do is people-centered research, that policies and actions resulting from the research are people-informed so as to catalyze change and transform lives!

This book beautifully showcases the co-creation process of a major initiative to promote the right to food. Through participatory activities, members of Nairobi's poorest communities have provided us with unique perspectives on their lived experiences with food insecurity, poverty and their aspirations while highlighting the everyday struggles of urban living in Kenya.

This book is a voice, an eye opener, and a call to action. Will we heed it?

Dr. Catherine Kyobutungi



Executive Director, APHRC

PREFACE

I grew up in a rural setting, so food was not a problem to many around me, as we grew it on our farms. I first interacted with the urban poor when I was a young undergraduate student about 20 years ago. I met Maria, a single mother of two – Rima who was about eight years old and Matty, about five years old (real names concealed for ethical reasons) – shortly after I went to university. They lived in a shack in an informal settlement in Eldoret. I started visiting them and we became friends. Maria told me about the previous life she led...well educated, married to a financially stable man, her experience with a good job and a good house... But life happened, she lost it all! She was divorced, lost her job, went into depression and had a mental breakdown. She got trapped in poverty.

Maria and her children often slept hungry. I often visited them, carrying food...They invited me to a meal, which often was just water and tea leaves, served in tins, in a small dark room. Maria or her son sometimes came looking for me on campus, because they were hungry. Given their tattered look, some colleagues on campus often asked me: “Who are those street people who visit your room?” True, they were hungry street people sometimes, but in my heart, I knew they were people just like me – with hopes and aspirations – just trapped in poverty.

Maria's story is not isolated...

In the course of my research work among the urban poor in Kenya over the last 15+ years, I have met many families like Maria's. I have documented high prevalence of food insecurity and child undernutrition among urban poor households. This is despite food being a fundamental, inalienable human right, enshrined in the Kenyan Constitution (2010).

I was excited to win a Wellcome Trust public engagement fellowship (2018 -2019). This provided an opportunity to get a nuanced understanding of the experiences of food insecurity amongst the urban poor. It has also accorded me the opportunity to help them understand the concept of food security and the right to food to ensure research does not leave them behind, and to link them with change agents through their voices.

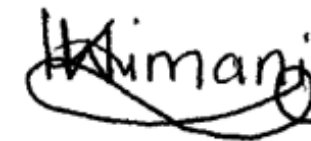
I am excited to be involved in using participatory public engagement to bridge the gap between people and research; as well as between research and action! This coffee table book presents voices of the urban poor regarding their experiences with food insecurity, obtained through participatory public engagement.

My call is for all of us change agents, to realize that we have a responsibility towards the realization of the right to food, especially for the poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups, including those living in urban slums.

In the shacks in urban poor settings, lie real humans, with hopes and aspirations as we all do --- only that their paths differed ... If only someone intervened! Someone needs to act!

Recognizing that the right to food is not a right to be fed, but primarily the right to feed oneself in dignity, I call on the government and non-state actors to provide an enabling environment for all to feed themselves in dignity!

Dr. Elizabeth Kimani-Murage



**Senior Research Scientist and Head, Maternal Child Wellbeing Unit, APHRC
International Engagement Fellow, Wellcome Trust**

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This book is dedicated to those who live in hunger, and those who have given their voices
towards the actualization of the right to food.



Every person has the right
to be free from hunger and
have adequate food of
acceptable quality.

Article 43 (1) (c) of the Kenyan Constitution



This page has been left blank intentionally, in memory
of those who have lost their lives due to hunger,
famine, drought, malnutrition and any other food
related causes.

~may their souls rest in peace~

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The right to adequate food is a human right recognized under international human rights and legal frameworks, specifically under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)¹, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)², the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)³, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)⁴, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁵. It protects the right of all human beings to feed themselves in dignity, either by producing their food or by purchasing it⁶. As authoritatively defined by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, “the right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.”

The right to food is enshrined in the 2010 Kenyan Constitution, Article 43 (1) (c) on Social and Economic Rights states that “every person has a right to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality”, thus providing for a human rights based approach to food security in Kenya. Many Kenyans however, do not enjoy the right to food. In urban informal settlements, about 80% of households are food insecure⁷ and the prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children under five years is close to 50%⁸. This underscores the need to promote the right to food.

Through a Fellowship from the Wellcome Trust, the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) is implementing the “Right to Food Project” over two years from January 2018 to December 2019. The core objective of the project is to stimulate dialogue on the nexus between the right to food as stipulated in the international human rights and legal frameworks and the Bill of Rights in the Kenyan Constitution, and the lived experiences with food insecurity among urban poor populations as evidenced by research.

Throughout 2018, the project used innovative public engagement approaches including photovoice, digital storytelling, participatory mapping, graffiti and wall murals, human library, community dialogue, participatory and magnet theaters, live radio shows, and film screening. Participatory visual methodologies (PVM) generated data using creative forms such as photovoice, audio recordings, drawings, songs and digital stories to document the urban poor’s experiences with food insecurity. Aside from eliciting perspectives on the meaning and potential for the actualization of the right to food, community participants also explored and depicted their lived experiences in line with the four pillars of food security: availability, accessibility, utilization and stability. The project also engaged in qualitative data collection, including focus groups discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs). All together, the public engagement enabled a deeper understanding of the vulnerability to food insecurity, giving a human face to the numbers from existing quantitative research evidence.

Data from the qualitative interviews and the participatory engagement methods revealed a general lack of awareness and information among community members on the right to food. The public engagement revealed that although food is available in urban poor markets this does not translate to food availability within the households. What we also heard from community members is that food access remains a major challenge due to limited economic and purchasing power, physical and social constraints, common among vulnerable groups such as older people and people living with disability. Even when the urban poor are able to access food, concerns arise on its safety owing to the unhygienic and poor food preparation practices, common in urban poor settings. From their own voices, they eat food grown with water from the sewer, or prepared and sold near burst sewer lines.

As a result of food insecurity, many urban poor residents resort to a number of coping strategies, which often impacts negatively on their overall wellbeing and takes away the ‘dignity’ on their right to food. These includes; scavenging for food from dumpsites, begging, stealing purchasing low quality food, prostitution among others. The food insecurity situation has however, also stimulated some urban poor residents’ to engage in innovative activities such as urban farming.

The target audience for this book include urban communities in informal settlements, change agents including policy, decision and law makers, the civil society and the media. We intend to use the outcomes of this engagement to influence policy and legislation towards food security and the right to food, and enhance this dialogue among communities in Kenya and beyond. We are working towards full realization of the right to food and to ending hunger by 2030 in line with sustainable development goals.

WHY

The core objective of the Right to Food Project is to stimulate dialogue on the nexus between the right to food as stipulated in the international legal framework, and the Bill of Rights in the Kenyan Constitution, and the lived experiences with food insecurity among urban poor populations as evidenced by research.

DIALOGUE
EMPOWERMENT
SOLUTIONS





KOROGOCHO







HOW

Different participatory visual methodologies were used to engage with the community members on the right to food. These included graffiti and wall murals, digital stories, photovoice, radio shows, human libraries, participatory educative theaters, open air events and community dialogue.



GRAFFITI & WALL MURALS

Graffiti and wall murals involve the visual expression of feelings, experiences and messages through artistic drawings and writing, usually using spray paints in public spaces. These forms of creative arts are increasingly gaining recognition amongst scientists and other professionals as legitimate public participatory art forms and as a medium for communities to voice their opinions.

Ngunyumu Primary School in Korogocho was engaged in developing and mounting wall murals. The school administration was first taken through the concept and method of delivery of the graffiti and wall murals as a participatory methodology, including the discussion of ethics and perceived risks. With the approved consent of the head teacher on behalf of the pupils, a brainstorming workshop was facilitated by Hope Raisers Initiative-Korogocho, to elicit the pupils' lived experiences with food insecurity, and to sharpen their drawing, painting and creative skills.

The focus was on transferring their thoughts and perceptions through a drawn piece of art with the intention of communicating the same message to anyone who interacted with it. Thoughts and creative pieces were then collated into one piece of artwork on paper, following which the pupils were guided on how to transfer their artistic piece of work from paper to wall.

The wall is strategically located along a busy road that traverses the community and provided community members with an opportunity to interact with the artwork. This activity helped spark conversations on the specific messages conveyed, thereby enhancing the dialogue on lived experiences with food insecurity.

FOOD SECURITY

GOOD FOOD

- Balanced Diet ✓
- KEBS Certified
- Well Cooked
- How it is sold (Environment/
places where it is sold)
- No chemicals
- Clean
- Natural Food

Sources of good food

- Trusted producers / Not prof
it oriented but health
oriented.
- Permit from government and
health institutions
- Public awareness and
- Clean restaurants → Health

RIGHT TO GOOD FOOD

KEBS
WASHING FOOD
PROPER WAYS OF HANDLING





Using the same approach utilized by Hoperaisers, a graffiti artwork, spearheaded by Ruben FM, was installed at Ruben Centre to achieve the same goal of enhancing dialogue on lived experiences with food insecurity.





PHOTOVOICE

Photovoice is an innovative participatory engagement method of facilitating community participation. The community generates photographic work that captures their lived experiences through their eyes. Since the community is actively involved in the process, there is more ownership and commitment.

Photovoice was used to engage communities in Kibera, Dandora, Mukuru Kwa Ruben and Korogocho. Various groups were engaged including mixed gender youth; women; groups with both men and women; mixed groups for older persons (60 years and above); and mothers of special needs children. The participants were trained on the use of cameras and the ethics of photography then provided with digital cameras to take photos that visually represented their day-to-day experiences, their struggles in attaining the food basket for themselves, their children and their families.

Group discussions were then held with the participants to discuss the issues represented in the photos taken. The technique SHOWeD was used to guide these discussions which involved the participants identifying what they can see, and how it relates to their lives and what various stakeholders can do to improve their situation as depicted in the photos.

SHOWeD technique

What do you **See** here?

What is really **Happening** here?

How does this relate to **Our** lives?

Why does this condition exist?

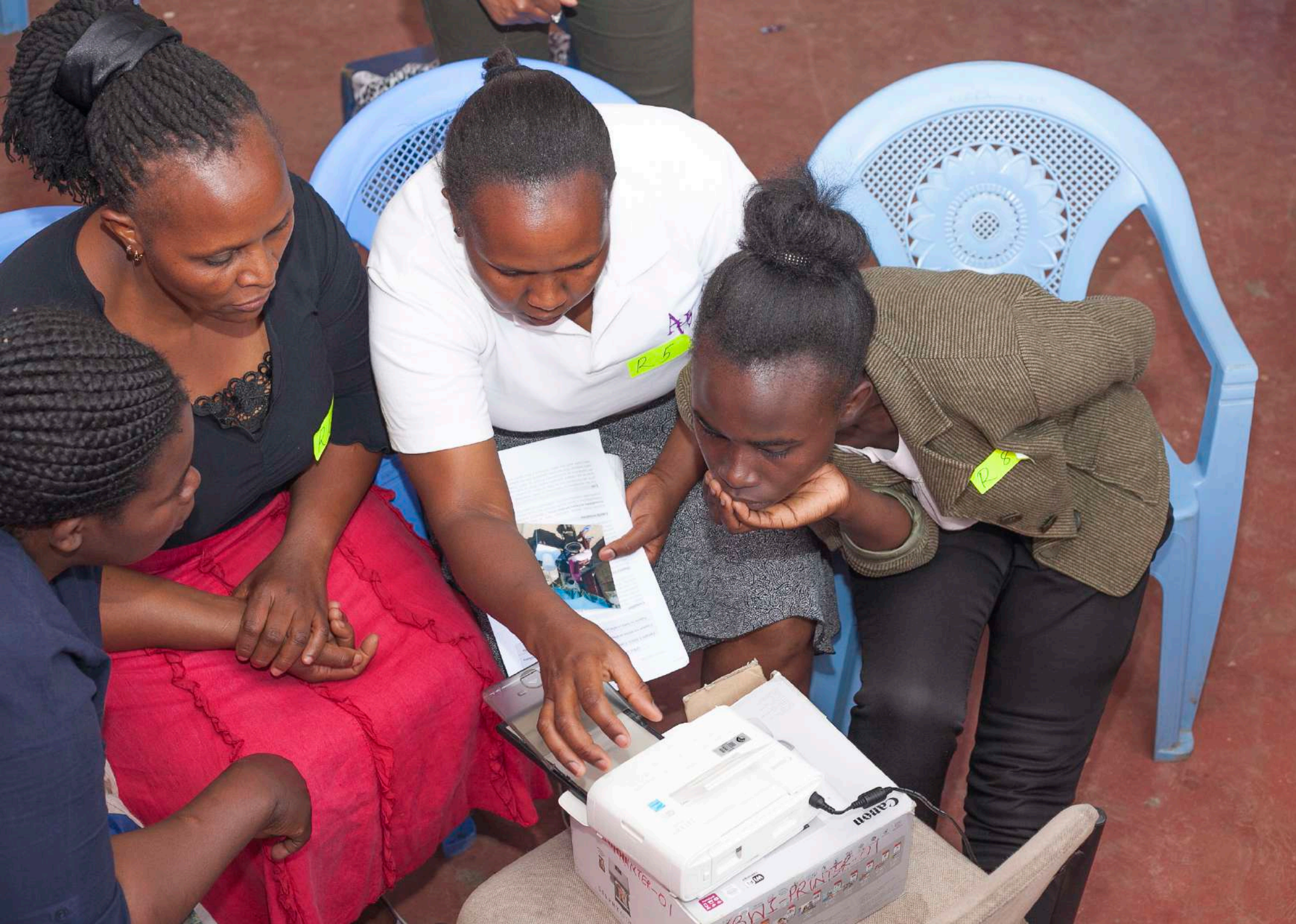
What can we **Do** about it?


























GROUP 1

- 
Cheap due to competition.
- 
Affordable.
- 
Nothing goes to waste.
- 
Food Preservation - long shelf life.
- 
Health hazards.
- 
Excess food.
- 
Affordable healthy food.
- 
'Makumbo' is a substitute for those who can't afford meat.

GROUP 2

- 
Clean, healthy and affordable Fruits.
- 
Assortment of food and innovative ways to prepare them.
- 
Agri-business a way to give jobs to unemployed youth.
- 
Flampos - 5A
Abanda - 20A
Food is accessible considering many kiosks like this one.
- 
Road-side kiosks bring food closer to customers.
- 
Sausage - 10¢
Eggs - 20¢
Affordable sources of protein.
- 
Easy access to animal feeds in dumpsites.
- 
This woman uses contaminated water for her garden.

GROUP 3

- 
EROSION
- 
TREE PLANTING AND WATER PURIFICATION
- 
FOOD AND DIRT WATER
- 
IDLE SPACE
- 
FERTILE LAND & FOOD PRODUCTION
- 
FOOD ARM DUMP SITE
- 
WRONG USE OF FREE SPACE
- 
SACK GARDENING

- Recommendations: Dandora (P.V)
- Insecurity: farmers should form groups.
: embrace selling produce.
 - food grown near the sewage: don't buy
: clean the water (purification)
: grow trees
 - lack of money: get jobs. Be resourceful.
Start small businesses.
 - excess food in the market: sell them cheaper
: drying process. make other foods that
will last longer.
 - drying food; people should be educated on methods.
 - More information on urban farming, county govt
to help with this information.
 - Purification of sewage water
- Recommendations to APHRC
- make a short film about their photos





OUTDOOR EVENTS

Community members were also engaged in various outdoor activities, open to everyone in the community, where food security and right to food issues were discussed.

Ruben FM, a community organized group (COG) convened an outdoor event at Ruben Centre in Mukuru Kwa Ruben as a culmination of all the engagements they had carried out on the right to food. This involved artistic performances (songs, poems, and dance) presentations and speeches focusing on the right to food. The event was also live on Ruben FM providing the public with opportunity to share their views on the right to food.

Precise Consultants, another COG, also convened a number of engagements in Kayole. They employed participatory engagement techniques (PET) and magnet theatre approaches, where skits and narratives were performed to the audience followed by an interactive educative session on food security and right to food.

Another COG, Slum TV, held an exhibition and film screening session in Mathare, showcasing the food security experiences in the area.

The photos below capture some of the open-air events.







DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Digital storytelling is a short form of media production through the use of digital tools to tell stories in a compelling, emotionally engaging, and interactive format. The digital stories produced combined still imagery, moving imagery, sound, and text, and their creation was via an interactive process that enhanced the experience, engagement and interactivity of the community members who created them. The method was used to learn, capture and share the struggles and lived experiences of community members in regards to food and nutrition security. This approach was executed by Hope Raisers Initiative, Korogocho. Through it they engaged youth groups and young mothers to enable them to share their lived experiences and struggles with regard to food security for themselves and their children.

A workshop was conducted to introduce the groups to the concept of digital storytelling, its importance, application and relevance to the public engagement process. They were guided through the process of documenting their stories on paper, conceptualizing the filming process of the documented story, use of cameras for taking relevant photos and videos, narration and audio recording, video creation and editing. The teams then, working in groups, set out to create their stories with supervisory support from the facilitators.



PARTICIPATORY EDUCATIVE THEATER

This involved use of staged plays and skits to communicate food security and the right to food messages, in a creative and comical way that attracted a large audience. The approach was used by Precise Consultants in engaging students from local schools as well as the community members in an open-air setting. There were two engagements with primary schools, two with secondary schools and three open-air engagements in Kayole. This approach was used to create awareness but also a way to engage community members in coming up with various possible solutions to their food security challenges. This was done through an interactive session after every staged item, in which the facilitator sought the views of the audience in solving the food security challenges highlighted by the skit or narrative.



LIVE **RADIO** SHOWS

Three community radios engaged the community through live radio shows-Ruben FM, Ghetto FM and Koch FM, broadcasting in Mukuru slums and Viwandani, Majengo, and Korogocho respectively. Guests were invited to engage with the community members on air included food security and legal experts. Through the community radios, community members had a chance to interact with the experts through questions and giving views via live call-ins, messages and on social media platforms. Some of the clips and sound bites collected during the community dialogue and from the general community were played to highlight various aspects of their daily food and nutrition security issues.





Community members from various slums were engaged in discussions and explorations of their food security situation and the right to food. This took various forms, including the fish bowl approach, consultative plenary, the soup kitchen, Vikao Vya Jamii, and photovoice focus group discussions. In some, pictures showing lived experiences, skits and narratives were presented, highlighting various issues that sparked conversations around food security and right to food. Some of the sound-bites recorded were later aired on community radios for the consumption of the larger community and formed the basis of various debates on live radio shows. The community dialogue took place in Korogocho (dubbed Kikao Cha Jamii, by Koch FM), Viwandani, Kwa Njenga and Kwa Ruben (by Ruben FM/Centre), Mathare (by Slum TV) and Kibera (by HOLC).











HUMAN LIBRARY

A human library involves inviting people who are knowledgeable on a certain topic to act as living 'books' where people talk to them for some time to learn more about that topic. Experts in food security and on the legal framework on the right to food were used as human books to engage with community members on the topics of food security and the right to food.

An existing community center was equipped with materials on food security and the right to food. Further, the resource center was used to stimulate peer dialogue of community members on the issue. This approach was used by SIDAREC in their engagement with communities living in Mukuru Kwa Njenga.



PARTICIPATORY MAPPING

Participatory geographic information system (PGIS) also known as participatory mapping, involved identifying and mapping out Korogocho food zones with the goal of locating where food is found and people's feeling the perceptions of community members on the quality of food. The team started by asking people on the streets about what they eat, where they eat, whether the food is healthy, and how accessible it is. This was a street activity where the crowd was entertained with music and contemporary dances. Participants were given sticker notes that they posted onto a Korogocho map. Over 200 participants were involved in the process.





WHAT WE
FOUND OUT

LIVED EXPERIENCES WITH
FOOD INSECURITY

PERCEPTIONS ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD

PERCEPTIONS ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD

Contrary to awareness on other rights such as the right to free speech, few of the urban poor residents we engaged were aware of their right to food. Some of the leaders engaged in the project admitted to having heard of the right to food although they understood little of what it entailed. Public engagement activities however served to raise awareness on the right to food and created a sense of empowerment among community participants and leaders alike.

PERCEPTIONS ON ACTUALIZATION OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD

Having enhanced their awareness, most community participants and their leaders expressed that the right to food had not been actualized in their urban poor settings. Some community members reported that, despite the desire to take actions to have the right realized, they were not aware of the right steps or channels to pursue for the actualization of their right to food. There was a general concern that the right to food is not given much attention as the other rights (such as, to education) in terms of implementation and advocacy.

PERCEPTIONS ON RESPONSIBILITY OF ACTUALIZING THE RIGHT TO FOOD

Project participants considered a range of actors or players responsible for actualizing the right to food. First, the government, including government agencies and elected leaders, was considered the main duty bearer in actualizing the right to food by way of making deliberate investments in agricultural production, formulation of appropriate policies, sufficient budgetary allocations to promote food production, strengthened training for extension officers, and larger investments in agricultural outputs such as fertilizers.

Second, civil society organizations (CSOs) by way of sharpening awareness creation on the right to food. And third, individuals or community members by way of being proactive in food production rather than waiting on the government, and by adopting practices such as food preservation methods that enhance food security.

PILLARS OF FOOD SECURITY



1 Availability

Refers to sufficient quantities of appropriate food being physically available. The food may be from own production, commercial imports or food assistance.

2 Access

This means that there is adequate income and other resources to obtain sufficient and appropriate food through home production, purchase and gathering among other practices. Lack of access to adequate and diversified diet results in various forms of nutrition problems.

3 Utilization

Refers to the use of the food and is linked to an individual's health. It is affected by appropriate food processing and storage practices, adequate knowledge and application of nutrition and child care principles, as well as adequate health and sanitation services.

4 Stability

This encompasses the stability of the other three pillars.



FOOD AVAILABILITY

Food is generally available in plenty in the urban poor markets and streets, and range from fruits, vegetables and cooked street foods. However, the availability of food in the markets masks a less positive picture on the household front. Food available in the markets hardly translates to food being available in urban poor households and for many families there is little food to feed everyone to satisfaction, or even lacks completely. The food that is usually available lacks dietary diversity as many families rely on affordable monotonous diets.



“Our children need certain food items because of their special needs. This photo shows that these types of food are sometimes available and if you have money, you can afford to get your children good healthy food.”

Mother - Viwandani, Nairobi



“There are times when you find that the market has food in plenty and there are times when the vendors throw away food because it is going bad. However, plenty of food in the market doesn’t always mean that there is food at home.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi













“If you want fresh vegetables, they are found in the slums but it means that you have to pay a little bit more than the regular price. The difference between this vendor and the cheaper ones is that she paid more for her tomatoes and they were not the rejects. This vendor is still able to sell because there are people in the slum who can afford her tomatoes at that price.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi





“ Due to lack of time, mothers leave their children with 10 shillings so they can buy chips for lunch. When you think about the time you will spend making food at lunch time, you would rather be working and make food once during supper. Chips is not so healthy but it is a solution to making sure that the children do not stay hungry.”

Mother - Korogocho, Nairobi





FOOD ACCESS

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Economic access (where a household purchases food produced elsewhere) presents the main challenge to food security for many urban poor. Many residents either lack, or have low paying income earning opportunities that weakens their purchasing power. For example, although urban poor settings have a wide variety of foods with some selling at prices as low as KES 10 (\$0.1), we heard that many residents are unable to afford these. Incidentally, those who benefit the most from these cheap foods are neighbors coming in from surrounding lower-middle income estates. This suggests that the high prevalence of hunger and malnutrition ((High levels of malnutrition have been reported, with nearly half the number of children under five years old being stunted -too short for their age- and close to a third of women of reproductive age being underweight (Kimani-Murage et al., 2016) evident among urban poor households in Nairobi is not often a case of market availability of food, but an inability to access available food.

PHYSICAL ACCESS

During the public engagement, we frequently heard that these vulnerable groups greatly suffer in their quest to access food from the markets, and have to rely on others for assistance. Some have caregivers but who have to go to work or school, leaving the sick or immobile old and those living with disability unattended to, often meaning that these vulnerable are left unattended and often have to bear hunger pangs helplessly. Those that do not have caregivers, have to rely on well-wishers who are reported to sometimes defraud or even rob them.

Also, during food security interventions, such as relief food distributions these vulnerable groups – because they are rarely given special consideration, and due to the intense scramble and physical aggression that often characterize these exercises further complicates their physical access of food.

In addition, the high level of insecurity in urban poor areas generally limits physical access to food. Some suppliers are unable to access certain parts of the areas at particular hours due to insecurity. The same applies to consumers who want to buy particular food products. Older adults are worst hit by the security challenges as their physical incapacity limits their ability to escape or defend themselves. Older women in particular, are exposed to risks such as theft, rape and violence when trying to access food from such locations.

SOCIAL ACCESS

In addition to economic and physical access, social factors can also influence food access for the urban poor. Culture and religion can be powerful behavioral determinants and can dictate the preference or avoidance of certain foods. For example, for Muslims living in urban poor communities, pork is deemed unacceptable and will be avoided at all costs, despite being locally available.

Perceived gender roles also play a role in hindering food access to some extent. Some men are adversely affected by the social stigma associated with particular activities in the process of accessing food that are viewed as feminine, and would rather fore go available food than execute the activities themselves. Some young men for example, find it embarrassing to be seen carrying basins and containers to buy chopped vegetables from vendors as this is considered female-oriented duty.

For others, time constraints present a major challenge to food access. Most urban poor residents work as casual laborers, going to work very early in the morning, and returning home late in the evening. This limits time for food preparation at home, hence opting for street food. Time constraints also limits opportunities for finding desired food from street vendors.





“I starve a lot because as you can see my legs, I cannot walk around. It’s easier to ask for help when you can walk. Currently I sit and wait for good Samaritans to come through for me. When I get money I ask people to do errands for me. Some come back and some run off. I ask young children to bring me water and I pay them. I sleep hungry and without drinking water not due to lack of money but because of my limited movement. Before my legs worsened I would go to”

Older woman - Korogocho, Nairobi





“We have a good road system here, this makes it easy for vendors to bring their food to us even during the rainy season, we are able to get food delivered to us.”

Mother - Korogocho, Nairobi





“When the garbage is burned at the dumpsite, the smoke ends up in our houses and it is the children who are mostly affected by respiratory issues. The money that would have otherwise been used to buy healthy food and benefit the family is used for medication.”

Woman - Korogocho, Nairobi











“Though we are in the slums, there are vendors who strive to bring healthy food, this food is accessible depending on how much money you have. The vendor has packed the food in a way that even though you don’t have so much money, you can afford it.”

Man - Kibera, Nairobi





“A cobbler like this one looks like his business is doing well and he is able to feed his family, however, the truth is, when you take your shoe there for repairs it will take you a couple of days or weeks before you can pick it and this is after you have driven a hard bargain on him... This drives the him into debt with food vendors, because by the time his customers are paying it means he cannot plan his income in any way.”

Women - Korogocho, Nairobi



FOOD UTILIZATION

FOOD QUALITY

We heard that at the larger wholesale markets, traders who sell to the high to middle income areas pick the best quality of the available foodstuff as residents of such areas are able to afford it at a higher. The traders who sell to urban poor consumers pick lower quality food products that they are able to sell at a relatively lower prices that are affordable to the local customer base. The low quality foods include overripe fruits, overstayed vegetables that are almost going stale, damaged food products, expired or almost expired food products, and rejects.

Owing to poverty and weak purchasing power, consumption of balance diets and variety of foods is not a priority in urban poor settings and is not commonly practiced. Most families resort to eating for the sake of sustaining life and are not necessarily concerned about the nutritional value of food.

FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE

Food safety affects food utilization and can be affected by the preparation, processing and cooking of food at community and household level (FAO, 1997). Poor sanitation and unhygienic environment is common place in urban poor settings in Nairobi. Most of the areas are characterized by poor drainage systems, poor waste management systems and congestion.

Open or leaking sewers are a major concern for access to clean and safe water for drinking and food preparation. Food is prepared and sold in this kind of environment, increasing chances of frequent contaminations. Sewage waste sometimes get into contact with water, contaminating it, ending up being consumed by unsuspecting community members. Some urban poor community residents also grow vegetables along sewer lines and polluted river banks using raw sewage sludge to irrigate and fertilize their farms. The farms are known to produce very green and attractive leafy vegetables that are said to look better and healthier than those from rural areas. This is not surprising given the general perception of good nutritious food, is determined by how appealing the food looks and is a powerful influence of consumer food choices. Thus, many unsuspecting residents are attracted to these vegetables and end up consuming contaminated food.

We also heard that hygiene is a major concern as vendors who lack proper structures display the food products on dusty ground, and near or on top of open sewers. Contaminated food was said to be a cause of diarrheal and other diseases that affect the nutritional and health status of the urban poor population or even lead to fatalities, with young children most affected if the conditions are not adequately contained.

In other examples, some community members living in the areas surrounding Dandora dump site buy their food from vendors who obtain food this dump site. These are said to be much cheaper and affordable for low income earners. Despite the obvious hygiene concerns of this type of food, most community members thought it was fine as they had grown up eating it and survived.

There is also a major concern of food adulteration, especially for the common foods sold along the streets. Soda ash and paracetamol, for example are commonly added to 'githeri' (a meal made of maize and beans) to make it soften faster while cooking, saving on the cost of fuel for boiling.

Despite the emerging food safety concerns in the urban poor settings, inspection of food by the relevant government officers was said to be inadequate, exposing the public to unsafe foods and illnesses. As much as this inspection is necessary and was demanded by the residents, their leaders explained that the hostility and insecurity in most parts of these areas greatly hinder the operations of the inspectorate officers.

As we already know, an unhealthy population is also a less productive one. When the bread winner is sick for example, the entire family suffers food shortage. If any family member falls sick, resources that would otherwise be used in food provision and development get diverted to medication, destabilizing the family's economic and food security status.



“Because of poor waste management, there are no safe spaces where vendors can sell their food away from the dirt. If we got a designated space in the slum for a market, then cleanliness would be easier to achieve.”

Man - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi



“Food is sold on the streets and it is not covered, the area surrounding the vendor is not clean.”

Woman - Kibera, Nairobi





“Waste disposal in the slum is absolutely absent, there are young men who go round emptying our toilet, that to begin with should not be the case, there are times when accidents happen and the waste spills, contaminating everything they come into contact with. Better waste management will improve our food situation.”

Mother - Viwandani, Nairobi



“Vendors go to the market and bring these parts of the fish, after the fillet has been removed, the bones is what he brings. They are dried in the open air on an old metallic bed. If you want to flavour your food and you cannot afford fish, this is what you buy and make soup to flavour your food. It is unhygienic and full of flies.”

Man - Kibera, Nairobi



“This is the pipe that brings the water we use at home. When a pipe like this bursts as they often do, we unknowingly drink the water without treating because we trust the water that gets to us is clean. This comes with waterborne diseases and other illnesses that we have to treat instead of buying food.”

Youth - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi





“There are no proper designated areas where vendors can sell their products and have access to a clean environment when preparing their food. Even though the vendor has tried to look for a clean way to display his food, the environment around him is still polluted.”

Youth - Kibera, Nairobi



“There are vendors like this one, who do take care of the space where they are selling food from, they are few but they still keep their spaces clean. If you look at the surrounding area and only buy from clean vendors, you will sleep hungry.”

Woman - Kibera, Nairobi











“Most times children like these ones will not wash their hands after playing with this water that is full of sewer waste. When it’s time to eat, they eat with their dirty hands and end up getting sick dues to this.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi



“This vendor just got a sack and put out the vegetables right outside her door, people who like local vegetables will buy from her even though she is settling right next to a drain that is full of sewer water. Local vegetables are healthy and nutritious, but such conditions affect and contaminate them.”

Woman - Korogocho, Nairobi



“These vegetables have been laid out next to the road and as the vehicles are passing, dust ends up on the food. So the food is not safe for eating. You will find that the food has dust and such things cause diseases. They also wither and lose nutrients.”

Man - Kibera, Nairobi



“Though this water looks clean, it is sewer water that streams from a factory that is near the slum. Most times when county water doesn’t get to us, we end up using it and sometimes even drink it. The trench where the water is draining from is dirty and it is most likely mixed with chemicals that can affect our health.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi





“Just look at the surrounding of this stall, it is so dirty and muddy from sewer water and the vendor is selling cooked food. Because his prices are low, he is able to sell even though his stall is surrounded by dirt.”

Man - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi



“Food that is already cooked is very popular in the slums, people prefer to buy it than to cook most of the time, because the vendor is mass producing, their costs are low and this makes the food affordable, if I was to boil this food myself, the amount it will cost me does not make economical sense. The only problem is, the vendors do not care so much about cleanliness.”

Woman - Korogocho, Nairobi

“This situation is not unique in the slum, where you find food being sold near a sewer that has burst. The sewages here are always bursting and vendors continue selling their food near them without knowing that it contaminates the food they are selling.”

Man - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi





“When you are doing business so that you can sustain your family, nothing else often matter, the cleanliness of the place or the proximity to the road and all the dust is irrelevant, as long as you are able to sell your food.”

Woman - Kibera, Nairobi









“Due to the proximity of houses to the river, there is always a likelihood of contamination. The river is always overflowing with sewer water and garbage. This is the same water that is used to irrigate vegetables that are either eaten at home or sold to customers in the communities.”

Woman - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi



“Many children are left at home without food or just a cup of porridge for the whole day. It is not a surprise to find young children taking care of their siblings as their parents, mostly the mother, goes out to look for money to sustain the family. Malnutrition among children is very high in our slum.”

Woman - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi



FOOD STABILITY



“Our main problem is lack of employment, if someone had money, they will most definitely eat good healthy food. Most times you will find people going to hustle, they don’t make any money and so they stay hungry. Take this man for example, because it is lunchtime, he is taking a break, by taking a nap instead of eating, because he doesn’t have money to afford food.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi

“When the cost of food goes up, a lot of vendors end up closing shop because the cost of buying the items to sell is something they cannot sustain. Food business in the slum especially for those who have to pay rent for their shop can be unmanageable at times.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi





“Because we lack modern ways of preserving food like refrigeration, we have to look for other methods like smoking and drying our foods to ensure they do not go bad. For example, such fish has been smoked and can stay for up to one-month before going bad. This way of preserving food ensures that we still have some access to some food when they are not delivered fresh.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi

“Food can be expensive when you don’t have money, so what some vendors do, is bring the food that is almost going bad and sell it at a cheap price. Some of them will even go pick up what other vendors have thrown and sell. This means we get substandard food, but we still buy it, because it’s all we can afford.”

Mother - Korogocho, Nairobi



COPING STRATEGIES

With the foregoing challenges to food security in terms of access, utilization and stability, many urban poor are inclined to resort to coping strategies for survival. These strategies often take the form of financial compromise and/or food compromization. For many urban poor, financial compromise coping strategies typically involve engage in risky social practices such as prostitution, crime and child labor as means of obtaining food. Others resort to food compromise which includes reducing meal frequency and dietary intake, relying on donations from well-wishers, scavenging for food in dump- sites, or purchasing low quality foods. Together, these coping strategies intensify the susceptibility of urban poor residents to poor nutritional and health outcomes.

BEGGING

It was widely reported that some people opt to depend on good Samaritans to give them something to eat. Some camp at places with high human traffic like the roadsides or at the entrance of an institution, while others move around asking for money and food. The older persons, persons with disabilities, the sick and children mostly adopt this approach as a coping mechanism.

BORROWING AND DEPENDENCY ON RELATIVES

This was also reported as common and takes many forms. There are those who buy food items from traders on credit. One has to create a good rapport with the trader and have a good record of credit worthiness to sustain this kind of relationship. This was also mostly mentioned as the reason why sometimes one would keep buying low quality or unhygienic products from a trader in an environment where there is another trader with better options at the same cost. Customer loyalty was highlighted as key to facilitating this. People also borrow money and food items from friends, neighbors and close associates. Some take loans from table banking groups, commonly referred to as ‘chamas’, micro-finance institutions and mobile app-based credit facilities. Borrowing however was reported to have many negative effects including stigma and loss of dignity especially borrowing within the neighborhood, and facing heavy penalties in case of defaulting payment to more formal borrowing mechanisms.

STEALING

Faced with frequent hunger situations and uncertainty over the next meal, it was reported that some people, especially the youth, resort to criminal activities as a source of income. Some get into mugging, stealing from houses, robbing shops while others advance beyond the petty theft to hard core armed robbery. This partly explains the high crime rates and insecurity situation in the informal settlements. Involvement in crime endangers their lives, and most of the times end up fatal, either via the police bullet or mob justice.

CHILD LABOR

Some parents send their under age children to work so as to increase household income. Some children resort to this on their own to supplement the little food available at home. This was reported as common in these settings.

SCAVENGING

Pushed to the brink by hunger, some people go to dumpsites and places with throwaway food wastes and search through the garbage to find food. This was stated as a very common practice among the slum communities. Some of those staying around Dandora dumpsite for example, commonly rely on the site for their daily meals, and told first hand stories of how they were brought up on meals from the site. Some pick the food stuff and sell to others, as a way of livelihood. Others earn their income from selling other

wares from the site, such as pieces of metals, thus, obtaining money for food and other needs. In Mathare for example, children visit the Eastleigh area where some residents have made it a practice to place food wastes strategically well packaged outside their gates, for these children to collect and eat. Children also commonly move along the streets and markets, picking any thrown away food stuffs and eating them.

CONSUMPTION OF POOR QUALITY CHEAP FOOD

As a result of hunger and little income, community members stated that they have no option but to go for the cheapest available food option, turning a blind eye to the quality, safety and hygiene concerns of the food. The first goal therefore is to get something to fill the stomach and in quantities shareable in the entire household. This explains why the market for low standard, expired, poorly handled and unsafe foods thrive in these settings. It also explains the frequency of illnesses and poor nutritional status of the population, especially among children.

The community members have knowledge that some of the food they eat is from questionable sources and is unsafe but due to affordability, they consume it. A common example is the case of vegetables grown along sewer lines and irrigated or fertilized using raw sewage.

SKIPPING MEALS

Due to limited finances, people opt to eat just one meal in a day to save for the subsequent days. In many families, supper is the most important meal, the rest are skipped.

EARLY MARRIAGES AND TEENAGE PREGNANCIES

It was noted that some girls get married at an early age with the hope that with a husband comes increased food security. Some are lured by the financial muscle of the man, with the promise of even extending financial aid to her family. Likewise, some girls are lured into irresponsible sexual behavior by money and material favors (such as food) at a tender age, some of which result into pregnancies. These pregnancies were also reported to sometimes push young girls into early marriages.

STREET LIVING

Occurrence of street children was partly attributed to food insecurity in the households. It was reported that due to hunger, some children resort to picking up discarded food wastes to eat. While at this, along the streets, next to restaurants and dumpsites, they meet others doing the same and some who have been on the streets for a while, gang up and resort fully to street life. Drug abuse sets in and transforms them completely into street children.

PROSTITUTION

“

...I have a neighbor who has a husband, the husband escorts her to the streets as her security, watching over her as she does street prostitution to get money so that they get food to give the children because the husband does not have a job and the wife does not have a job too. So they have to look for a way out for the children to get food.

”

Woman - Korogocho, Nairobi



“...I leave there and go to Mukuru Dumpsite and start collecting the bad ugali that has been thrown out, I come and cut it into small pieces after which I boil it. Then I peel potatoes that are rotting and after peeling these rotting potatoes I put them on the fire with cooking fat like the one that is thrown out by companies, I scrape off the cooking fat left on cooking fat container covers and I put it in the pot, not knowing whether it has worms or soil or sand...”

Older woman- Mukuru Kwa Ruben, Nairobi





“This flour is milled out of whole maize and it is very nutritious and affordable, way cheaper than store bought maize flour. If only people in the slum would embrace it, then this would make nutritious food more available in the households here.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi



“Most old business women have to wake up very early (3am) to make it to far off markets (such as Burma) to obtain their stock. Most times, they get mugged and even raped, losing the stock/ cash, and ultimately affecting the businesses and livelihood. Due to this, they are forced to go for days without food.”

Older woman - Korogocho, Nairobi

“We as older women go to the dumpsite to look for wares (bones, metals or cartons) to sell and get money for food. Sometimes we don’t get the wares and thus stay hungry. When we get the wares we go to the vendor so as to get some money, but unfortunately even the vendor sometimes lacks cash and we end up hungry that day .Exposure to the dumpsite has brought ill health on us and this is affecting our bodies. It’s harder to provide for ourselves. Medical care is also unaffordable.”

Older woman - Korogocho, Nairobi





“These bags are picked up from the dumpsite; they are washed at the Nairobi River, which is full of sewer waste. They will be sold to people who sell food to pack their food and this definitely exposes the customers to dirt and unsafe food situations.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi



“Left over food from aeroplanes is one of the major sources of food collected from the dumpsite, this food is sometimes still packed but what makes it unsafe is that it is mixed up with all the other waste. People still pick it up and sell it and sometimes you will find things like needles in there.

Others entirely depend on the dumpsite for their daily food, which is not fit for human consumption.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi



“In cases where one doesn’t have enough money, you will find such butcheries that sell offals, in those times, we are able to still prepare a balanced diet for our families because offals are cheaper than regular meat.”

Youth - Dandora Nairobi



“This kind of meat is sold a lot in the slum and it is portioned to affordable prices. It is however, not eaten as dinner but as a snack, there is no way you will eat this and not need food. It is often prepared in dirty space, but we still buy it, because it is affordable.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi



Plastic collection points in the slum help keep the slum clean and are also a source of income to provide food for your family.

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi



“I started off as a street urchin. I would go scavenging from the dumpsite to get food but due to old age and my swollen legs I can no longer do it. I resorted to begging on the streets where I get mistreated at times, I lack enough to provide for myself and most of the times I sleep hungry.”

Older woman - Korogocho, Nairobi

“When I was healthy I used to farm for myself. Due to ill-health I can no longer farm or do anything, I depend on well-wishers to buy me blood pressure drugs and give me food. I also have my grandchildren who provide for me through the proceeds of the dumpsite.”

Older woman - Korogocho, Nairobi



RECOMMENDATIONS

IN THEIR VOICES

Although most of the coping strategies developed by urban poor residents hold significant negative implications, numerous opportunities exist for more viable innovative practices that can enhance livelihoods and promote food security. Several such opportunities were already being actualized by urban poor communities while some were fronted as holding great potential for enhancing the right to food for urban poor.

Improve **food access**

Economic **empowerment**

Promote innovative **urban farming**

Improve **food safety**

Devise and implement appropriate **policies and laws** to actualize the right to food

IMPROVE **FOOD ACCESS**

- Extend safety net measures through income transfers and food distribution dedicated to vulnerable groups such as, older people and people living with disability to strengthen their ability to access healthy and nutritious food.
- Support mechanisms to improve access to food for the most vulnerable groups such as, providing food subsidies and tax reductions on the production or transportation of nutritious foods
- Intensify the provision of better quality education and vocational training for youth and women to improve productivity and incomes thus enabling dignified provision of basic needs including adequate and nutritious food.
- Enhance food preservation and banking/storage to curb food waste as an optimal option of ensuring food stability and access.
- Establish food banks to enhance food security and nutrition for urban poor.

URBAN FARMING

The assurance of regular supply of and access to, quality food, and the opportunity for income- generation provided by urban farming emerged as a sufficient incentive for some community members to undertake this venture. However, we learned that urban farming is not without its limitations in urban poor settings. Inadequate capital, lack of access seeds and livestock, limited access to land, absence of extension services, and inadequate training opportunities are among the key challenges to effective and sustainable urban farming.

Policymakers need to recognize and address these challenges to strengthen the opportunities offered by urban agriculture. In particular, the following policy entry points should be considered:

- Avail land for agricultural purposes especially vegetable and poultry farming in urban land-use planning schemes and structure and zoning plans.
- Provide awareness raising and information but also technical support to urban farmers in terms of training and agricultural extension support to guide urban farming activities.
- Improve land-use rights to make land available to low income groups and to ease access to land and tenure for agriculture and food production in urban areas. Zoning of specific land and clarifying what activities are allowed where could be a first step in this regard.
- Strengthen urban farming from a value- chain perspective to create opportunities for job and income creation, but also as a means of increasing access to fresh and nutritious food for wider communities, beyond production for home consumption.
- Promote integrated water management for urban farming. This could include rain water harvesting, and increasing the water holding capacity of the soil. Schools may offer excellent opportunities for piloting these specific interventions



“There are always innovative activities that young people can engage in to have a source of income. Teaching them different ways of practicing urban farming is a big solution.”

Youth - Mukuru kwa Ruben, Nairobi



ECONOMIC **EMPOWERMENT**



“Young men used to rob people in the neighborhood; they were spoken to, given motorcycles and hence started an income-generating project so they could stop bothering people. They are now able to feed themselves and we have less worry that we will lose the money we made to feed our families to them.”

Woman - Korogocho, Nairobi

“There are a couple of business ideas that we can be able to engage in to provide good food for our families, however, most of these business require start-up capital which is hard to come by.”

Youth - Korogocho, Nairobi



ENHANCE **FOOD SAFETY** AND **FOOD QUALITY**

- Enhance civic education on food handling, sanitation and hygiene and safety for food vendors and community members, to minimize risks such as health hazards, water contamination and food safety concerns.
- Support food vendors by creating enabling environments such as, erecting food platforms for compliance to requisite food hygiene and safety requirements.
- Develop awareness campaigns on food quality and/or utilization as well as an emphasis on the importance of the different food groups in diets (particularly for children, women and older people).
- Promote urban food-processing, storage, packaging, and processing as a strategy to enhance access to fresh and nutritious food.



“Cleanliness is our responsibility and if we clean our workspaces then we will be able to provide clean healthy food. The owner of this hotel has made sure that their space is clean. If we do our part in maintaining cleanliness, we can push the government to do their part.”

Man - Kibera, Nairobi



“Those who have spaces in the slums can be supported to start greenhouses, this will ensure that the empty spaces in the slums are put to use and provide food for the slum dwellers.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi



“Such open spaces can be used to do urban farming. Young people can come together and lease it from the owner before he decides what to do with it. We will be able to make money and at the same time provide a solution to the food insecurity issue in Dandora.”

Youth - Dandora, Nairobi



CONCLUSION

The Right to Food project enabled us to engage with urban poor communities in Nairobi in innovative participatory ways, to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences with food insecurity and document their views on potential solutions towards actualization of their right to food in ways most relevant to them.

Working with community organized groups revealed the great wealth of knowledge that lies in communities – if only adequately tapped. The groups' capacities were strengthened for potential engagement and sustainability of the engagement efforts in this communities.

Findings from the project reveal inequality in access to food for the urban poor in Nairobi slums due to prevailing negative economic, physical, social and environmental context. The risk of food insecurity is particularly heightened for urban poor residents who have little or no income generating opportunities and whose physical capacity is diminished.

We call on researchers and change agents to identify and frame solutions to problems affecting communities using a lens that accurately reflects their lived experiences. This would ensure people-informed and people-centered solutions to the problem of food insecurity, hence implementation of the most viable context specific and relevant solutions. To do so, further research must be repositioned to focus squarely on working with communities experiencing food insecurity as partners whose voices guide advocacy and action. The project also invites the need to carry out similar engagement approaches in other urban poor and rural areas to derive a better sense of the diversity in lived experiences across different settings, towards effective actualization of the right to food.



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I am so excited about public engagement with participatory visual approaches. It allows the people to express themselves and present their situation in ways most relevant to them. It is the way to get to the core of people's experiences; it is the way to hear the voices of those often silent and whose voices are often left out; it is the way to connect to the hearts of change agents meaningfully!

Participatory public engagement has enabled me to break health concepts e.g. food security to people so that the concepts can be more meaningful to them; it has enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of peoples experiences; it has enabled me to be more meaningful in policy advocacy.

Participatory public engagement with research evidence and on health concepts is the new way for me in promoting, health, justice and human rights; it is the new way for APHRC in transforming lives through research; it is the new way for all of us in making a meaningful difference in our societies!

I am forever grateful to the Wellcome Trust for according me the public engagement fellowship and several other public engagement grants!

~ Elizabeth W. Kimani - Murage~



The Right to food remains a dream to many people, especially the low-income group unless drastic measures are implemented to enhance access through markets and promoting own production. Even with the current policies, right to food cannot be guaranteed as it requires well thought out processes and actions that strengthen the food systems for the benefit of all. Working with the Community Organized Groups (COGs) in low-income urban informal settlements was a great eye opener and an opportunity to understand the potential the community holds in coming up with their own innovative solutions. The innovative ideas and initiatives developed by the COGs created an opportunity for re-imagining and re-designing what the right to food means for the urban poor.

~ Triza Njoki~



Having interacted with the lived food security experiences of the urban poor as depicted in this book, friends, remember the old Latin saying; *'Ex nihilo nihil fit'* (out of nothing, nothing comes). If we, in our own small ways do nothing about this situation, nothing will ever change. The world, in the words of Shakespeare in the Merchant of Venice, is a stage where every man has a part to play. It is my hope that ours be that of transformation.

~ David Osogo~



It has been inspiring and confronting to engage with the different perspectives on the Right to Food and to find innovative ways in which to share these with others. This book captures the grass-roots knowledge, lived experiences, and dilemmas faced by community members in relation to food insecurity, it also captures their resilience and ideas for change. It is my hope that what has been created will inspire others to tackle the issues and advocate alongside those affected.

~Melaneia Warwick~



Being a part of the Right to Food project has been an eye-opener and a challenge in terms of finding new ways of engaging with communities, so as to get their voices heard especially on things that matter most to them. Many residents of these communities spend their entire lives unseen, unheard and unacknowledged, and the challenges they encounter even more so. To have no food is to live every day on the brink, not knowing whether tomorrow will ever come. It is my hope that anyone who comes across this book and any other material from this initiative, appreciates, empathizes and feels compelled to act.

~Michelle Mbuthia~



The participatory nature of project has afforded me an opportunity to get a nuanced understanding on the Right to Food. It was also a great learning environment, especially on the research methodology. I hope that through interacting with the materials from the project, every reader will heed the call to action; agitate for the realization of the right to food for all.

~Florence Sipalla~



Always such energy, spirit and meaning one exudes from engagement with community members! Gives me great honor to be part of amplifying their voices on an issue that is right next to their hearts.

~Hilda Owii~

COMMUNITY **ORGANIZED** GROUPS

The public engagement project activities were implemented by Community Organized Groups (COGs) in various slums of Nairobi, including Kibera, Mukuru Kwa Njenga, Mukuru Kwa Ruben, Viwandani, Majengo, Korogocho, Dandora, Kayole and Mathare.



Hope Raisers Initiative, a community-based initiative that was established in 2005 to serve the Korogocho slums in Nairobi. The initiative is structured to offer mentorship and outreach programs to children and the youth living in informal settlements. The approaches used by the group were digital storytelling, graffiti and Participatory Geographical Information Systems (PGIS) in Korogocho slums.



Household of Love Center (HOLC) is a faith based organization whose mandate is to alleviate social, economic, mental and emotional poverty in communities within Kenya. HOLC had its activities in Kibera and Korogocho slums and engaged the communities through plenary discussions, photovoice, social media and soup kitchen dialogue.



Koch FM founded in 2006, is registered as a Community Based Organization based in Korogocho. Its mission is to provide a platform for the community to address their issues through information sharing, education and communication with an aim to promote social, political and economic well-being of the Korogocho community and the general listenership. This is done through the radio programmes and the community conversation forums. Koch FM engaged communities in Korogocho slum through radio skits, a series of kikao cha jamii (community dialogue forums), social media and live radio shows.



Slum TV is a Community Media Organization, registered as a Trust founded in 2006. Its mandate is to document the lives of people in informal settlement with a mission of utilization of audio visual media as a tool for self-representation for grassroots communities with the aim of addressing priority issue in the communities in Kenya through educative, informative and entertaining film (audiovisual) content. This is done through 3 programs: Film and Radio Training; Film production; Film dissemination through regular open air and indoor screenings and partnering with like-minded organizations to run and participate in exchange programs. Slum TV engaged the Mathare slum community through community dialogue, photography, film and open air screening and exhibitions.



Precise Consultants is a registered community-based organization (CBO) that offers various services including data collection, entry, analysis, consultancy, and monitoring and evaluation services. The methodologies Precise Consultants uses are majorly based on the capacity to work with clients in efforts to deliver effective solutions to them. The team used participatory and educative theatre and magnet theatre to engage the Soweto-Kayole slums community in schools, public events and the open air.



Ruben Centre is a faith-based organization striving for an empowered and just Mukuru slums community by providing quality education, health, financial and social services to children and families in Mukuru community. The Ruben Centre is a non-profit, charity organization run by the Christian Brothers African Province. It offers educational, health and community development programs to the Mukuru residents. Ruben Center engaged Mukuru Kwa Ruben, Kwa Njenga and Viwandani slum community through graffiti, songs, poems/drama, wall murals, live radio shows, community dialogue and open air events.



Slums Information Development and Resource Centers (SIDAREC) is a youth, children and women communication project operating in three major slums of Nairobi (Pumwani, Kibera and Mukuru Kwa Njenga). The Organization activities are geared towards alleviating poverty among poor slum communities in a bid to restore human dignity. SIDAREC activities are anchored under 5 core pillars namely education, reproductive health programs, social enterprise, ICT and a community radio (Ghetto FM). SIDAREC engaged the communities living in Pumwani and Mukuru Kwa Njenga through live radio shows, a library (human and resource materials), community dialogue, photovoice and a secondary school debate.



Mum, Baby & Love is a registered Trust in Kenya that aims at helping mums cope with motherhood. Our goal is to build a community of mums who help each other have a fulfilling motherhood through a network of support groups. We especially target new mums with a focus on a holistic approach encompassing improved maternal mental health resulting in fewer cases of postpartum depression, physical well being and socioeconomic support.

For the right to food project, we used photovoice as our participatory engagement method of research to understand what challenges communities face in accessing good, healthy and nutritious food and the solutions they proposed. The results were a series of pictures and a focus group discussion that gave various recommendations. The photovoice activity was carried out in Kibera, Dandora, Korogocho and Mukuru kwa Ruben.



RIGHT TO FOOD



African Population and Health Research Center





behind the scenes





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