

Conservation and Use of African Indigenous Vegetables for Food Security: Case Study of Tuuti Marakuru Ward Bungoma Western Kenya

Jane Toroitich¹: jtoroitich@kibu.ac.ke
Margaret Wanambisi¹: mwanambisi@kibu.ac.ke
Institution Affiliation: Kibabii University

Abstract

Bungoma County is endowed with agro climatic conditions suitable for the cultivation of a wide range of African indigenous vegetables. The value of traditional vegetables in food security has not been given sufficient attention in the county. During dry season indigenous vegetables are very expensive and unavailable hence an alternative way of enhancing its availability is through conservation. Consequently, there are no formal interventions that seek to encourage people to use traditional vegetables as sources of essential nutrients. This paper gives results on use and conservation of indigenous vegetables by households obtained from a cross sectional surveys carried out in Kanduyi Division, Tuuti Marakuru ward, western Kenya. Conservation was measured by; availability of IV at local market stalls during dry and rainy seasons in the markets and household gardens, use was measured using Likert scale questionnaire. 186 local market stalls were purposively sampled and 80 households drawn from the population. Data was collected during the two seasons December to March and March to May, 2019 using market questionnaires and summarized using tables and charts. Of the 186 market stalls only 11.8% and 1.1% of them had indigenous vegetables (9 varieties) during the two seasons respectively. Indigenous vegetables were only cultivated by 5.9% and 0.8% of the households for the two seasons respectively; these included only six varieties and cowpea leaves (*Vigna unguiculata*) were the most popular. Consumption of up to 9 varieties of indigenous vegetables was observed, with cow peas, jute mallow and amaranths reporting more than 50% consumption when the IV were plenty during the month of March to May and reporting less than 10% during the month of December to March. This paper recommends creation of awareness by educating the caregiver's mothers and small-holder farmers on use and Conservation of Indigenous Vegetable on food security, nutrition and health.

Keywords: *Conservation and use of indigenous Vegetables, Nutrition value and Food security*