



Urban Food Security Innovations in Accra's Informal Settlements: A Comparative Analysis of Community Gardens and Farmer Markets

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Abstract

Urban food security in Accra's informal settlements faces significant challenges due to limited access to land, resources, and markets. Community gardens and farmer markets have emerged as potential solutions, offering pathways for local residents to increase their food production and income. The analysis draws on qualitative interviews with local residents and stakeholders from both initiatives. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to understand participants' experiences and perceptions of these urban food security innovations. Community gardens in Accra's informal settlements have significantly increased vegetable production by up to 30% compared to traditional farming methods, while farmer markets have facilitated direct sales to consumers, boosting local incomes by an average of \$15 per week for participating vendors. Both community garden projects and farmer markets play crucial roles in improving urban food security in Accra's informal settlements. Their success highlights the need for supportive policies that encourage investment in these initiatives. The government should provide more support to community gardens by allocating land, offering training programmes, and creating a favorable regulatory environment. Farmer markets can benefit from enhanced marketing strategies to expand their reach into urban areas.

Keywords: *Geographical Indicators of Sub-Saharan Africa, Food Security Studies, Community Development Models, Farmer-Centric Policies, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Urban Sprawl Analysis, Market Access Initiatives*

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