C3P FOOD SECURITY BRIEF NO. 4

FOOD SECURITY IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN UGANDA

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BACKGROUND

One of C3P's activities is to assess and document the status of food security in the regions' households, and the relationship between food security and the C3P mandate crops, East African Highland banana and cassava.

This brief describes three indicators of food security in Uganda. 'Food security I' contains the actual calorie intake per caput per day from own production. 'Food security II' depicts the total cal/cap/day capacity of households from own production (both consumed and sold), whereas 'Food security III' describes the capacity of households to purchase food from off-farm income.

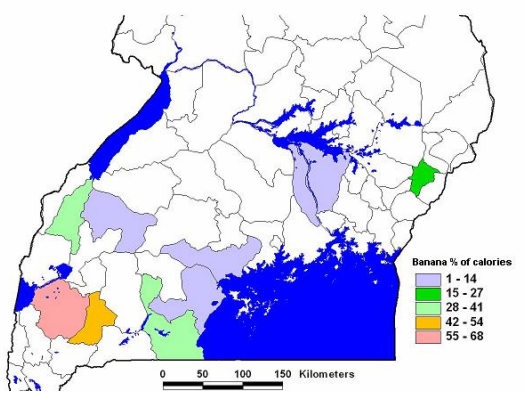
The region covered in this survey are ten districts in Central and Western Uganda: Mbale, Kamuli, Kayunga, Mpigi, Masaka Rakai, Bushenyi, Mbarara, Kabarole and Kyenjojo.

For an overview on the overall Ugandan food security statistics, we refer to the Food Security Brief No. 1 (Abele et al. 2006).

THE ROLE OF BANANA AND CASSAVA IN THE REGION'S FOOD SECURITY

Bananas play a major role in Western Uganda, namely in Mbarara and Bushenyi with diet shares between 54 and 69 percent. The rest of the region has a diet share of bananas between only one and 29 percent of the diet. Considering that in overall Uganda, bananas constitute about 20 percent of the caloric intake, we can see that in many of the Western and Central districts, bananas play a more important role than in the rest of Uganda. Map 1 shows the significance of bananas in the survey region's diets.

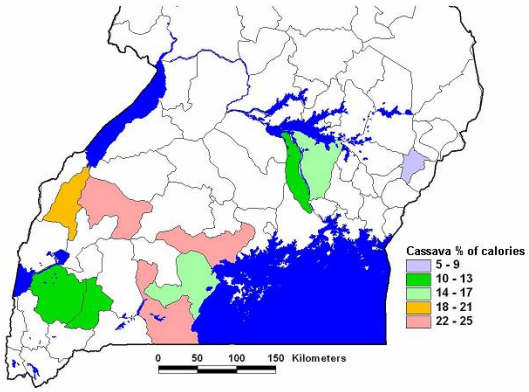
Map 1: Contribution of bananas to caloric intake



Source: Own data

The role of cassava in this region's diets is less significant than for the rest of the Uganda (Abele et al. 2006). It ranges from five to 25 percent (Map 2), whereas in the major cassava growing regions, it can reach up to 70 percent. However, the overall average of cassava shares in the diets match the one for the whole of Uganda, which is about 13 percent.

Map 2: Contribution of cassava to caloric intake



Source: Own data

Food security I: Daily calorie intake from subsistence production

Daily calorie intake from subsistence production ranges from only about 460 kcal per capita in Bushenyi to more than 2,200 in Mbarara. This means that most of the households in this region cannot or

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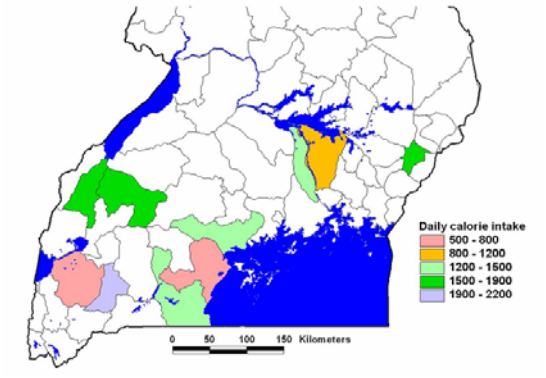
do not cover their energetic food needs from own production but have to get food from the market (Map 3).

Map 3: Daily calorie intake from own production

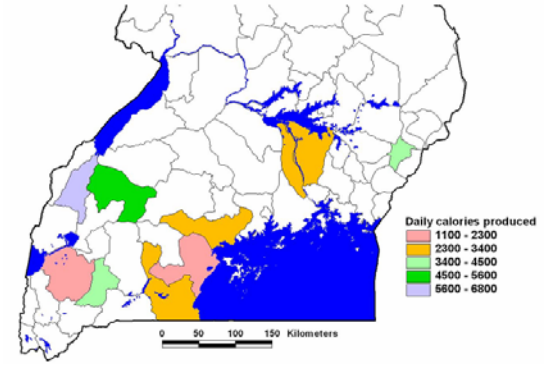


Source: Own data.

Food security II: Daily calorie capacity from total crop production

The availability of calories from total crop production ranges from about 1,100 (again, Bushenyi) to more than 6,700 kcal per capita per day in Kabarole. The distribution is depicted in Map 4.

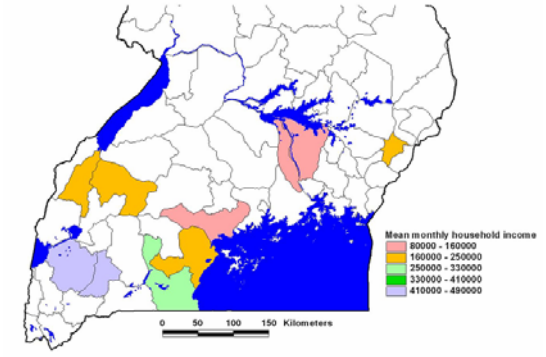
Map 4: Daily calorie intake capacity



Food security III: Off-farm income

Off-farm income provides an additional access to food through purchases from markets. This figure ranges from 80,000 Ushs to almost 500,000 Ushs. The distribution is depicted in Map 5.

Map 5: Off-farm income

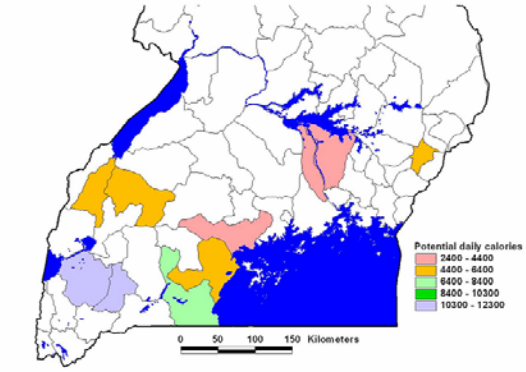


Source: Own data.

How does this translate into food security? For example, households that earn 100,000 Ugandan Shillings per month could purchase 200 kg maize (at an assumed price of 500 Shillings/kg). This would translate into 662,000 kcal per month, and thus 2,200 kcal per day.

In the survey region, households can obtain from about 2,400 up to 12,000 kcal per capita per day from their off-farm income sources, which attributes a decisive part to their diets and eventually their food security (Map 6).

Map 6: Calorie intake capacity from off-farm income.



Source: Own data, FOODNET/MIS

CONCLUSIONS

Households in Central and Western Uganda are food secure. Although they cover only a small part of their food requirements from own production, they have enough production and off-farm income capacity to cater for their food needs.

Yet as bananas cover a large part of the diet, it is clear that banana production losses negatively affect food security, however, without really threatening the overall food security in this region.

REFERENCES

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FAO 2007: Statistical databases.

FOODNET/MIS (2006): Price data.

IITA/FOODNET

Editorial
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Disclaimer
Due to recent changes in the regional organization of Uganda, the depiction on the maps may differ slightly from actual geographic district borders.
The data have been collected and evaluated according to the present geographic districts of the Republic of Uganda.