



Commonwealth Geographical Bureau

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN FOOD AND FOOD SECURITY

An International Conference
Maputo, Mozambique July 4-5, 2019

Theme of the Conference

Foods of many types and nutritional value are produced and consumed in varied ways and different amounts across the world. The patterns of the stability of both production and consumption are affected by a wide range of bio-physical and socio-economic drivers, and these are further conditioned by political and cultural contexts. Who produces and who consumes what types and amounts of food are reflections of existing levels of assets inequity at all scales – from the global and national to the community and household. The people with least assets and, therefore, the most vulnerable in terms of regular access to adequate food, are the poor in countries of the Global South. In some cases the vulnerability of poverty is compounded by prolonged military conflict, disease epidemics, as well as the inequitable competition for agricultural land and water in rural areas, and for affordable retailed food in urban centres. The strategies employed by people to secure food further reflect variations based on gender roles, knowledge base, technological capabilities, perceptions and issues of governance. Additionally, a food transition is currently in process with traditional diets frequently being replaced by new options. The trend is towards higher consumption of calories, fats and animal products, as populations become influenced by the globalized marketing strategies of ‘big food’ which is changing food preferences, including those of the poor.

The Conference

This conference, held in the Radisson Blu Hotel in the city of Maputo, Mozambique, was organized by the CGB President, Professor Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, on behalf of the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau. The situating of a CGB event in Mozambique (the most recent country to join the Commonwealth) was made possible by the fact that the CGB Representative for Southern Africa, Dr. Ines Raimundo is a member of staff of the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo and who ably facilitated local arrangements.

The CGB acknowledges, with thanks, the Director, Professor Jonathan Crush, Balsillie School of International Affairs, Waterloo, Canada, and the Coordinator of the Partners on the Global South, Dr. Gareth Haysom of the University of Cape Town, South Africa for the collaboration of the Hungry Cities Partnership (HCP), a project supported by the (IDRC) and (SSHRC).

Thanks are also due to the Urban Farming in Cape Town / South Africa and Maputo / Mozambique (UFiSAMO) project based in Maputo, led by Ms. Nicole Paganini, for its input to the success of the conference by supporting local participation as well as providing a pre-conference session on their work in Maputo on urban farming.

Opening Session



(Photo courtesy of Maryam Liman)

Left:

Professor Thomas-Hope, President,
Commonwealth Geographical Bureau

Professor Carvalho Madivate, Executive
Secretary of the Academy of Sciences of
Mozambique

Dr. Ines Raimundo, Eduardo Mondlane
University, Maputo

Professor Jonathan Crush, Director, Hungry
Cities Partnership.

Below: Conference participants at the
Opening Session.



Conference Programme

The conference themes reflected many of the contemporary issues relating to food and food security and covering a range of perspectives based on different country cases. (**See Annex I** for Conference Programme and **Annex II** for the Abstracts of papers). Each of the eight Paper sessions ended with panel discussions. (See photographs from three of these below). A total of 36 persons participated in the conference, drawn from eleven countries – Canada, China, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, South Africa, USA.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS



Left:

Gareth Haysom, Godfrey Tawodzera, Daniel Tevera, Julia Davies



Above:

Jorge Bahule, Zayaan Khan, Tinashe Kanosvamhira, Andrew Zimmer, Graeme Young



Left:

Cândido Armando Manhica, Amina Inkani, Máriam Abbas, Ivo Cumbana

OTHER PARTICIPANTS PRESENTING



Left to right from the top:

Bruce Frayne; Ines Raimundo & Cândido Manhica; Balfour Spence
 William Munro; Taiyang Zhong; Amina Inkani; Jordan Blekking
 Samuel Owuor; Heidi Gengenbach; Rachel Schurman; Gareth Hysom; Boaventura Cau; Ndeyapo Nickanor
 Tony Binns; Mairo Haruna; Nicole Paganini & Jorge Bahule

PAPER SESSIONS continued



Ezequiel Abrahamo &
Keerthana Jagadeesh



Adonna Jardine-Comrie presenting

One of the challenges facing CGB conferences is that the lack of core funding, and the difficulty of raising funds from donors for conference participation (even with training component for young scholars), is that participation is restricted to those who are able to obtain support from their own institutions. This is severely restricted in institutions of the Commonwealth Global South.

Partnering with other organizations has facilitated the involvement of some persons but, in general, attendance has mainly been from the region or country in which the conference has been held. In the case of the conference “Climate Change: Vulnerability and Resilience” held in Kingston Jamaica in April 2015, supported by the University of the West Indies, most attendees were from Jamaica and the Caribbean with some participants also from Canada, supported by the HCP or by their university, from Africa.¹ The conference in which the CGB partnered with Indian Geographical Societies, held in Guwahati, India in February 2018, was mostly attended by scholars from the Indian subcontinent.² On the occasion of the conference held in Maputo in July and about which this report is being made, predominantly included persons from the African continent or whose research is based in Africa. Given the cost of international travel, the regional focus of the CGB conferences is likely to continue in the future. Despite the constraints, it is an indication of the value of these forums that a large enough number of persons have come together to produce a vibrant and worthwhile scholarly event with strong emphasis on the implications for policy and outreach to civil society and those engaged in the practical aspects of the topic. In this case, it involved representation from small-scale urban farming community of Maputo.

¹ See Website - Commonwealth Geographical Bureau.org

² See Website - Commonwealth Geographical Bureau.org

Field Trip

A field trip was organized for participants to observe urban structure and development of Maputo and the major food market from which food from rural areas is received and sold to the urban retailers.



In Maputo city centre

Front left to right: Balfour Spence, Adonna Jardine-Comrie, Teresa Mbatia, Amina Inkani, Maryam Liman



At Zimpeto food market, Maputo

Left to Right- Front: Maryam Liman, Ines Raimundo, Amina Inkani. Back: Mairo Haruna, Ezequiel Abrahamo

The field trip ended with a visit to the Eduardo Mondlane University Department of Geography, and the Centre for Policy Analysis where we were met by the Director, Dr. Ramos Muanamoha.



Back row: Graeme Young, Bruce Frayne, Gareth Haysom, Jonathan Crush, Godfrey Tawodzera, Amina Inkani

Middle row: Samuel Owuor, Maryam Liman, Mairo Haruna, Tony Binns, Balfour Spence, Adonna Jardine-Comrie, Teresea Mbatia

Front row: Keerthana Jagadeesh, Ndeyapo Nickanor, Ines Raimundo, Elizabeth Thomas-Hope

Public Education and Publicity

The Press was present at the Opening session and the interviews later aired on Maputo television. (See **Annex IIIA** for interview with Professor Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, translated by Dr. Ines Raimundo).

Reported by E. Thomas-Hope, July 2019