

## **Food security and Mt. Kenya smallholder farmers: A local struggle in a globalizing world**

### Poster Presentation

With increasing population growth and projections for a world with 9 billion people by 2050, food security remains a key concern. Dominant approaches in research and development programs aimed towards achieving food security have been drawn from the Food and Agricultural Organization's (F.A.O.) definitions. The F.A.O.'s guidelines on food security focus on the four dimensions of availability, access, utilization and stability. Further research has expanded this scope by integrating aspects of agricultural productivity. However, emerging scholarship reveals a gap between such approaches and local practices among small scale food producers in sub-Saharan Africa where smallholders manage 80% of the farmland. In a study conducted between 2013 and 2015 in Embu, Kenya engaging 40 farmers in group discussions and interviews, it emerged that their priorities and perspectives on food security varied from those in dominant research and development programs. This paper argues for a different approach to addressing smallholders' food security. It proposes a realignment along themes on; (i) livelihoods; (ii) temporal perspectives; (iii) food preferences; (iv) cost of farming; and (v) productivity. This paper offers a more refined approach to addressing food security from the household to global levels while bearing in mind the concerns, preferences and priorities of smallholders.