



Call for Papers from Young Researchers: "Emergency Agriculture and Food Security"

*An International, Interdisciplinary KOSMOS Research Workshop
30 - 31 May 2016, Berlin, Germany*

Academic Organizers: Prof. Eckhard George (HUB & IGZ), Prof. Wolfgang Bokelmann (HUB) & Prof. Tilman Brück (IGZ); 9 March 2016

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Summary

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HUB) and Leibniz Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops (IGZ) invite young researchers to submit original research papers for presentation at an international workshop on "Emergency Agriculture and Food Security". Submitted papers should address empirical research questions at the interface of natural sciences, agricultural sciences, development economics and disaster research in these research domains:

1. Forms and representations of emergencies and fragile environments: Role of Conflict and Natural Disasters;
2. Drivers and consequences of food insecurity in emergencies and in fragile environments;
3. Agricultural practices in emergencies;
4. Consequences of food insecurity in emergencies and in fragile environments, especially at the individual level;
5. The role and impact of local and global policy actors for emergency agriculture and food security;
6. Crises, Fragility and Agriculture in Central Asia;
7. New and emerging data sources and indicators; and
8. Methods and techniques.

This call is aimed at doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers from Germany or abroad. Papers for submission should be written in English, be complete and submitted as a single pdf file with a maximum file size of 5MB. Please also attach a short CV in pdf format and send your whole submission by email to kosmos2016@igzev.de. The deadline for the submission of papers is 4 April 2016. Notifications about decisions taken will be circulated by mid-April. Limited travel funding is available.

Research Motivation and Interdisciplinarity

Despite the notable decline of food insecurity worldwide in the last decade, 795 million people remain undernourished, especially in emergency settings where the availability of and the access to nutritious food often continues to be a critical concern for victims of natural and human-made disasters.¹ The concept of food security is based on four intertwined dimensions: availability, access, use and quality. Addressing all four dimensions of food security for these victims remains a challenge for the international community and national governments in light of ineffective outcomes of food aid, particularly in protracted and complex humanitarian emergencies.² At the same time, displaced individuals resort to various survival and coping strategies such as cultivating vegetable gardens for self-sustenance.³ However, very little is known in either the natural or the behavioral sciences about the nature and the effectiveness of such basic agricultural survival strategies and their impact in reducing food insecurity, not just through provision of food but also through their nutritional and safe use.

Previous studies of food security at times disregarded the emergency characteristics of the agricultural system or failed to include a nuanced understanding of these (sometimes endogenous) processes in the analyses. Recent advances in conflict and disaster research have helped to understand how emergencies themselves are socio-economic systems which can be analyzed at both macro and micro levels.⁴ Hence rather than considering “emergency” to be a background of food insecurity, we are now better equipped to understand the detailed “emergency” system and its interactions with and relevance to both food security and the wider agricultural system working under emergency conditions.

There remain both system-wide knowledge gaps as well as research questions focusing on the role of individuals, groups and institutions in creating, shaping and overcoming food insecurity in emergencies. The reliance only on national measures of food availability during crises disregards crucial individual-level, socio-economic aspects relevant to understanding food security. These include but are not limited to: consumption, diet diversification, and measures of malnutrition. With the increasing availability of household and individual-level data sources in emergency settings, it is feasible to provide meaningful measures of food security, as well as to undertake rigorous interdisciplinary causal-effect approaches and analyses on food access, production, and intake.

¹FAO, IFAD and WFP. (2015). *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015*. Meeting the 2015 international hunger targets: taking stock of uneven progress. Rome, FAO.

²Alinovi, L., Hemrich, G., and Russo, L., (2008). *Beyond relief: food security in protracted crises*. Practical Action Publishing, 2008.

³ Pingali, P., Alinovi, L. and Sutton, J. (2005). *Food security in complex emergencies: enhancing food system resilience*. *Disasters*, 29(S1): 5–24.

⁴ Brück, T., Justino, P., Verwimp, P., Avdeenko A., and Tedesco, A., (2015). *Measuring Violent Conflict in Micro-Level Surveys: Current Practices and Methodological Challenges*. World Bank Research Observer, forthcoming. And: Justino, P., Brück, T., and Verwimp, P., eds. (2013). *A Micro-Level Perspective on the Dynamics of Conflict, Violence and Development*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.