

# Food Security Determinants at rural households in Bolivia. Four cases of study

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## **ABSTRACT**

According to FAO “Food Security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, economic and social access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (Cumbre Mundial de Alimentos, 1996; FAO, 2009). Regardless of the existence or lack of Food Security in a specific study unit (home, community, province) a multiple analysis of social, economic and (at least) political factors is required, in addition to agronomic factors, that are classically evaluated (Ingram, Ericksen, & Liverman, 2010)

Since FAO definition there are hundreds of indicators and methodologies that try to measure Food Security at different levels (from Global to individuals). Normally these indicators consider three or four dimension of Food Security, that are: availability, access, use and stability. However, this systems indicators are design from a quantitative approach, and most of times had a lack of feedback from the individuals/households that participated in these surveys. Moreover, what could be perceived as a problem for the researcher due to the quantitative results, for the community is not.

Food Security and Sovereignty are considered as complex problems, since in order to propose solutions there must be an understanding of the complex interactions that are carry on between multiple process inside of the Food Systems. Complex problems, like these should be analyzed from a transdisciplinary research approach, in which the researcher has the opportunity to co-construct the problematic and also the solutions with the communities involved.

This research starts with a literature review about food security indicators and methodologies. Then, select the indicators that adjust better considering the available data that were collected through 787 households surveys in 4 zones where IUC Interuniversity Cooperation Program VLIR-UOS/UCB has active actions. After that, calculate and compare the level of food insecurity for each community, and identify the main causes for this results through correlational analyses. Finally, the researchers triangulate this results with the households that participate from this study through a collaborative research approach.

**Key words:** *Food Security Indicators, indigenous communities, intercultural communities, San José de Chiquitos.*