

# Urban Food Security of the Colombo Metropolitan Region (CMR) in Covid times

## ▼ Outstation vegetables for CMR (Kotte) during COVID 19 Lockdown



Home Visits: Mobile Vegetable Vendors from Upcountry Nuwaraeliya

## ▼ Interviews with CRFS actors



Author Interview a wholesale trader in Dambulla Economic Centre



Co-Author interview commercial farmer in Welimada & explore the solutions for vegetable logistics in Bandarawela

Colombo Municipality Region (CMR) consists of a highly complex food system that relies on the supply from distant outstations which literally collapsed during the pandemic situation. A requirement exists for empirical research to derive guidelines and recommendations to increase the sustainability and security in the food supply in CMR during a disaster situation.

### Research Objectives

To investigate sources of urban food supply in CMR; identify the impacts for the City Region Food Supply System (CRFS) components during the COVID 19 & recommend guidelines & policies to address problems in the supply side of Urban Food System (UFS).

### Design/methodology/approach

Qualitative thematic data analysis with purposive sampling with 25 respondents and face-to-face interviews were performed at the domicile of the CRFS actors, with many case studies.

### Originality/Social Value

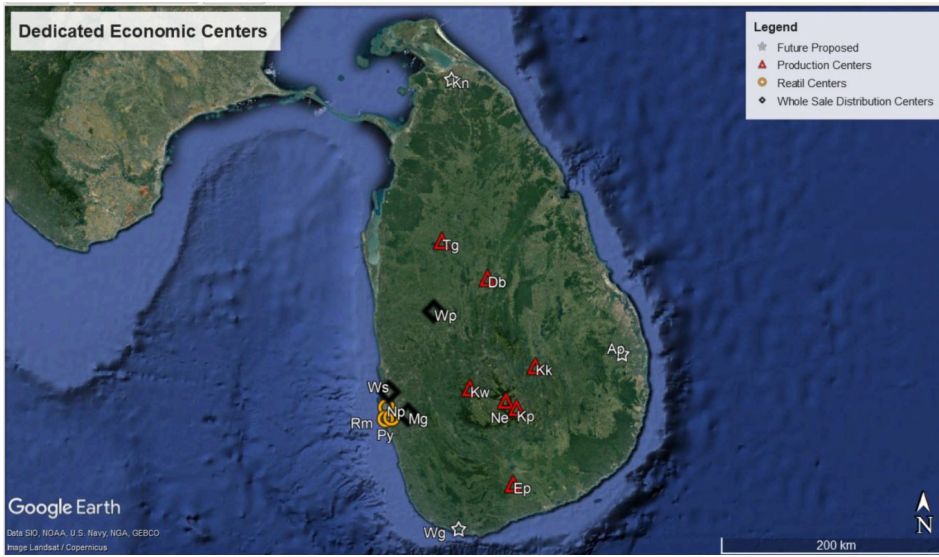
The first study is to use primary data to address the sustainability of UFS in CMR and helping farmers at origins and end urban consumers.

### Findings and Policy implications

#### Sustainability of the food security within CMR,

+ Need some form of central and regional intervention during a pandemic to maintain the supply chain.

+ Alternative sources of food supplies - Peri-urban agriculture, Home gardening, Community farming at Grama Sevaka levels.

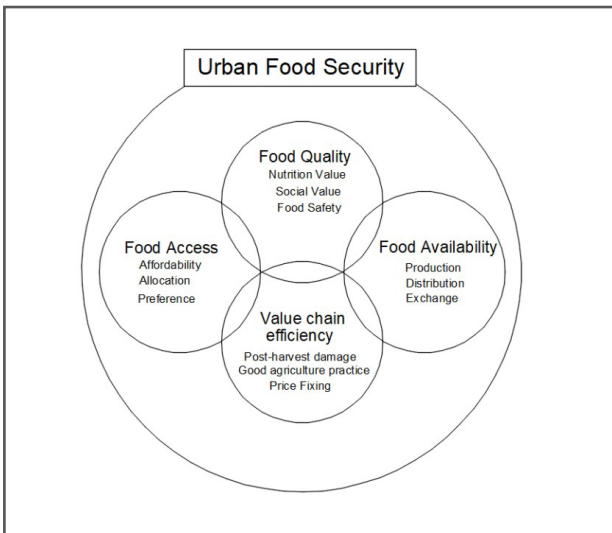


◀ Strategically located 'dedicated economic centres'

Dedicated economic centres in Sri Lanka

Exploiting the price slumps at outstations, converting retail to the wholesale business model during COVID 19 - Narahenpita Economic Center

▼ The study derived Urban Food Security Framework



Author defined UFS framework built upon (Ford,2008)



Retail business switching to wholesale model

▼ Bad transportation - one of the root causes of post-harvest damage



Dambulla Economic Center – wholesale vendor about to transport purchase to Colombo

▼ Key Player in UFS discussion – Price fixing by commission broker damage



Commission Broker (In the middle of the picture) at Keppetipola Economic Center

▼ Refurbish abandoned and unused/under-utilized railway for vegetable transport



Abandoned logistic hub in Bandarawela linking road & railway network

▼ Why the use of Wooden Crates rather than Plastic ones?



Cheaper, practical solution for safe storing & transport

Efficient and effective vegetable value chain,

- Increase connectivity within value chain partners.
- Increase information transparency of demand & supply.
- Encourage traditional 'attam kramaya' which has the character of EOS & resource sharing.

Information sharing platform

- SMS service to communicate with farmers.
- Web platform to communicate with consumers.

Post-harvest damage mitigation,

- Safe sorting & storing.
- Introduce railway for vegetable transport.
- Promote GAP to produce quality products, minimize chemical use, minimize hybrid seed use, create a niche market for organic vegetables.
- Reduce stress on outstation farmers, by urban agriculture.
- Promote Traditional knowledge – ex: maze farming in Guatemala
- PAW- state-of-the-art technology.

Eliminate price fluctuations in the value chain

- A data-driven approach for price-fixing.
- Need an independent authority to determine prices.
- Encourage more alternative trading platforms, ex: Embilipitiya – pola & EC.
- Sorting & grading of vegetables – sorted vegetables need price discrimination to encourage farmers.

Article by

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