



3 Urban Food Supply

Truck carrying tomato from Burkina Faso to Tamale, Ghana.

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The majority of the food consumed in developing regions comes from domestic sources, and only a small share from imports.^{3.1} Industrialized countries, on the other hand, rely more on globalized food chains.^{3.2} However, recently in developing countries, the situation has been changing as urban food systems are increasingly affected by growing urban demand for food, the globalization of food markets and changing diets toward more animal products and processed foods.^{3.1} In urban areas, most people do not grow their own food, and are therefore dependent on cash income to purchase food, which makes them highly vulnerable to price changes.^{3.3}

Short food supply chains, strong rural–urban linkages and local production have the potential to minimize food-related problems such as

inadequate nutrition, volatile food prices and food waste.

Given increasing urban populations and their strong reliance on marketed food, we wanted to investigate the ways food reaches urban markets in Tamale and Ouagadougou, the quantities entering the cities on a daily basis, and, in general, which geographical areas supply the cities. What is their reliance on

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imported food and how does this relate to the resilience of food systems?

In the following chapter, we will introduce a study examining flows of

unprocessed food in Tamale and Ouagadougou, including 1) the quantities entering the cities per season, 2) the food miles certain commodities travel to get to the urban consumer, 3) transport characteristics, 4) nutritional indicators and 5) supply challenges.



Truck entering the main market in Tamale (Ghana) directly from Burkina Faso. Produce coming from the rural and peri-urban areas is assembled at village markets, before going to the urban market of Tamale.



Tomato travelling to the urban market in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), directly from farm gates by public transport and via an assembly market in the nearby village.

