Global Agro-food Governance, Supermarket Chain Expansionism and Household Food Insecurity in Rural South Africa

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Abstract

Global governance of agricultural markets has enforced the collapse of conventional rural agricultural production systems and eroded tenuous guarantees of household food security. With the ascendency of global agro-food governance, transitory food insecurity increasingly evolved into moderate chronic vulnerability among rural households in most developing economies. The exposure of household and smallholder food self-provisioning systems to stressors attendant to global agro-food governance through, among other factors, commodity and food pricing, production, marketing, distribution and expansion of supermarket food chains, undermined rural household food security. As conventional mainstay for food security in rural South Africa, the collapse of household and smallholder food self-provisioning triggered disproportionate exposure to risks and increased vulnerability to both chronic and transitory food insecurity. This article concedes that global agro-food governance, through food agents and supermarket expansionism, have conditioned rural households into deficit producers and net consumers of purchased foods. It contends that the moderate chronic household food insecurity within rural South Africa, wherein the majority merely avoid hunger, is intricately connected to the liberalized and deregulated global agro-food governance. DOI: 10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n8p656

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For agriculture and food sectors, participation in agro-food value chains helps enhance overall sector growth – improving the returns to farmers and food makers along the value chain. In particular, making use of inputs from other countries to produce agro-food products, and having access to foreign consumers through these chains, has helped to grow agro-food sectors and increase the share of gains flowing to farmers and producers. OECD work is exploring the nature and shape of evolving global value chains in food and agriculture, and how countries can maximise their participation in, and benefits from, these GVCs. Food insecurity has emerged as a global crisis following the global economic meltdown.1 According to the 2004 report of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on the state of food insecurity in the world, more than 814 million people in developing countries are undernourished.2 Of these people, 204 million live in countries of sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa. The research question. National surveys that measured food security/insecurity in South Africa from 1999 to 2008. Breaking down of the question into “facets” or “terms”. Food insecurity clearly decreased in South Africa at both the household and the individual level from 1999 to 2008. The results of the 2005 FIVIMS study were similar to those observed in the NFCS:FB-I conducted the same year. Global agro-food governance, supermarket chain expansionism and household food insecurity in rural S May 2014 · Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. Johannes Tsheola. With the ascendency of global agro-food governance, transitory food insecurity increasingly evolved into moderate chronic vulnerability among rural households in most developing economies. The exposure of household and ... As conventional mainstay for food security in rural South Africa, the collapse of household and smallholder food self-provisioning triggered disproportionate exposure to risks and increased vulnerability to both chronic and transitory food insecurity.