Title: Food security as a key element for sustainable development in rural areas: the case of San Antonio De Coronados, Altiplano Potosino, Mexico

Mexico exhibits the paradox of having been one of the centers of origin, domestication and diversification of food-plant species, nevertheless 46.2% of the country’s population lived in a state of poverty in 2014 and 23.4% suffered from a lack of access to food. This paper analysis the livelihood strategies practiced by a Mexican peasant farming community and the objective is to demonstrate how these strategies focused on achieving food security contribute toward the attainment of sustainability in a rural system.

The research corresponds to a case study of the rural community of San Antonio de Coronados, located in the state of San Luis Potosí and the setting is an area characterized by the aridity of its landscape.

The methodology approach adopted the dimensions of food security provided by FAO-UN, considering their performance in a socio-environmental context at different scales. The fieldwork and the literature review were carried out through ethnographic techniques and participative community workshops.

Our study finds that the community has a diversified range of family strategies, which are focused mainly on agricultural and livestock activities. They have food availability and access, however high-income inequality, deficiency in local governance, lack of coherency of public policies with the principles of sustainability, vulnerability to introduced food and increasing abandonment of traditional food are placing at risk the continuity of the livelihood strategies of rural arid zones. In conclusion they are currently not sustainable.

This study contributes to reinforce that the current public measures to eradicate poverty and food insecurity in Mexican rural areas are obsolete. On the other hand, this research observed that self-reliance generates strength in the achievement of local sustainability, hence this paper presents a list of sustainable proposal guidelines.

Finally, the case study shows that the strengthen of the traditional way of life in a rural community, such as recognize and promote their capacities, knowledge and culture applied at the local agriculture and food systems will contribute to the global sustainability and to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.