

LOCAL MARKETS IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA

SUMMARY REPORT



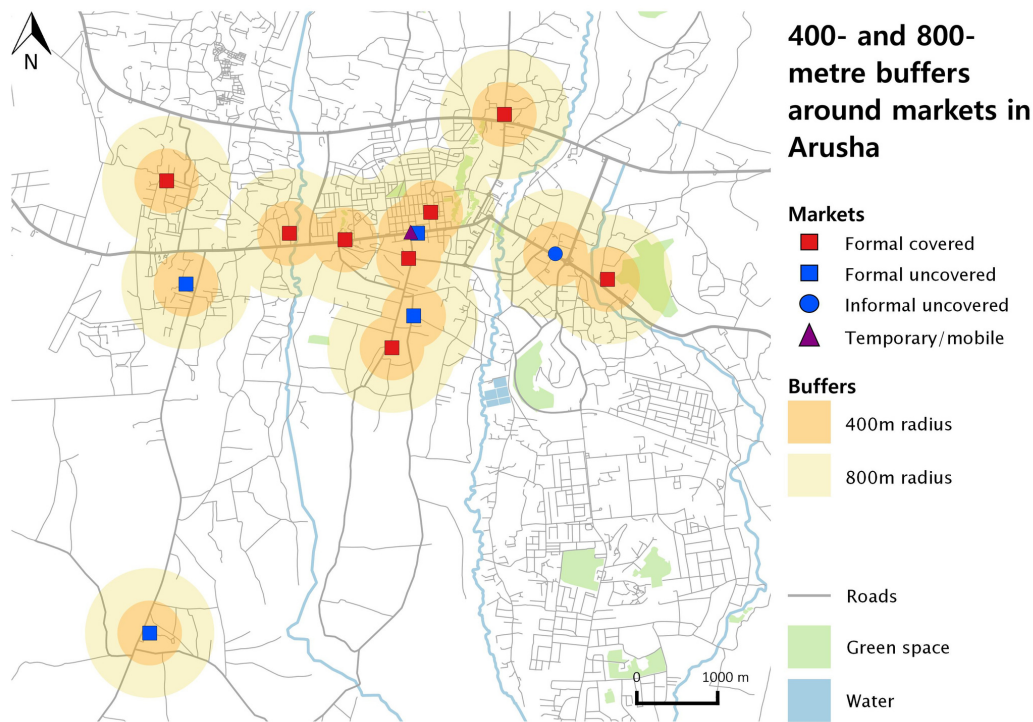
Local public markets, as with other public spaces, are a vital ingredient of successful cities and are the places in a city that provide access to food while also building a sense of community, culture, social capital, and community revitalisation. Local public markets provide many community benefits including health, livelihoods, affordability, food visibility and security, community cohesion, and urban/rural linkages.

Despite their benefits, and perhaps because they are so common, local public markets have been undervalued. They face challenges from other competing urban land uses and, in Tanzania, urban researchers have paid scant attention to studying the contribution they can make to local food security, and the well-being of residents.

We conducted a study of the local markets in Arusha in 2018 and 2019 in order to better understand the location and quality of the markets and the policies that protect (or destroy) the markets. The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods and included surveying a sample of six markets to better understand the quality of the markets themselves. We also conducted a policy review, vendor and market manager interviews.

Responsibility for local public markets rests almost entirely with the local government. While the national policies made general statements, the Public Health Act and the Local Government Act (urban authorities), in addition to the Arusha bylaws, make strong pronouncements with regards to everyday management of local public markets. These policies address the health and safety of market operations. However, these policies impact mainly formally established local public markets and hence isolate informal public markets. In addition, despite the presence of strong policy statements on local public markets, it appears the enforcement of those policies is weak and the government, thus far, is not considering markets as a wholistic system.

When we mapped the quantity of local public markets in the city of Arusha, it reveals that 15 of the 25 wards have neither formally nor informally established marketplaces. The mapping of local public markets reveals high spatial inequality as many neighbourhoods/ wards do not have access to local public markets.



These findings were confirmed when we interviewed the customers at the markets. The results show that 64% of residents spend between 20 minutes or more to reach the nearest market and this is despite the fact that 55 per cent of users visit the market closest to their house. This implies that the majority of Arusha market users travel much farther than the recommended 800 m walking radius to the nearest market.

Several challenges and opportunities surfaced as a result of our quality assessment. It is clear there is a need to improve the physical conditions of these markets, particularly those without built-up structures. Vendors and users expressed a desire for permanently built stalls and there is a clear need for cement floors and drainage/ditches. The sidewalks within the markets are insufficient for the amount of people walking in them to be comfortable and they are not friendly to those with disabilities. There are no facilities available in the markets for people with disabilities to freely and comfortably move when using mobility equipment such as wheelchairs. Therefore, the level of access for people with disabilities is mostly difficult and the condition is poor.

There were several issues related to transportation that the surveys identified. The vast majority of customers arrived either by local taxi (public transit: 46%), or by walking (42%). Despite this, the quality of the pedestrian environment surrounding the market is poor and the conditions of the bus stops are poor without appropriate facilities for people to wait. In addition, buses are not scheduled and they appear to arrive randomly. Although the survey revealed that only one per cent of customers accessed the markets using bicycles, this could be because there are no specific and paved cycle ways



exist in the entire area surrounding local public markets. Improving the bicycle, walking and public transit environment would also support vendors and delivery providers. For example, although there is a wide variety of ways that goods are delivered to the market, taxi (75%), walking (50%), tricycles and pushcarts (37.5%) and bicycles (12.5%) are important methods.

The level of garbage disposal can be described as insufficient at all the six markets surveyed as the designated garbage collection points were full of garbage surrounding the bins. Uncollected garbage, especially food waste, creates an important hygiene issue, especially during the rainy season and was a concern noted by market customers.

There were sufficient fire / emergency exits in all the surveyed market. However, there were insufficient or no fire extinguishers at all the surveyed markets. While a fire truck can gain easy access to the outside of the markets, it would take more than 30 minutes for the local fire response team to get to a specific market. Once at the market, a fire truck would have difficulties in moving easily inside the market area.

An interesting area that emerged was the quality of the fruit and vegetable sold. Of the fruits and vegetables sold in the markets, very few were of good quality and in peak condition. This could be explained by the fact that most of the fruit was transported from a distance outside the city, resulting in them losing acceptable quality. In addition, the interviews with the vendors revealed that 60 per cent purchase their stock from other markets, 16 per cent from a dealer, 12 per cent from local shops and two per cent from neighbouring villages. Others (10%) buy within the same markets or other towns or regions. These findings point to the need to better connect vendors with local farmers, thereby reducing the supply chain, which will also improve quality.

Lastly, because there are many women in the markets, there are also many pre-school aged children in the markets as well. Unfortunately, the market environment provides little, if anything, for these children to do.

As a result of the study, we recommend the following:

- **Address the spatial inequality** in locating local public markets, which would include developing a neighbourhood-based local market system so every ward has a market within 15-minute walking distance of residents.
- **Prepare city land use plans** that identify all the existing and future local public markets. This will allow the city to visualization the existing spatial inequality and provide the necessary information needed for future management plans.
- **Construct built-up structures** to improve the physical conditions of the local public markets. There is a need for cement floors and drainage/ditches to avoid an unpleasant and perhaps unsafe environments for both vendors and market customers during rainy seasons.
- **Widen and build concrete sidewalks** as they play a vital role in reaching and navigating within local markets. Many people walk to the markets, but many markets have no pedestrian paved sidewalks, which disadvantages everyone but especially people living with disabilities. The city council should plan to build concrete sidewalks and widening the narrow ones. These issues should be addressed both in land use/urban plans and in urban transportation plans.
- **Designate access for emergency exists** to protect vendors' livelihoods and assets and customers safety. There is a high need to improve the fire procedures within the market and designating emergency exists.
- **Establish a kitchen incubator** as it would reduce organic waste, it would benefit the vendor as they would still be able to sell their past prime produce, it would benefit local food businesses by creating opportunities, and it would benefit customers by widening the products supplied.
- **Better connect vendors with local farmers** as this would reduce the supply chain and improve the condition of the fruits and vegetables. If there are fewer people in between the customer and the farmer it may result in both improved prices for customers and improved income for vendors.
- **Improve markets as public spaces** by installing seating, which would encourage the market to act as a community and neighborhood gathering place. Also consider developing children's play spaces within the market to allow children to play while their parents are either buying or selling within the market.

Local markets serve the Arusha community in numerous ways, providing both an economic and social good. The trends that are showing a change in life styles and in people's diet in Arusha, as in other cities and towns in Tanzania, and the pressures from both urbanization and globalization. Based on the findings of this research, there is a great need to reinforce the implementation of national urban policies and emphasize on the importance of investing in, and strengthening already existing local public market infrastructures in order for them to continue to serve local urban residents.

For a copy of the full report visit the HealthBridge [website](https://www.healthbridge.ca).

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