

Culture and Food Habits in Tanzania and Democratic Republic of Congo

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ABSTRACT The paper is based on a study which used primary and secondary sources to examine the influence of culture on food habits in Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The study revealed that culture impacted on food habits, through food production, distribution, and consumption. The other factor considered was the HIV/AIDS. As community knowledge-holders die of AIDS, they take with them their local knowledge and experiences. In times of severe labour shortages owing to AIDS, people plant fewer crop varieties to save time and money. There should also be a realization that while some cultural practices have negative effects on nutrition, especially among women and children, many provide valuable opportunities for improving community-based food-security and nutrition. It is recommended that policymakers, researchers and other stakeholders should incorporate culture and food habits in community-based food security, nutrition and educational programmes.