



19 November 2018

New book looks at how the cities we live in shape what we eat

How do the cities we live in shape what we eat? This question is central to a new book, *Tomatoes & Taxi Ranks: Running our Cities to Fill the Food Gap* by Leonie Joubert with Jane Battersby and Vanessa Watson, published by the African Centre for Cities (ACC).

There is an ocean of invisible undercurrents that tugs us this way and that in today's urban food system forces and nudge us subtly as we decide what type of food we'll lift from the food seller's shelf or stall. Will we choose the tomato over the maize snack, and why do we make our decision? Will it satisfy our hunger, and will we be well nourished over time?

Tomatoes & Taxi Ranks specifically looks beyond the fresh produce that leaves farmers' gates and considers how that food gets from the farm onto our plates. It looks at the many forces and agents that shape how much that food eventually costs, and what form it takes when it reaches our dinner table. It explores whether this food ultimately satisfies our hunger and our nutritional needs.

The book is based on research conducted by the Consuming Urban Poverty team comprising urban geographers, sociologists, economists and planners from the ACC at the University of Cape Town, Copperbelt University in Zambia, the University of Zimbabwe, and the Kisumu Local Interaction Platform (KLIP), in Kisumu, Kenya.

Tomatoes & Taxi Ranks, illustrated with evocative photography by Samantha Reinders and Masixole Feni, distils the research into a digestible read and is published alongside the academic book *Urban Food Systems Governance and Poverty in African Cities* (Routledge, 2018), edited by Jane Battersby and Vanessa Watson.

"*Tomatoes & Taxi Ranks* takes research from a three-year project on urban food security in sub-Saharan Africa and makes it accessible to a wider readership of policymakers, practitioners and the general public interested in urban issues," says Watson. "The book is published in both hard and soft copies and is complemented by a dedicated website and animated videos to encourage its use in presentations and curricula."

The book debunks some of the stubborn misconceptions about how cities keep themselves well fed and well-nourished and considers how to create a more sustainable and equitable urban food system, particularly for those trying to survive close to the

breadline. It is written for anyone interested in creating sustainable, fair cities on the African continent.

Both *Tomatoes and Taxi Ranks* as well as *Urban Food Systems Governance and Poverty in African Cities* are available as Open Access downloads from www.tomatoesandtaxiranks.org.za

Hard copies of *Tomatoes and Taxi Ranks* are available from The Book Lounge. All proceeds of the book will be donated to The Book Lounge School Library project.

LAUNCH DATE

- 21 November, 17:30 for 18:00, The Book Lounge, Roeland Street, Cape Town



INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

Leonie Joubert and Prof Vanessa Watson are available for interviews. Please schedule with Alma Viviers, Communications Officer, African Centre for Cities, alma.viviers@uct.ac.za or 082 444 1729

ENDS

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