

**Youth Voices in Development**  
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**Perspectives of the SDG's from Tanzania**  
**Topic Four Goal 12**

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1. Choose one of the targets of goal 12. Based on your observations, discuss ways in which your host country could work to meet this target from where they are now.

According to the UN, roughly one third of all food produced in a year ends up rotting in the bins of consumers and retailers, or spoiling due to poor transportation and harvesting practices. As a result, SDG 12.3 aims to cut per capita global food waste in half by 2030.

Having lived in Dar es Salaam, and walked the streets of Kariakoo Market at least twice a day for the last six months to get to work, I have some situated knowledge about this particularly devastating statistic in my host country. Explicitly, my daily ritual of walking through Kariakoo Market; one of the largest markets in East Africa, has allowed me to witness the countless venders lined in a row with large sacks of the exact same food products, particularly carrots, onions and tomatoes. As I walk home from work, I observe the venders sacks to estimate how much food they have sold so far, and nearly every day the sacks have hardly been depleted. I curiously wonder just how much food ends up going bad before these market sellers are able to sell it and how much this disadvantages the market seller's economic profit. Surely, I think to myself as I walk by them, there must be considerable amounts of food that rot due to the unequal distribution of supply and demand.

While I am quite possibly the farthest thing from an economist, it is quite obvious that the supply of fresh produce, particularly carrots, onions and tomatoes, are considerably high in Kariakoo market, and other markets I have been to in Tanzania. In comparison, the demand for these vegetables, in the concentrated areas where they are being sold, is much lower. To put this into perspective, let's say that there are roughly 15 market sellers within two streets, each with 1 large sack of carrots (lets say there is 900 carrots in each bag) [ though, it should be noted that I was never good at those "guess how many jelly beans are in the jar" game as a child so my estimate should be taken with a grain of salt], and there are 35 people seeking to buy a stack of 5 carrots, 65 people looking to buy three stacks of 5 carrots, and 55 people looking to buy  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a sack for their own stands in different markets. The supply (13,500 Carrots) is much higher than the demand (9,290 Carrots). While my estimates could very well be considerably off, there is no denying that the supply of produce in Kariakoo and other markets whereby several venders are selling the same produce is higher than the amount of people seeking to purchase and consume those products (again, in that area). As a result of this inadequacy there is a lot of food rotting away in Tanzania.

As there is considerable poverty in Tanzania and food insecurity, it isn't that there is an overall lack of demand across the country. Rather, it is that produce is highly concentrated in a few streets in markets across the country.

Therefore, a way in which Tanzania can work to meet this target is by fostering entrepreneurial innovation and by supporting organizations like EfG in order to train market sellers across the country. By fostering entrepreneurial innovation, vendors would be educated about different produce and products they could sell, rather than all selling the same thing. This would decrease the supply of food and thus would aid in reducing the amount of food going to waste in markets where many market vendors are selling the same produce. Similarly, supporting organizations like EfG to train women to run successful market businesses across the country would help increase the supply to places where currently less produce is being sold. This would aid at alleviating the SDG 2 by increasing food markets across the country.

2. Compare this to how you think this target would need to be tackled in Canada: do your host country and Canada face the same challenges in addressing this target?

In terms of what I spoke about above, I wouldn't say that Canada faces the same challenges as local and sustainably produced vegetables and fruit are not as accessible as they are in Tanzania. While produce is available in Canada it is quite expensive, particularly compared to Tanzania. However, food rotting is still a massive issue in Canada as over consumption in any arena continues to occur in the country. Whether it be at the consumer level, where people buy groceries that go bad before they finish or the retail level where there are many more vegetables and fruits than people will buy, especially taking into account stores like Costco whereby the customer is forced to buy 5 cucumbers instead of the 2 that they need, waste is common in Canada.

I think educating people about the effects of over consumption and the effects of food waste would be a good way of approaching this SDG. This would also enable grocery stores to improve their Corporate Social Responsibility strategies by reducing the amount of food they sell, or even better, providing discounts for food that will be going bad in the next few days. At home, the grocery stores in my community would only provide discounts on food that were already badly bruised or slightly rotten.

However, one local health store would sell food quite a few days before it was going bad on sale, which enabled me to buy healthy, mostly locally grown food for considerably cheaper while also ensuring the food was consumed rather than going to waste.