**Which Kind of relationships among nested market e small farms:**

**Reflections from a Sub-Saharan Africa Experience**

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This paper tries to apply the frameworks of nested markets and alternative food networks to an empirical case in Tanzania, in the city of Arusha. In particular, it aims to analyse the main dynamics of these markets in order to demonstrate which are the main characteristics, especially with regard to the role of smallholders farming systems in Sub-Saharan Africa (henceforth SSA) and to their contributions to rural development practices, policies, and processes.

The paper focuses on the study of MESULA Project in Tanzania and the Mesula Farmers’ Market, in the city of Arusha. This project represents an alternative process of rural development that relies on traditional cultures and traditional farming techniques. It promotes an agro-ecological transition of local farming systems, associating it with the development of a reference (and nested) market. It also shows that the small farm systems can play a pivotal role in stimulating place-based rural development practices, and thereby representing a viable alternative for a post-carbon and post-neoliberal future. Smallholders systems are mostly based on short and decentralized circuits of production and consumption. Albeit chiefly geared toward self-consumption, smallholder farmers remain the principal supplier of local and regional food market in SSA, playing a pivotal role for local and national food security. This is attributable to the fact that smallholders farms are primarily food oriented and they privilege regional and the local markets to sell their surplus.

In this sense, despite being subject to criticism and showing limitations, nested markets con be a relevant strategies for rural development practices, processes, and policies, being able to create opportunities for small farms. In the same time smallholders could be the main actors of nested market in particular in fragile context like rural area in SSA.