



THE EDIBLE CITIES

Enhancing Resilience in Urban
Food Security and Livelihoods through
Urban Agriculture in Uganda”

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BACKGROUND

Globally, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN estimates that urban agriculture is practiced by 800 million people.¹ In terms of livelihood, urban agriculture is an indispensable component in the lives of both urban rich, the poor and large rural population. However, rapid urbanization, particularly in developing countries is reshaping food security and nutrition in both rural and urban areas. In 2012, FAO further reported that between 1960 and 2010, Africa’s urban population grew from 53 million to 400 million.² It is also

estimated that by 2030, the number of Africans living in towns and cities will increase by a further 345 million and In Sub-Saharan Africa, where Uganda lies, urban population is projected to reach to almost 600 million.³

It is vital to acknowledge that, as the world becomes more urbanized and connected, food production patterns in the countryside, food chains, and markets are changing and so are patterns of consumption. Consequently, as the urban population expands, poverty, food insecurity, and malnutrition have become increasingly urban problems.⁴

¹FAO: Urban Farming: <http://www.fao.org/urban-agriculture/en/>

²FAO. 2012. Growing greener cities in Africa. First status report on urban and peri-urban horticulture in Africa Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

³FAO. 2012. Ibid

⁴Marie Ruel, James Garrett, and Sivan Yosef (2017): Food Security And Nutrition: Growing Cities, New Challenges.

Specifically, it is estimated that by 2012, forty (40%) of urban inhabitants were living on less than US\$1 a day, while simultaneously 70% are living on US\$2 a day (FAO, 2012). Similarly, impoverished urban households are estimated to spend 60–80 percent of incomes on food, making them more vulnerable to food price volatility.

Over the years, the effects of high urbanization have been numerous;

- First the declining farmland, expansion in squatter settlements, youth unemployment and raising costs of living which in turn have devastating effects on women;

- Second, mounting pressure on the global food system as agricultural production comes under stress from environmental degradation, climate change, and extreme weather conditions (unpredictable weather changes); Indeed climate change and weather vagaries, present and forecasts, are generally compounding food insecurity and drastically changing farming activities, as diagnosed by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in June 2011.⁶

- Puts, direct pressure on food sources agricultural production and

conservation or exploitation of urban ecological resources; thus, there exists a serious challenge in supplying enough nutritious and safe food to meet the demands of such rapid urbanization.⁷

- This rapid shift is changing diets and reshaping food chains from small farms to modern supermarkets. Among adults, the global rise in overweight and obesity had been concentrated in urban areas indeed poor urban residents, especially slum dwellers, face unique food security and nutritional challenges related to accessing nutritious food leading to two extreme cases of malnutrition, under nutrition and obesity.⁸

- The soaring food prices and food riots are among the many symptoms of the prevailing food crisis and insecurity. In 2015, the world adopted sustainable development goals there by re-energizing the global policy agenda for development. Furthermore in 2016, the UN Habitat III set the urban agenda in which the concept of resilient cities is emphasized. The agenda sets a standard for sustainable urban development, including the provision of basic services for all, strengthened resilience in cities, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and promotion of greener

⁵[Taylor & Francis Online], 23 Baiphethi, M and Jacobs, P 2009. Increases than their rural counterparts.⁸¹ Cohen, M and ⁶Sasson, Albert. "Agriculture & Food Security." Food Security for Africa: An Urgent Global Challenge. N.p., 19 Apr. 2012. Web. 18 Apr. 2016.

⁷Ulf Magnusson¹, Kristin Follis Bergman¹, Eli Katunguka-Rwakishaya² SLU-Global Report 2014: Introduction to urban and peri-urban agriculture for food security

⁸Popkin B. M. and P. Gordon-Larsen, "The Nutrition Transition: Worldwide Obesity Dynamics and Their Determinants," International Journal of Obesity Related Metabolic Disorders 28, suppl. 3 (2004): S2–S9.

cities. However, despite the enormous potential of urban agriculture, food production is compromised by declining size of the available land for cultivation, lack or limited access to critical information, inadequate capacities, destruction of ecological and other vital resources. It is observed that lack of shared governance of natural resources tends to weaken links between rural and urban areas. Among other factors it was established in the IFPRI Global Food Policy Report, 2017, that 73% of respondents think the expansion of cities and urban populations will make it harder to ensure that everyone gets enough nutritious food to eat.⁹

important part of enabling citizen well-being and the cities. Despite this, food concerns do not generally occupy a spot on the agendas of urban planners or municipal officials in developing countries and policy debates.

Uganda, exhibits one for the fastest urban growth rate in the world of 5.2% per year. Although the Physical Planning Act 2010 declares the whole country a planning zone, the country is in the process of developing a physical planning policy, an anomaly in the policy and legal development chronological flow. The initial discussions and drafts reviewed reflect a more emphasis on urban infrastructural development and limited attention to urban agriculture and food self-sufficiency.

However, by 2040, the Government of Uganda commits to pursue a planned urbanization policy that will bring about better urban systems that enhance productivity, livability and sustainability while releasing land for commercializing agriculture.¹⁰In the National Development Plan II (2016-2021), the agricultural sector is to contribute to wealth creation and employment along the agriculture development value chain which call for more effort to address the issues of inefficient extension service, inadequate physical and marketing infrastructure and limited availability of key agricultural inputs.¹¹ The plan further roots for government efforts in the development regulated urban agriculture.

Whereas there are re-energized efforts by Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to improve the legal and policy environment, urban farming continues to suffer from traditional stereotypes as being less lucrative and less rewarding and therefore an activity for the rural areas.

Therefore, the 1st Edible Cities Conference held in Kampala sought to enhance resilience in urban food security and livelihoods at the centre stage in an effort to shape a new policy regime defining the relationship between urban agriculture, food security and urban sustainable livelihoods in Uganda. The Conference went a long

⁹Shenggen Fan (2017): Food Security and Nutrition in an Urbanizing World. Global Food Policy In 2016–2017

¹⁰Government of Uganda: Vision 2040 (2015) XV

¹¹Second National Development plan (NDPII) 2015/16-2019/20 April 2015 in reference to Chapter 6 and 12

way in amplifying the profile of urban agriculture in social economic and demographic transformation. Numerous issues emerged that were consolidated in recommendations. They include;
Recommendations

- Integrating urban agriculture into urban physical plans: While urban authorities are keen on particular structural spaces in developing and approving physical planning structures such as parking lots, minimum spaces for agriculture and food vending in terms of public spaces should as well be mandatory.

- Institutional and structural capacity be developed in urban authorities to support urban agriculture: The government financial budget for the Ministry of Agriculture in Uganda set aside an explicit budget for KCCA. Whereas this is a welcome step towards the right direction, budget votes for agriculture should be reflected in all Municipality plans and budgets in principle. In addition, Municipal authorities should designate a structure with competent staff to oversee the activities of agriculture.



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