Increasing Recognition of Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture: Emerging Declarations for its Support and Policy Review

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ABSTRACT

The practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) is receiving more recognition internationally, regionally and locally than it did three decades ago. This paper, drawing largely from existing literature, highlights the significance and roots of this development. There is greater awareness and understanding today that urban and peri-urban agriculture is contributing substantially to the challenges of feeding the poor urban masses especially in the developing countries, alleviating poverty, addressing hunger and food security and sustainable urban and environmental management. Through the great efforts of the Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA), The Urban Agriculture Network (TUAN), International Development Research Centre (IDRC), International Network of Resources Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security, Netherlands (RUAF), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) and other international agencies and donors, regional networks on urban and peri-urban agriculture, several regional consultative seminars and workshops on urban and peri-urban agriculture were systematically organized. The municipal declarations in support of UPA are the outcomes. This is a great tribute to the increasing recognition of the practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture. We are all anxious to witness the impact of these declarations on policy reviews since UPA contributes to peoples’ livelihoods. This paper highlights on the significance and roots of this development.

Keywords: Urban, peri-urban, agriculture, policy review

INTRODUCTION

It is a recognized fact that today, the practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) is receiving much recognition internationally, regionally and locally. This reality has been building up in the last three decades (Mougeot, 2006; Veenhuizen, 2006). Before going further, it is important to give a resume of urban and peri-urban agriculture as practiced in developed and developing countries.

A Resume of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture (UPA)

Urban agriculture may be described as “the growing, processing, and distribution of food and non-food plant and tree crops and the raising of livestock, directly for the urban market, both within and on the fringe of an urban area (peri-urban). This takes place through tapping on resources (unused or under-used space, organic waste), services (technical extension, financing, transportation) and products (agrochemicals, tools, vehicles) found in the urban area and, in turn, generate resources (green areas, microclimates, compost), other services (catering, recreation, therapy), and products (flowers, poultry, dairy) largely for the urban area” (UNDP, 1996; Mougeot, 2006). Urban and peri-urban agriculture is complex. It encompasses several multifunctional and multisectoral stakeholder aspects (Table 1), within the urban ecosystem and although its practice is distinct, it is complementary to rural agriculture (Mougeot, 2006). Practitioners of urban and peri-urban agriculture in some of the major cities of the world have combined all kinds of knowledge, creativity, technologies and they engage in urban and peri-urban agriculture even when municipal authorities prohibit them. They do this in order to survive, earn a living and clearly, they are refusing to succumb to poverty.

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Table 1: Farming Systems Common in UPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farming System</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Location and or Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aquaculture</td>
<td>Fish and seafood, water vegetables, seaweeds, duckweed, water hyacinth,</td>
<td>Ponds, man made tanks, lakes, rivers, streams, estuaries, sewage (wastewater) lagoons,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>water spinach.</td>
<td>wetlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td>Vegetables, Fruits, Compost.</td>
<td>Homesites (Home gardening) on front and backyards, rights-of-way, rooftops, containers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hydroponics, wetlands, greenhouses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Raising (dairy cows, pigs</td>
<td>Meat and Dairy (milk), eggs, manure, hides and skin, fur.</td>
<td>Zero-grazing, rights-of-way, (free-range grazing in peri-urban areas), open spaces,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chickens, goats, guinea pigs,</td>
<td></td>
<td>backyard areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rabbits, ducks, geese, pigeons,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agroforestry (Urban Forestry)</td>
<td>Fuel, fruit and nuts, building materials, compost, fodder, recreation,</td>
<td>Street trees, home sites, steep slopes, vineyards, greenbelts, wetlands, orchards,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aesthetics, climate modification, shade for coffee etc.</td>
<td>forest parks, hedgerows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Farming Systems:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Apiculture (Beekeeping)</td>
<td>- Honey, wax</td>
<td>- Apiculture is labour intensive in peri-urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Vermiculture (Raising worms)</td>
<td>- Silk</td>
<td>- Boxes on verandas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Beverage crop raising</td>
<td>- Tea, grapes, hibiscus, palm, sugar cane</td>
<td>- Grown mostly in peri-urban area but also in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Raising medicinal crops</td>
<td>- Medicinal herbs</td>
<td>- Open spaces roadsides, peri-urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ornamental horticulture</td>
<td>- Flowers</td>
<td>- road reserves, peri-urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mycoculture</td>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>- urban and peri-urban areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Urban and peri-urban agriculture is a global phenomenon, practiced in cities of developed industrialized countries and in all cities of developing countries. Depending on the motives of practicing UPA, location, scale, resource availability, processes, policy and technology employed, several farming systems have been identified (Table 1).

The information in Table 1, suffices to show the spectrum of what urban and peri-urban agriculture is all about. There is much more that could be mentioned. Just to emphasize the importance of UPA, it has been noted that, urban and peri-urban agriculture links well with the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations in 2000. The first goal is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Urban and peri-urban agriculture contribute directly to this goal. The two major forces driving the poorest city dwellers to become urban farmers are (a) the critical need for a reliable source of fresh food, and (b) the hope of improving their precarious financial circumstances (Mougeot, 2005). It can also be argued that “urban and peri-

urban agriculture contribute –directly or indirectly- to three other Millenium Development Goals: to reduce child mortality, to improve maternal health, and to ensure environmental sustainability” (Mougeot, 2006:). That is why there is increased recognition of this industry by municipal authorities and their associations in different regions of the world and hence the emergence of declarations for its support.

It is important also to understand that research has it that urban and peri-urban agriculture may not be easily eliminated. Of the nearly 800 million people that have been proven to be involved in UPA worldwide, it is estimated that about 200 million produce for the urban market. About 150 million are full-time employees. It has also been documented that between 1993 and 2005, urban and peri-urban agriculture could raise its share of world food from 15% to 33%, and its share of vegetables, meat, eggs, fish and dairy products consumed in cities from 33% to 50%. The number of urban and peri-urban farmers producing for the market could increase from 200 million to 400 million (UNDP, 1996; Mougeot, 1998). These
statistics add to the importance of urban and peri-urban agriculture, and invites practitioners, policy makers and researchers to take interest in the increase of recognition for the UPA industry.

Urbanization, Environment, Poverty and Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture

There is concern that as the world becomes more urbanized, so do more urban dwellers become poorer (UNFPA, 2007). The challenges of feeding the majority of the urban poor especially in the developing countries is daunting. Eradicating extreme poverty and halving hunger by 2015 (MDG Goal 1) for instance, is quite challenging. Creating healthy, livable, safe and environmentally sustainable urban ecosystems could be highly frustrating to municipal authorities. Urban and peri-urban agriculture in its multifunctional and multi-sectoral environmental practices in developed and developing countries according to numerous researches and efforts to disseminate the resultant findings show that urban and peri-urban agriculture is contributing significantly towards addressing the above mentioned problems and many others. For this reason, experts on the field of urban and peri-urban agriculture emphasize:

“In urban and peri-urban agriculture is increasingly on the international agenda, recognized as a key part of a comprehensive solution to the problems of the runaway growth of cities in the developing countries. International donor agencies are now more willing to fund research to better understand the phenomenon and find ways to make UPA more responsive to the needs of the urban population. But it has been noted that even where the political environment is open to UPA, frequently the policy structure is not. Thus there is a pressing need to develop methodology for relating research and policy to fully exploit the comparative advantages of both rural and urban areas” (Mougeot, 2006).

In that context, this paper attempts to bring attention of this growing recognition of urban and peri-urban agriculture to practitioners in land-use planning, urban planning, urban resources management, financing planning and management, settlements development and service provision, and local authorities’ capacity building. Some practitioners still maintain staunchly that agriculture has to be carried only in rural areas. As a matter of fact, peri-urban agriculture may be somehow tolerated. Urban agriculture (carried out in built-up areas), has always met much resistance by urban authorities and planners (Takawira and Shingirayi, 2006). Most of these resistances by urban authorities and planners, are due to some ‘urban-elite bias’ or rigidity in following received colonial planning models. Some urban authorities have always viewed and still continue to view urban and peri-urban agriculture as a relic of rural activities. As such they are temporary and transient because they will wither away as the city grows. In addition to that, many urban planners and local authorities consider urban agriculture to be a nuisance and a health hazard. Therefore, it does not qualify to be included in urban land use plans and policies. This stance is now changing as the recently made declarations show.

Potentials, Benefits and Risks of UPA

Urban planners and authorities who resist and attempt to prohibit the practice of UPA belittle its value and significance. Urban and peri-urban agriculture is not even mentioned in official documents of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security or in national statistics. However, research on this area is increasing steadily worldwide. The contentions for omitting UPA information in certain statistics are that this industry cannot contribute substantially to the GNP or GDP.
However, research findings from numerous studies worldwide, and realities on the ground in many cities and towns in the world attest to the potentials and benefits of urban and peri-urban agriculture as described above (Box 1).

The potentials and benefits of UPA notwithstanding, if UPA activities are carried out haphazardly, several risks are bound to occur. Some of the known risks of poor practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture are listed in (BOX 2).

**BOX 1: Urban and peri-urban agriculture potential and benefits lie in:**

- Improving the livelihoods of the majority of the urban poor.
- Serving as a tool for poverty alleviation, hunger reduction and food security enhancement.
- Generating extra income to poor households.
- Generating jobs especially for youths and the elderly.
- Contributing to organic urban wastes recycling, and so helping to close the nutrient loop as the wastes are turned into soil, compost and mulch.
- Creating new green spaces and maintaining existing green spaces in urban and peri-urban areas.
- Adding value to urban land.
- Bringing unused or idle land into production.
- Enabling HIV/AIDS patients to get fruits, vegetables, medicinal herbs and other nutritional foods close to their dwellings.
- Easing urban and peri-urban ecological problems.
- Capturing rainfall runoff in dry areas and channeling it to vegetable gardens and orchards.
- Enabling richer urban people invest in large-scale agro-enterprises, hiring managers and establishing large-scale production of poultry and pig farms, and taking advantage of nearby market.
- Contributing to sustainable urban development.

**BOX 2: Known Risks of Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture include:**

- Land and ground water pollution due to excessive application of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- Land degradation resulting from inappropriate agricultural practices.
- Health risks caused by eating contaminated urban agriculture products, for example vegetables and fruits watered by untreated waste water, or crops grown in areas with heavy metals and other effluents.
- Zoonotic diseases from urban and peri-urban livestock keeping with poor practices, such as poor animal barns, failure to remove dung and waste water and other refuse.
- Soil erosion, resulting from cultivating steep slopes.
- Environmental destruction and other problems due to lack of guidelines, adequate information, regulations, policies and municipal support.
- The risk of accessing and recycling accumulated urban nutrients.
Such risks of urban and peri-urban agriculture (Box 2) must be dealt with to ensure food safety, and protection of the health of the urban dwellers, urban farmers themselves as well as the environment. Rather than outlawing or restricting the practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture outright because of those known risks, it is advocated that it is better to work with practitioners, partners and stakeholders, donors and international organizations, NGOs, CBOs and local governments, in various capacities and settings, to generate knowledge and technologies to mitigate the risks (Mougeot, 2006). The challenges of the 21st century urbanization, especially in the developing and countries in transition makes such declarations timely and cogent.

Why make declarations in Support of UPA: The Driving Forces

As noted already, the resume on urban and peri-urban agriculture suffices to provide an idea of what UPA is all about. The purpose of the ensuing sections is to highlight on the emergence of increased recognition of UPA and to describe the emerging municipal declarations in support of urban and peri-urban agriculture. Five declarations are presented.

The declarations reviewed here reflect a number of driving forces (BOX 3).

BOX 3. Some Driving Forces Underlying the Municipal Declarations in Support of UPA:

- Increased knowledge world wide through research on the potentials, benefits of UPA for food security, poverty reduction, income and employment generation.

- Growing interest in the practice of UPA by international organizations such as: Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA), The Urban Agriculture Network (TUAN) International Development Research Centre (IDRC), FAO, UNDP, Major Research Institutions, e.g. International Network of Research Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security, Netherlands (RUAF), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI, Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research CGIAR) etc.

- Increased interest urban authorities, stakeholders in the private sector in sharing experiences on the UPA industry.

- Increasing commitment among planners, municipal and local authorities in improving urban and environmental management.

- Deliberate promotion of Seminars, Workshops and Regional Consultations and Ministerial Conferences to share knowledge and to sensitize Municipal Authorities and associates and many other stakeholders, planners and urban managers on the significance of UPA, its benefits and risks.

- A collective effort to put in place policies, regulations and guidelines that help to integrate UPA in sustainable urban planning and management, and to highlighting the strategies to use to remove or reduce UPA risks and enhance human health and the urban environment.

- Donors’ willingness to fund research on UPA.

The background to each municipal declaration in support of UPA is provided where possible. A full text of a declaration is presented or summary of it. These declarations are opening up new opportunities for the development of UPA. The declarations also focus on the need for urban planners, municipal authorities and other decision-makers to be realistic with regard to UPA by acknowledging its value and the people who need it most in our urban areas, the urban poor. Five Municipal Declarations in support of UPA are described in the following sections.
Nyanga Declaration on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture in Zimbabwe

The background to this declaration is that the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe have Annual Conferences comprising of the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing and his Deputy, the Minister of State for Informal Sector, Executive Mayors and Chairpersons, Town Clerks, Chairpersons of Council Committees, Councilors, Heads of Departments, representatives from the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, International, Regional and Local Non-Governmental Organisations. It deliberates on matters of national, regional, economic and urban development. In its meeting on urban and peri-urban agriculture at Montchair Hotel, Nyanga, from 4-7 June 2002, urban and peri-urban agriculture, The Nyanga Declaration was the result which:

Acknowledged that Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture contribute to urban food security, poverty reduction, local economic development and sustainable urban development. The Declaration:

Urged:
- Local authorities to: promote urban and peri-urban agriculture in their cities, develop appropriate incentives and policies necessary for its growth, mainstream urban food security within their operations and promote the collection and dissemination of information on urban and peri-urban agriculture activities in their territorial planning areas.
- The Government to include Urban Agriculture in its programmes to alleviate poverty and economic empowerment, food security, promotion of local economic development and environmental and health improvement.
- Non-Governmental Organizations and Donors to support financially and materially urban and peri-urban agriculture projects for the benefit of the urban poor.
- The private sector to invest in high value intensive urban and peri-urban agro-industries in order to create employment opportunities and promote local economic development. The declaration:

Encouraged:
- Urban local authorities to recognize the significance of the contribution of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture to social development approaches, generation of jobs and income, self-esteem, environmental improvement and urban food security and to add them to their key development goals. The declaration:

Reaffirmed:
- Its commitment to improve urban management through the promotion of urban and peri-urban agriculture in cities to enhance urban food security, address urban poverty, improve urban environmental and health management as well as to protect the urban and peri-urban bio-diversity”


The Hyderabad Declaration on Wastewater Use in Agriculture

The background to the declaration is based on the realization by researchers on Water, Health, Environment, Agriculture and Aquaculture of the increasing use of urban wastewater in agriculture due to escalating scarcity of fresh water resources in many arid and semi-arid regions. Driven by rapid urbanization and growing wastewater volumes, wastewater is widely used as a low-cost alternative to conventional irrigation water; supporting livelihoods and generating considerable value in urban and peri-urban agriculture, associated health and environmental risks notwithstanding.

The Hyderabad Declaration on Wastewater use in Agriculture is a result of a Workshop entitled: Wastewater Use in Irrigated Agriculture: Confronting the Livelihood and Environmental Realities, held from 11 - 14 November 2002 in Hyderabad India. It was sponsored by International Water Management Institute (IWMI- Colombo Sri Lanka) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ottawa, Canada). Ending the Plenary session, the Declaration was adopted by the researchers, practitioners international and national institutions with experiences of wastewater management from 18 countries:

Recognized that:
- Wastewater raw, diluted or treated is a resource of increasing global importance, particularly in urban and peri-urban agriculture.
With proper management, wastewater use contributes significantly to sustaining livelihoods, food security and the quality of the environment.

Without proper management, wastewater use poses serious risks to human health and the environment.

Declare that:

- In order to enhance the positive outcomes while minimizing the risks of wastewater use, there exist feasible and sound measures that need to be applied. These measures include:
  - Cost-effective and appropriate treatment suited to the end use of wastewater, supplemented by guidelines and their application.
  - Where wastewater is insufficiently treated, until treatment becomes feasible:
    - Development and application of guidelines for untreated wastewater use that safeguard livelihoods, public health and the environment.
    - Application of appropriate irrigation, agriculture, post-harvest and public health practices that limit risks to farming.
    - Education and awareness programs for all stakeholders, including the public at large, to disseminate these measures.
    - Health, agriculture and environmental quality guidelines that are linked and implemented in a step-wise approach.
    - Reduction of toxic contaminants in wastewater at source and by improved management.

Also declare that:

- Knowledge needs should be addressed through research to support the measures outlined above.
- Institutional coordination and integration together with increased financial allocations are required.

We strongly urge:

- Policy-makers and authorities in the field of water, agriculture, aquaculture, health, environment and urban planning, as well as donors and the private sector to:
  - Safeguard and strengthen livelihoods and food security, mitigate health and environmental risks and conserve water resources by confronting the realities of wastewater use in agriculture through the adoption of appropriate policies and the commitment of financial resources for policy implementation.


Quito Declaration: Municipal Support to Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture

The background to Quito declaration is based on the work of IDRC’s Cities Feeding People (CFP) Programme and UN-Habitat’s Urban Management Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean (UMP-LAC). These two programmes created a strong regional network of cities aiming at promoting the sustainable development of urban and peri-urban agriculture. From 1997 to 2001 the UMP-LAC conducted several city consultations involving municipal authorities and community organizations in the region. These consultations and seminars resulted in the signing of the Quito Declaration. Ninety participants attended an international seminar “Urban Agriculture in Cities of the 21st Century” held in Quito, Ecuador, April, 2000.

During the seminar, mayors, and professionals from Latin American and Caribbean cities, debated and analyzed city experiences, baseline studies and lessons learned for policy formulation, creation of structures, mechanisms, and technical options for sustainable urban and peri-urban agriculture development. The resultant Quito Declaration is summarized below.

“URBAN AGRICULTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY”“DECLARATION OF QUITO”

We thirty three Latin American and Caribbean cities and local governments, reaffirm our commitment in:

- Improving urban management through the promotion of Urban Agriculture experiences in our cities.
- Replicating and improving Urban Agriculture municipal policies and actions developed in
Latin American and Caribbean cities as to enhance food security, address urban poverty, improve urban environmental and health management.

- Developing more participatory and less excluding governance processes, as well as to protect urban biodiversity

Commit ourselves to:

- Produce and to disseminate, at least once a year, methodology tools, guidelines and mechanisms that collect regional experiences.
- Report on the formulation and execution of urban planning and land use, reuse of wastewater and organic solid waste.
- Report on credit for Urban Agriculture, transformation and marketing.

Invite:

- All public and private actors of Latin American and Caribbean cities and cities in other Regions of the World to embrace the practice, promotion and support of Urban Agriculture.

Villa Maria del Triunfo Declaration

This declaration is a spillover of the Quito declaration. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) supported a project to develop municipal policy briefs on urban and peri-urban agriculture in American and Carribean region. The project was designed to promote development of methodological tools, guides and mechanisms reflecting regional experiences in the formulation and implementation of urban agriculture policy. The Quito working group, and members of the IDRC Cities Feeding People Program (CFP), Promotion of Sustainable Development (IPES) and UMP-LAC prepared 8 policy briefs on UPA.

The policy briefs were discussed and validated in a series of local consultations in the region A final regional consultation involving representatives of the local governments, their associations and decision-makers was held in September 2002 in Lima Peru in the municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo. The outcome is the Villa Maria del Triunfo Declaration on UPA. The full text of the declaration reads thus:

City representatives gathered at Villa [Maria del Triunfo, Lima, Peru, from Sept. 11 to 13, 2002, on the occasion of the Regional Consultations on Municipal Policies for Urban Agriculture, have agreed to issue the following:

DECLARATION OF VILLA MARIA DEL TRIUNFO

Considering:

- That our cities are faced with grave problems of poverty, food insecurity and environmental mismanagement.
- That in Latin America 60 million people go to bed hungry every night, and cities must rise to this challenge by providing food for their people.
- That urban agriculture is a means of creating employment at an investment cost that is very low compared with the costs associated with other productive sectors.
- That cities in Latin America and the Caribbean have recently been pursuing a variety of experiments with urban and peri-urban agriculture (e.g. animal breeding, crops, fisheries, fruit growing, processing and marketing), in order to create incomes and work for disadvantaged urban residents, as well as to achieve food self-sufficiency and improve the environment and the quality of life.
- That experiments with urban agriculture in the cities of Latin America and the Caribbean represent significant contributions to creating cities with greater equity, better health and more food security.
- That these experiments show that it is possible to use local resources and technologies that can reduce the costs of urban economies and bring improvements to living standards.

Encouraging governments:

To recognize the importance of urban agriculture in strategies for local development, employment and income generation, environmental improvement and, in particular, food security.
To formulate policies that take account of the following guidelines in favour of urban agriculture:

- To create and institutionalize opportunities for participation in municipal management and the support of local capacities.
- To adopt urban agriculture as an instrument for fostering equity in gender relations.
- To consider urban agriculture in the course of land use planning as a multifunctional element in soil use and environmental protection, thereby reconciling the demands of urban growth with activities of great economic and social value.
- To promote urban agriculture as a means to food self-sufficiency, and to ensure that lower-income people have access to safe and healthful food of sufficient quality and quantity.
- To promote generation of added value in urban agricultural output, through processing and marketing and the adaptation of legal standards for all entrepreneurs.
- To develop credit, financial and tax policies and instruments together with technical assistance programs to encourage urban agriculture, with particular emphasis on the poorest and most vulnerable groups.
- To promote the sanitary use of household waste waters and solid organic wastes in urban agriculture; training for urban farmers in techniques in reusing and recycling their wastes; educating the community to buy from source and encouraging local and national governments to set standards for promoting and regulating their use.

Recommending:

Implementation of the guidelines for the formulation of municipal policies for urban agriculture, validated during these regional consultations.

Urging:

- Local governments to promote urban agriculture in their cities as a political strategy of inclusion for sustainable and socially responsible development.
- Local, state, and national governments to consider urban agriculture within their overall development plans and programs as an instrument for achieving food self-sufficiency while improving health and the environment.
- Technical and financial cooperation agencies to give importance and special treatment to urban agriculture.
- Cities to encourage South-South cooperation through the exchange of knowledge and experience.

Reaffirm:

- Our commitment to encourage experimentation with urban agriculture in our cities.
- Our decision to implement the guidelines for the formulation of municipal policies for urban agriculture in our cities.
- Our commitment for the Working Group on “Cities and Urban Agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean”.
- Our decision to support dissemination, validation and implementation of the guidelines for the formulation of municipal policies for urban agriculture.
- Our determination to work together to conduct consultations on urban agriculture, with the support of the Urban Management Program of IDRC and IPES for Latin America and the Caribbean—Promoting Sustainable Development.

Invite:

- All public and private stakeholders in cities of Latin America and the Caribbean to commit themselves to institutionalizing, practicing, promoting and supporting urban agriculture.
- All cities and governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to implement the guidelines for the formulation of municipal policies for urban agriculture, and to adopt this declaration.

The Harare Declaration on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture in Eastern and Southern Africa

This declaration is a result of a Ministers’ Conference entitled Urban Agriculture-Opportunities for Food Security held from 28-29 August 2003 in Harare. The Conference was co-organized by Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa and Zimbabwe’s Ministry of Local Government, Public Construction and National Housing. It was sponsored by UNDP, UNICEF and IDRC. It was attended by 69 participants, with Ministers and delegates from Malawi, Tanzania, Swaziland, Kenya and the host Zimbabwe. The main objectives were:

1) To facilitate the sharing of experiences on the issues of urban and peri-urban agriculture in the sub-region.

2) To come up with strategies to enhance urban food security, nutrition and local economic growth and development through intensive high value peri-urban agriculture development.

3) To come up with strategies for improving the nutritional status of HIV/AIDS sufferers through urban agriculture.

4) To identify key policy issues for urban agriculture in the region.

5) To formulate a regional development programme on peri-urban agriculture focusing on the technical, financial and legal institutional aspects and support.

The Harare Declaration text is as follows:

We the Ministers responsible for Local Governments from Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, at our meeting in Harare on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture (UPA) in Eastern and Southern Africa organized by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing of the Government of Zimbabwe and the Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa, in collaboration with UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, SAFR, FANRPAN, RUAF and IDRC held on 28 and 29 August, 2003:

Acknowledging further that:

- UPA is a widely practised activity in and around towns and cities within the region on parcels of land with alternative competing uses;
- UPA has generally been practised informally without appropriate policy, legislative and institutional frameworks;
- UPA plays, and will continue to play, a significant role in promoting food security, employment creation and income generation, health and nutrition and improving economies of urban areas;
- Some governments in the region have made significant progress in incorporating UPA in their urban development plans, and that others are now beginning to rise to the challenge.

Recognizing:

The existence and increasing practice of UPA and also noting the many challenges it faces including:

- Absence, inadequacy and/or inconsistencies in the policies, legislation and institutional arrangements for regulating the sector,
- Limited availability or and access to resources
- Limited research documentation and information-sharing nationally and regionally
- The need for environmental sustainability.

Accepting:

That the foregoing challenges require immediate and prudent reform of policies, legislative and institutional arrangements in order to effectively integrate UPA into our urban economies.

We therefore,

- Call for the promotion of a shared vision of UPA that takes into account the specific needs and conditions of the region.
- And accordingly commit ourselves to develop policies and appropriate instruments that will create an enabling environment for integrating UPA into our urban economies.

(Source: Municipal Development Partnership, Harare Zimbabwe).
Synthesis of the Declarations in Support of UPA

The five declarations presented here came about as a result of consultations, seminars, conferences and workshops among municipal authorities and their associates. All the declarations focused on the existence, experiences of the practice of UPA, and its growing significance and recognition among municipal authorities, urban local authorities, researchers, donors, NGOs and various other stakeholders. This is the common thread in the declarations.

In all the five declarations, there is Commitment to support UPA. There is great emphasis on the contribution of urban and peri-urban agriculture to urban food security, poverty reduction, local economic development, sustainable urban development, income and employment generation. Urban and peri-urban agriculture is therefore a vital livelihood strategy for the urban poor. It provides nutrition health and mitigates some of the ecological problems of growing urban areas.

Governments and local authorities in all the declarations acknowledge the significance and value of urban and peri-urban agriculture, they affirm their commitment to incorporate it in their urban development plans, including financing, generating and disseminating information, guidelines to regulate it, and policies to promote UPA.

There are some divergences in the declarations especially with regard to risks in the practice of UPA. The Hyderabad declaration on Waste Water Use in Agriculture focused on the dangers of increasing use of waste water in UPA in water-scarcity arid and semi-arid areas. Researchers of Water, Health, Environment, Agriculture and Aquaculture critically warned about the gravity of the risks. Hence the need to emphasize use of guidelines for appropriate treatment and use of waste water for UPA. Also highlighted is the need for educating farmers, putting awareness programs in place, and ensuring that policy makers, urban authorities in the areas of water, agriculture, aquaculture, health, environment and urban planning, donors and the private sector should safeguard and strengthen livelihoods and food security, mitigate health and environmental risks and conserve water resources by confronting the realities of wastewater use in agriculture through the adoption of appropriate policies and the commitment of financial resources for policy implementation.

The Quito declaration authorities emphasized improving urban management by promoting UPA and replicating UPA experiences and actions developed in the region, especially methodological tools. Issues of wastewater use were highlighted as well.

In the Declaration of Villa Maria del Triunfo, there is emphasis that UPA is addressing the problems of hunger and environmental management. Regional experiences of UPA practice and experiments were appraised. Governments are encouraged to adopt UPA as an instrument for fostering equity in gender relations. There is emphasis that UPA should be considered in the course of land use planning as a multifunctional element in soil use and environmental protection. Cities are encouraged to develop South-South cooperation through exchange of knowledge and experiences in UPA.

In the Harare declaration there was acknowledgement that UPA is practiced in many towns and cities in the region. It was highlighted that some governments in the region had made progress in incorporating UPA in their urban developments plans. Others are just rising up to the challenge. More emphasis was put on the challenges of UPA including its informality and illegality, absence, inadequacy and inconsistencies in the policies, legislation and institutional arrangements for regulating the sector. Other challenges centre on limited availability and access to resources, limited research documentation and information sharing nationally and regionally. There was a call for the promotion of a shared vision of UPA considering the needs and conditions of the region.

Overall, the declarations have indicated that time has come to exploit the opportunities of the UPA sector by deliberately creating policies and strategies and research programmes to address the risks of UPA or challenges.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE UPA PRACTICE

The five declarations presented in this paper underscore the reality that UPA is certainly being recognized by more municipal authorities worldwide and that the possibilities of enhancing the potentials of the industry are expanding. Thanks to the efforts of researchers, and members of the Support Group for Urban Agriculture (SGUA) and in a very special way, the work of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Ottawa, Canada, and the International Network of Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Food Security, Netherlands (RUAF) and others for researching and disseminating basic information on the UPA industry and sensitizing researchers, urban...
planners, municipal authorities and local government authorities. The commitments of the various municipal authorities and related associations and organizations are by themselves a challenge because actions have to be put into place, and tangible results must be seen in the enhancement of urban food security, improving the health of the majority of the urban poor, increasing incomes, employment and improving standards of living of the urban poor, and enhancing urban economies and environmental management. Moreover, deliberate efforts, policies and plans must be made to include UPA seriously into urban plans, and appropriate institutional frameworks must be put in place to ensure that the risks of UPA are controlled accordingly and that sustainable environmental and urban development are achieved. All this depends on expanding research in the area, availing adequate finances to support every segment of the UPA industry, and promoting effective partnerships among all stakeholders. What follows are recommendations for future practice of UPA.

**RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE PRACTICE OF UPA**

Recommendations suggested here for future practice of UPA underscore the fact that any country that is a signatory to a declaration to support UPA must nurture the requisite political will in cities, municipalities and towns to:

- Ensure that municipal and local authorities and associated decision-makers know what UPA can contribute to urban ecosystems, economies and sustainable development.
- Promote effective use or production of all idle, unused, underutilized or misused open and vacant urban land via UPA.
- Innovatively collect and recycle organic solid waste (biodegradable wastes) through composting, and reuse of wastewater for UPA using appropriate technologies, guidelines and research practices.
- Recognize and put in place UPA land use categories in urban land use planning, policies and formulate appropriate development management strategies.
- Assist UPA actors (urban farmers) in various ways to access credit (finances), extension services, technologies, marketing and processing information, and be granted temporary permission where appropriate to use public or private vacant or undeveloped urban land until formal development commences.

- Use more participatory and inclusive approaches in urban development decision-making that puts the needs of the urban poor at the forefront, especially those surviving because of their involvement in UPA.
- Consume realistically existing research findings and build policy, institutional and regulatory frameworks that are fair, earthly, equity-oriented, socially acceptable as well as environmentally friendly.

**REFERENCES**


