

Topic 2

POLICY FORMULATION AND ACTION PLANNING

Urban agriculture is not a new phenomenon in the present-day cities of the world, and is more and more considered as an integrated part of urban management (as a strategy for poverty alleviation, income and employment generation and environmental management).

However, only in few cases has urban agriculture been integrated into policy-making and planning.

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The Mayor of Quito signing an Inter-Actor Agreement to support the development of Urban Agriculture in El Panecillo, Ecuador

A Framework for Facilitating Planning and Policy

While prohibitive policies are bound to be ineffective, several constraints and risks are clearly associated with non-regulated agriculture in the city, like environmental pollution. Furthermore, corruption and conflicts, in the competition for scarce resources, often exclude those who would benefit most from urban agriculture: the urban poor. A policy and planning facilitation framework could promote and support the development of urban agriculture in the context of sustainable development (de Zeeuw, Gundel and Waibel 2000, UMP-LAC et al. 2001).

Three municipal case studies describing different experiences in developing such a facilitation framework, each with a unique thematic entry point and a very different political and institutional context, are elaborated below. General conclusions and remaining questions based on an analysis of these cases will then be drawn. The case studies are: Cuenca, Ecuador, in South America; Santiago de los Caballeros, the Dominican Republic, in the Caribbean; and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in East Africa.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT IN CUENCA (ECUADOR)

This section is based on the contribution by Andrea Carrion (UMP-LAC, Ecuador), entitled "El Plan Estratégico de Inversiones: una estrategia para la planificación y la formulación de políticas" (Strategic Investment Plan; a strategy for planning and policy formulation).

Background

In 1998, an urban agriculture programme was implemented at the municipal level, strongly based on traditional practices - mainly hor-

ticulture, orchards and forestry. Between September 2000 and August 2001, the city of Cuenca, Ecuador, (350,000 inhabitants), developed the "Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for Local Development in Cuenca". This SIP was developed as part of the City Alliance Programme, under the coordination of the Urban Management Programme (UMP-LAC). The SIP sought to "generate a participatory process that would identify, formulate and implement strategic programme(s) and projects for local economic development." It was recognised that this

The Latin America City Working Group on Urban Agriculture and Food Security, bringing together 40 municipalities from Latin America and the Caribbean, have expressed the need to perceive urban agriculture as an urban activity and to recognise, incorporate and regulate it under specific municipal policies and programmes. They urge "local governments to become strongly committed to the development of agriculture in their cities, mobilising existing local resources, institutionalising it, procuring its extension at the national level; and to allocate municipal budget items to the execution of urban agriculture practices". They affirm the need for "inclusion of UA within territorial planning processes as an element for the multiple-use of land and environmental protection and the development of credit and financial policies and instruments for UA, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable producers, to supplement technical assistance programmes" (Quito Declaration, April 2000).

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process would require the re-orientation, investment and combination of available local (public, private and community) and external funding mechanisms.

Phases

The SIP was implemented in five phases:

Initial Agreement (September 2000)

A formal agreement for implementation of the SIP was signed. The agreement specified the objectives of the SIP and defined four specific areas for economic development: promotion of the formal economy; strengthening of the informal sector; environmental management; and using the municipality as a motor for economic development. Gender equity and citizens' participation were seen as cross-themes).

Methodological design (October 2000)

Various meetings were held among the working team members to design the methodology to be used for implementation and systematisation of the SIP. Through discussions with the local partner institute ACUDIR and the municipality, actors involved in each of the development areas were identified, guidelines were developed for interviewing each of them to get to know their present activities and proposals for further local economic development, and formats for project development elaborated.

The role of private enterprises is very important

"Fieldwork" (October 2000)

The actual fieldwork undertaken included the collection of basic information on the development areas identified, through field-visits, literature reviews, interviews with local actors and stakeholder meetings. These activities allowed for an understanding of present development in Cuenca. It further facilitated the identification of existing initiatives and experiences, of available capacities and expertise for project implementation and for a first identification of specific projects to support.

Project elaboration

(November 2000 - June 2001)

The fourth phase comprised the elaboration of 15 specific project proposals for each of the defined thematic areas for eco-

conomic development, comprising 7 investment projects, and 8 municipal policy proposals and instruments.

Feedback (July - August 2001)

At this stage, the projects were formally presented to the Cuenca authorities, ACUDIR, the Provincial Council, the organised private sector and community representatives. The SIP will be used as input into the Cuenca Strategic Local Development Plan that is being developed.

Actors involved

The municipality, urban farmers, Public-Private Platform for Local Development, NGOs, women's groups, universities, international agencies and UMP-LAC were involved in this process.

Results

The results were that:

- ❖ the multi-sectoral UA Working Group was established;
- ❖ the Municipal Action Plan on UA got approved; and
- ❖ the programme became institution-alised, with allocated financial commitments.

Fifteen projects for local economic development were elaborated as part of the municipal strategies and intervention instruments. Two of these were related to urban agriculture: 1) the promotion of commercial urban agriculture (technical assistance, a commercialisation programme for 40 enterprises and the establishment of a credit fund); and 2) employment generation through environmental services (establishment of micro-enterprises for waste collection and recycling). The projects will be financed by setting aside part of the municipalities' own funds (for 2001, US\$ 70,000 has been set aside to support the UA project), by the actors involved and through external financing.

Lessons learned

The interaction of various local actors in a collective effort to define and plan strategic investment for local development requires the careful management of conflicts of interest. The role of private enterprises in this process, being local agents for investment, is very important, but should be managed on the basis of their real involvement and interest in the "common good" and not on defending their

(economic) interests.

TERRITORIAL PLANNING PROCESSES IN SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The full version of this case can be found on www.ruaf.org and is also summarised in *Urban Agriculture Magazine No 4*.

Under the Municipal Urban Agriculture Programme in Santiago de Los Caballeros, an action plan was defined and formally approved, several pilot projects were set up, and urban agriculture was recognised as an urban land use.

A first lesson from this case is that in implementing a UA programme, a municipality has to consider and optimise the use of locally available human and material resources (by means of incentives, organisation and institutional collaboration). A proper financial basis must also be assured from the start, as this makes it possible to involve institutions and communities in collective activities without a direct economic return like training and promotion. Despite the acknowledgement that urban agriculture has received, and the development of specific regulations by the municipality, these have not yet been integrated widely into several city instruments like the territorial development plan, the housing plan and the economic development plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

A third case comes from the contribution of *Asteria Mlambo of the Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project*. The full version of this case can be found on www.ruaf.org and is also summarised in the *Urban Agriculture Magazine No 4*.

The EPM process has contributed to the sustainable development of the city of Dar es Salaam region by strengthening the local capacity of partners and by preparing a long-term development plan. The approach piloted in the city of Dar es Salaam has been widely accepted by the Ministry for Land Development.

Major lessons learned from the EPM process are that communities are capable

Urban agriculture interacts with multiple facets of sustainable municipal development

entities in developing their own priorities, working out solutions and arranging for implementation. Also, strategies that relate project support to priorities developed by the communities themselves stand a better chance of succeeding. New institutional relationships and compatible political and social norms are needed. The EPM process in Dar es Salaam has further demonstrated that urban agriculture can effectively be integrated into urban land-use planning. Monitoring and evaluation are essential elements to minimise negative impacts and inform decision-making.

A CROSS-ANALYSIS: GENERAL CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

Planning and policy on urban agriculture require multi-thematic, multi-level and multi-actor approaches. The initial entry point will vary between cities, but in general there is a commonality in each of the described cases with strategies on poverty reduction. In Cuenca, the thematic entry point concerned local economic development with a pro-poor emphasis as part of a City Development Strategy. In Santiago, it was the issue of food security for poverty reduction which guided the programme, while in Dar es Salaam, the development of a UA programme fit into the city's planning process for environmental sustainability and poverty reduction. The existence of traditional practices and of "spontaneous" urban agriculture is important to all three case studies. The municipal programmes have served to provide visibility and to generate awareness on the need to incorporate them into city planning.

The case studies also show that urban agriculture interacts with multiple facets of sustainable municipal development and has the potential to diversify and strengthen the necessary strategies. In all cases, a wide spectrum of local actors has been involved, and municipalities play an important role as facilitators.

To ensure the participation and involvement of the various actors (who do not necessarily share common goals and visions), municipal policy and planning interventions should be linked to the specific development objectives of these different urban groups.

In developing a common methodological set-up for a policy and planning facilita-

tion framework, there are a number of lessons to take from these case studies. All three, although evolving separately, ended up following a similar logical and methodological process. In general, five distinct phases can be defined in each process:

- ❖ *Phase 1:* Awareness-raising and lobbying
- ❖ *Phase 2:* Diagnosis and stakeholder commitment
- ❖ *Phase 3:* Strategy formulation and action planning
- ❖ *Phase 4:* Implementation
- ❖ *Phase 5:* Follow-up and consolidation, institutionalisation and "anchoring"

Awareness-raising and lobbying

In all cases, wide representation has been a key factor in the generation of awareness amongst the institutions and communities. Local ownership and commitment is a critical condition for improved urban governance. This requires consensus-building and consultations with all actors. The initial focus may be on key stakeholders, but ultimately all relevant players should be involved in the process for strategy formulation and implementation. These are:

- ❖ those who are affected by, or affect, a priority issue;
- ❖ those who possess information, resources and expertise; and
- ❖ those who control the implementation instruments.

A major challenge during this phase is to identify and involve vulnerable and marginal groups, especially the poor and women. In the process, the target group should be specified and the specific interventions to reach them should be clear. None of the experiences above describes how the different stakeholders were identified, why they were selected to participate and apparently neither identifies nor addresses specific needs, problems and operative solutions for the different stakeholder groups. Specific target groups are not detailed and, perhaps because of that,

no specific emphasis is given to either social inclusion or gender analysis. Furthermore, the role of specific actors such as the private sector, for example, is not sufficiently clarified.

Motivation and dissemination strategies, for instance by using demonstration projects, have an important function in raising citizen - and institutional awareness. In Cuenca, the UA Working Group, consisting of 28 institutions (NGOs, community organisations and municipal management), has been the engine of the initiative. In Santiago, the lobbying was supported by international experts. A communication strategy, including workshops, seminars, journal articles, and radio and television appearances, has stimulated agricultural use of available land. Furthermore, demonstration projects in selected areas of the city were implemented with the support of local actors. In Dar es Salaam, the EPM process used dialogues and participatory city planning. The Inter-Sectoral Working Group was formed in this city to work out strategies to get urban agriculture onto the city agenda. Here demonstration projects were also set up in selected areas.

Diagnosis and stakeholder commitment

The second phase in the facilitation framework, is for diagnosis and creating stakeholder commitment. This phase has three main stages: participatory diagnosis; building collaboration and forging consensus; and formalising commitments for the future.

Elaborating on the issues coming from phase 1 has happened through the process of developing baseline studies and proposals (Santiago, Dar es Salaam), and field visits and interviews (Cuenca, Dar es Salaam). This should yield information on the present state of the thematic area, the local, socio-economic, cultural and political-institutional context, the current impact on urban management, the actors

Pilot or demonstration projects usually involve small-scale, locally oriented capital investment or technical assistance projects, designed to demonstrate a new approach. Being small, they can be implemented rapidly, ensure visible results early on and thus strengthen social and political commitment and participation.

involved and their roles, needs and visions. These papers or interviews should be structured and highly focused, in order to highlight issues and set the stage for reflection and debate.

With the participation of various actors involved in discussion meetings (Santiago, Cuenca) or through consultations and stakeholder workshops (Dar es Salaam), key issues are debated, a consensus on the issues to be addressed sought, and the institutional arrangements for the implementation of activities is to be agreed upon. A spin-off is that relationships among the various actors is established or strengthened. Additional actors might be mobilised and involved, while commitments for further action programming and co-ordination can be defined and formalised through inter-actor agreements.

Strategy formulation and action planning

In this phase, the actors further identify, review and expand upon the priority issues, evaluate options and develop approaches and activities by means of multi-actor platforms (Cuenca) or working groups (Dar es Salaam, Santiago). This process can be aided by spatial, economic and social analysis. Conflicting interests need resolving through negotiation, which subsequently lead to agreement to pool resources for the coordinated implementation of strategies and activities, and to define responsibilities. This is often the most difficult stage in the process.

Action plans do not only identify solutions to local needs and problems, but also seek to strengthen capacities of local actors. Concerted definition and adoption of

action strategies and the formal adoption of an action plan by the local authorities (in the form of signing agreements) is found in all three cases.

Implementation

The action plan represents the turning point between the process of diagnosis and strategy development, and the process of implementation of activities. The implementation can take different forms and can include: specific pilot projects (Santiago and Dar es Salaam); a normative and legal framework/municipal policy (Santiago and Dar es Salaam); new models of financial management and subsequent allocation of funds (Cuenca); and new institutional devices that facilitate participation (Santiago, Dar es Salaam).

Follow-up and consolidation, institutionalisation and anchoring

Monitoring and evaluation are essential elements to provide a flow of systematic feedback allowing for (continuous) adjustments during implementation and to inform decision-making. This includes experiences of for instance demonstration projects, which give a firmer basis for replication at a larger and wider scale. Monitoring should address institutional, management and technical issues, and is preferably participatory. The cited cases use participatory monitoring through: multi-actor or working groups (Santiago, Dar es Salaam) and specific workshops or focal groups (Cuenca).

However, none of the experiences describe in detail the monitoring and evaluation framework used. Neither do they define specific techniques, criteria or indi-

cators used (see also the topic paper on Monitoring and Evaluation on page 40).

Institutionalisation and anchoring are long-term processes to change the way things are done, to build new issues and participatory processes into procedures, norms and ideas of local stakeholders and institutions. In all cases, urban agriculture was officially acknowledged and this recognition was expressed in the institutional plans and commitments. The founding of inter-actor or inter-institutional working groups has been of fundamental importance. Santiago and Dar es Salaam have advanced more in terms of legislation and regulation.

Considering the risks and limitations of “project cycle and exit strategies”, long-term support is necessary. Inclusion of processes and its results into normative, legal and operational instruments of the cities (such as Strategic Plans, Zoning Plans, District Development Plans, etc.) gives a much more permanent and firmer basis. It facilitates the integration of urban agriculture into the city’s environmental, economic, social and health programmes. However, it requires the development of methodological tools to facilitate integration and inclusion. Facilitation frameworks should thus integrate policy (proposals) and action plans of different sectors, and provide local governments and other actors with practical tools for implementation.

Scaling-up and replication capitalises and builds on experiences to extend it to a broader and larger scale. With the exception of Dar es Salaam, where national expansion began, the scaling-up is more horizontal. In Cuenca and Santiago de los Caballeros, scaling-up occurs by increasing the number of farmers and micro-enterprises in the city and its surroundings. In Dar es Salaam, scaling-up is also vertical. The process to prepare Strategic Urban Development Plans in nine other municipalities with the EPM approach provides evidence of its integration at the national policy level. This process requires favourable political conditions in the national bodies (ministries etc.) In all three cases, inter-institutional coordination problems and the availability of resources emerge as the most important conditions for scaling-up.

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