

## BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

Bulawayo is the second largest city in Zimbabwe and is located 435 kilometres from Harare in the south western part of the country. It was declared a municipality on 27th October 1897 and was the hub of heavy industry in the country up until the late 1990s when most firms moved to Harare. It has a mild climate (temperatures between 14 and 22 degrees) and average rainfall is 575 mm. The city covers an area of about 700 km<sup>2</sup> and has an estimated population of 1,4 million (in 2007). Bulawayo's geographical position within the Southern African region is very central.



Poverty levels in Bulawayo have increased as a result of the recent economic crisis. Most firms have closed or relocated to Harare, resulting in high unemployment levels estimated to be at 80%. Poverty is estimated to be around 60% of the population based on the average household monthly basic food needs. Most people have turned to other means of survival and urban agriculture is one of those activities.



## CITIES FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

The Cities Farming for the Future programme (RUAF-CFF) seeks to make a contribution to sustainable urban development, by creating enabling conditions for empowerment of male and female urban and peri-urban farmers, capacity development of local authorities and other stakeholders and by facilitating the integration of urban agriculture in gender-sensitive policies and action programmes of local governments, civic society organisations and private enterprises with active involvement of the urban farmers, livestock keepers and other relevant stakeholders”



## CONTACT

### Bulawayo

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## THE RUAF FOUNDATION

The central aim of the RUAF Foundation (the International Network of Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security) is to contribute to urban poverty reduction, urban food security, improved urban environmental management, empowerment of urban farmers and participatory city governance by enhancing policy awareness on benefits and risks of urban agriculture, capacity development, facilitating local policy formulation and action planning on urban agriculture, and promoting networking and exchange of experiences. The RUAF – Cities Farming for the Future programme (RUAF-CFF) is executed by the seven regional RUAF partners in co-ordination with ETC Urban Agriculture (the Netherlands) in 20 pilot cities and 48 dissemination cities. The CFF-project is funded by DGIS (the Netherlands) and IDRC (Canada). More information is found on [www.ruaf.org](http://www.ruaf.org).

International Coordination: ETC Urban Agriculture  
Global website: [www.ruaf.org](http://www.ruaf.org)

### THE RUAF PARTNERS ARE:

Municipal Development Partnership (MDP), Harare, Zimbabwe  
Institut Africain de Gestion Urbaine (IAGU), Dakar, Senegal  
International Water Management Institute (IWMI-Ghana), Accra, Ghana  
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Promoción del Desarrollo Sostenible (IPES), Lima, Peru  
Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resource Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGSNRR), Beijing, China  
Environment and Sustainable Development Unit, American University (AUB-ESDU), Beirut, Lebanon  
ETC Urban Agriculture, Leusden, The Netherlands



## Cities Farming for the Future



*‘Key stakeholders have met for the first time, who realised that urban agriculture plays a critical role in food security for the urban poor and in local economic development.’*

J.J. Ndebele, Head of Town Planning and Development Control, Bulawayo City Council.

BULAWAYO Zimbabwe



## URBAN AGRICULTURE IN BULAWAYO

Urban agriculture in Bulawayo is an important activity for many people. Those engaged in it realise commercial benefits, or practice it for subsistence to supplement their meagre incomes or simply for survival. At the moment, the City has nine irrigated garden allotments totalling about 25ha that are managed by the Social Services Office of the Department of Housing and Community Services. The beneficiaries (over 5000) grow vegetables predominantly for domestic consumption. The City also manages the Gum Plantation Allotment, a massive community garden project on an estimated 450 ha. Also here, preference in allocation of plots was given to the elderly and the poor, comprising about 75% of the beneficiaries. Each household is allocated 6 long-beds for free, making up a total of 200-400m<sup>2</sup>. But there is increasing demand for land, and youths started to practice agriculture in the city recently also. Some of the produce is sold to generate income.

Major challenges experienced by the Bulawayo producers are access to water and land. All the waste-water from the city's treatment works is channelled for irrigation to the garden allotments and council farms (free of charge), where three different crops are grown on a rotational basis every year: vegetables, sugar beans and maize. The community gardens established with support of World Vision get their irrigation water from hand pumps. Here a larger variety of vegetables is grown.

There is competition between land for agriculture and for other uses like housing and industrial development. Most of the farmers cultivate similar crops resulting in a glut or shortages in the market. Other main challenges are marketing and adding value by processing.

Under the current political and economic conditions of food shortages the plots play a key role for household food security. Ninety five percent of the producers in the allotment gardens indicated that urban agriculture contributed significantly to their livelihood, by providing them assisting the farmers with food and money (99.1%), school fees (44.6%), medication (9.8%) and clothing (29.5%).



## MULTI STAKEHOLDER ACTION PLANNING

RUAF Cities Farming for the Future Programme (RUAF-CFF) facilitates participatory and multi-stakeholder policy formulation and action planning (MPAP) on urban agriculture in Bulawayo.

*Participatory and Multi-stakeholder Policy formulation and Action Planning (MPAP) is a process of collaboration between the urban authorities with citizens, farmers, civil organisations, private sector companies and other governmental entities in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of policies and related action plans. This approach brings together major stakeholders in the form of communication, dialogue, co-determination of issues, joint decision making, planning and implementation of projects. The main output of a MPAP is the joint development of a City Strategic Agenda on urban agriculture in Bulawayo.*

The MPAP process in Bulawayo is led by a core group consisting of the Municipal departments of Health, Town Planning, Housing and Social Welfare and the Town Clerk of the Bulawayo City Council, SNV, World Vision, the Environmental Management Agency, the National Department of Agriculture and Extension Services (AGRITEX) and the Department of Physical Planning, the Zimbabwe Open University of Bulawayo, farmer representatives and Agribank. This core group reports to the Stakeholder Forum on Urban Agriculture (made up of a wider group of about 50 stakeholders), and to the Bulawayo City Council's Lands and Planning Committee.



Based on an exploratory survey on urban agriculture in the city, the core group identified a number of important issues related to urban agriculture in Bulawayo.

- Access to land for urban agriculture.
- Revision related by-laws.
- Access to adequate water for irrigation.
- Funding opportunities.
- Diversification in agricultural production.
- Marketing.

For each of these issues, working committees further elaborated on these issues and made recommendations for the City Strategic Agenda.

## KEY RESULTS

The results from the project include:

- Awareness has been improved on urban agriculture and its contributions to the various facets of the city.
- A policy on urban agriculture has been developed, which has officially been adopted by City-Council, and which is guiding the development of the sector in the city.
- Interest in urban agriculture has increased and there has been an increase in the applications for leasing land for urban agriculture.
- A specific unit on urban agriculture has been created within the City Planning section.
- The MPAP process has managed to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders, who did not meet before, and who are now working together on the subject in a coordinated manner.

For more information and links to publications: please visit [www.mdpafrica.org.zw](http://www.mdpafrica.org.zw)

## CITY STRATEGIC AGENDA

The Bulawayo City Strategic Agenda on Urban Agriculture (CSAU) includes a vision on the desired development of urban agriculture in the city, the key issues identified during the exploratory survey, the strategies regarding each issue, the main actors responsible for each action, and actual or potential funding.

The central aim of the CSAU is the development of urban agriculture in the city that is vibrant, diversified and environmentally sustainable for subsistence and commercial purposes.

The core team is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the CSAU and monitoring progress and reports to the Multi-stakeholder forum. The CSAU will continue to guide the work in Bulawayo on urban agriculture, supported by RUAF under the From Seed to Table programme (2009-2010).



## IMPLEMENTATION

A number of activities have been undertaken in the past few years:

- A municipal policy for Bulawayo and the CSAU has been drafted and officially adopted by council in December 2007.
- Municipal by-laws related to urban agriculture have been revised and are awaiting final approval by the city council.
- The national agricultural extension organisation AGRITEX, so far not giving much attention to urban agriculture, made extension staff available to train urban producers in appropriate methods of mushroom production, horticulture and poultry keeping and continues to contribute to capacity development for urban producers.
- Attracted by the Multi-stakeholder Planning Process various NGO's became active in Bulawayo implementing urban agriculture projects and contributing with their own resources. For example, World vision has drilled about 22 boreholes in the low-income residential areas, around which new allotment gardens were organised for poor urban households. SNV has played a critical role in the strengthening of the farmer organisation in the Gum Plantation.
- In the Gum Plantation, with support of RUAF-CFF, a project involving 135 producers was implemented, including a number of activities: enhancing the availability of irrigation water by drilling a bore hole and lining the irrigation canals to avoid water losses through seepage, diversification of the agricultural production including new vegetable varieties as well as beekeeping and mushroom production, strengthening the farmers organisation of the scheme and farmer training in administrative and technical issues, with emphasis on organic farming techniques. Initial impact monitoring results indicate that food security has been enhanced substantially through enhanced production and that income has increased by about 40%.
- The experiences gained in Bulawayo have attracted the attention of policy makers at national level leading to the request to assist in the organisation of a national policy seminar on urban agriculture and national policy development on this issue. Representatives of Harare Municipality visited Bulawayo to get to know these experiences in person.

Several local organisations have committed themselves already to continue the implementation of the CSAU in 2009 and 2010.