



Urban Agriculture in Hyderabad

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Regional Coordination of the RUAF Cities Farming for the Future Programme

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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.

International Coordination: ETC Urban Agriculture
Global website: 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
- International Water Management Institute, (IWMI-India), Hyderabad, India
- 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



SERILINGAMPALLI



HYDERABAD, INDIA

Serilingampalli is one of the 12 Municipalities conforming the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation and one of the fastest-growing zones of Hyderabad and high levels of poverty. Hyderabad is the capital city of the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. It has an estimated population of seven million making it India's fifth-largest metropolitan area. It is known for its rich history, architecture, food and multilingual culture, and considered to be the modern hub of information technology and biotechnology. With the recent addition of twelve municipalities (in 2007), the city is now estimated to cover an area of 650 km².

With an annual precipitation of 790 mm, and temperatures ranging from 13 - 28°C on average, the peripheral areas of the city are studded with agricultural landscapes. Rice, fodder and vegetables are the predominant crops. However, soaring land prices have led to a rapid conversion of agricultural plots and wastelands into commercial real estate sites. While the city offers modern amenities and a global lifestyle to its citizens, GHMC and the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) are also committed to creating a "Greener Hyderabad", and for this purpose are promoting a number of campaigns for a healthy environment.

Around 13.48 per cent of the population (540,000) lives below poverty line. Hyderabad is characterised by a very significant presence of urban poor with a growing urban poverty profile. Slum settlements have multiplied in recent decades and living conditions have not improved (the 2001 census counted 1631 slums). The number of people inhabiting slums is estimated to be around two million. The incidence of poverty is higher among women than men, and female-headed households constitute the poorest of the poor. The main source of income for the poor is daily wage labour in infrastructure companies and informal sectors like small industries.



CITIES FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

The Cities Farming for the Future programme (RUAF-CFF) seeks to make a contribution to urban poverty reduction, urban food security, improved urban environmental management, empowerment of urban farmers and participatory city governance by promoting capacity development of local stakeholders in urban agriculture and facilitating participatory and multi-stakeholder policy formulation and action planning (MPAP) on urban agriculture, including safe reuse of urban organic wastes and wastewater.

HYDERABAD INDIA

"Household food and nutritional security for low income-communities"



URBAN AGRICULTURE IN HYDERABAD

Major agricultural activities within the city of Hyderabad are fodder and vegetable production, urban forestry and dairy/milk production. Sorghum, maize, horsegram, ground nut and vegetables are also grown to a limited extent in the peri-urban fringes of the city. Water for irrigation of crops and other livelihood activities is taken primarily from the Musi River, which flows through the city and has become a perennial water source due to wastewater generated from the city. In 2005 about 2108 ha. of para grass in and around Hyderabad and 10,000 ha of paddy along the “Musi River Corridor” are irrigated with waste water.

Agriculture in and around Serilingampalli is dominated by paddy and small-scale vegetable production, such as brinjal (eggplant), tomato and leafy vegetables. However, high land values and rapid urbanisation have resulted in the reduction of agricultural land, which has hit the low-income communities the hardest (nearly 80 per cent of the municipality’s vegetable supply is now brought from other neighbouring peri-urban areas). RUAF-CFF assisted the Serilingampalli Municipality to explore the potentials of and constraints for urban agriculture and at the moment is collaborating with a low-income community (Surabhi Colony) to develop household kitchen gardens and a school garden at a residential school for poor girls.



MULTI STAKEHOLDER ACTION PLANNING

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

In 2005, the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH) now Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), supported by RUAF CFF, created a multi-stakeholder team that undertook a study on the scale and scope of urban agriculture in Hyderabad to explore its potentials and constraints and enable policy development and action planning on urban agriculture. In 2006 Serilingampalli was selected as the pilot municipality to explore the potential of develop pilot activities on urban agriculture. Supported by the Serilingampalli Circle-1 Municipality, the members of the Surabhi Colony (mainly women) were identified as the direct stakeholders for the pilot activities. Other stakeholders are the Andhra Pradesh Social Welfare Residential Girls High School and Junior College, and institutions such as EPTRI, Roda Mistry College of Social Work, Acharya NG Ranga Agriculture University (ANGRAU), APUSP, and more recently GHMC’s Urban Poverty Alleviation and Livelihood cell.

Participatory and multi-stakeholder policy formulation and action planning (MPAP) is a process of collaboration between urban authorities, 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 process is the joint development of a City Strategic Agenda on urban agriculture.



URBAN AGRICULTURE ON THE CITY AGENDA

Asking attention of policy makers for urban agriculture is a challenge in Hyderabad, which is a rapidly developing IT and biotech city. In addition to being involved in the exploratory study and the pilot project greening process in Serilingampalli, authorities from GHMC have conducted exposure visits to countries like the Philippines and received city stakeholders from neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka with support of RUAF-CFF. These activities have opened a window for the exchange of ideas at policy making level, especially between stakeholders of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. GHMC has expressed interest in exploring avenues to include urban agriculture as a part of its city greening programme. GHMC is also keen to pilot test the allotment garden concept in some of the open spaces close to community dwellings and to develop a city strategic agenda on urban agriculture. This agenda will include close links with self-help groups and the state of Andhra Pradesh.

SURABHI COLONY

In Serilingampalli, RUAF-CFF collaborates with members of Surabhi Colony in the development of urban agriculture on available open spaces. The community members, most of whom are women, have developed kitchen gardens next to their homes using low-space methods including vertical and aerial cultivation. They also have engaged in composting of kitchen waste and collection of water from the roof area for use in the dry season when water is insufficient for irrigation. Implements, seeds, vermicompost, neem-oil and cake, sprayers, rainwater harvesting structures and compost bins were provided to the colony members as part of the pilot project. An average yield of 3.8 kg of vegetables per household/month was harvested in the initial phase, with an average monthly saving per household of around Rs. 84 (\$2) per month, in addition to an increase in the varieties of vegetables consumed. At the Andhra Pradesh Social Welfare Residential Girls High School and Junior College located at Gowlidoddi Village in Serilingampalli Municipality over 1000 m² of land was cultivated to supplement the students’ daily vegetable and fruit requirements and also to expose the children to the importance of a balanced diet that includes vegetables and fruits.

All documents regarding this work can be found at <http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/southasia/ruaf/mate.html>

KEY RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- GMHC has expressed interest in exploring avenues to include urban agriculture as a part of its city greening programme “Greener Hyderabad” that was launched in 2008, with activities like tree planting, development of parks and gardens with the support of the welfare associations, private institutions, and schools. GMHC is keen to pilot test the allotment garden concept in some of the open spaces close to low income communities. Other suggested agricultural activities linked to this concept of urban greening are: home gardens using low-space options, school and institutional gardens, and “edible landscaping”
- GMHC also expressed interest to develop a city strategic agenda on urban agriculture. This agenda will include close links with self-help groups and the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- Urban agriculture in the form of kitchen gardens is emerging as an alternative means of improving household food security and savings. Household food security is possible, if proper guidance and technical support is made available. The most significant changes experienced by the participating households are improved access to a greater variety of fresh vegetables

and the acquisition of new skills. One of the major constraints that the city dwellers face is the lack of space. Vertical structures can increase the surface area on which to grow vegetables. Poor soils and insufficient water resources necessitate the use of novel technologies and methods to use household greywater.

- In spite of keen interest, city dwellers are sometimes reluctant to engage in urban agriculture due to their lack of information and training on the subject.
- A concerted effort to increase knowledge, skills and awareness from institutions such as the Departments of Agriculture and Horticulture along with the municipal administration is required to support urban farming.
- A clear policy framework that supports urban agriculture is needed for the productive development of open spaces. Growing perishable vegetables on these vacant spaces will in turn reduce food miles, keep the prices of vegetables low and enhance urban greening.