

# Accra, Ghana

## growing cities – growing food

### Background information:

**Location:** Eastern Coast of Ghana

**Climate:**  
mean annual temperature: 24°-27°C  
annual rainfall: 730mm

**Total Population:** 2,5 million

**Population Density:** 10,000 pers/km<sup>2</sup>

**Size of the city:** 174 km<sup>2</sup>

Authors:  
Dr. Margaret Armar-Klemesu

### Location of major urban agriculture categories in Accra



Major vegetable growing area in Dzorwulu, along the Volta River Authority power lines and adjacent to a major residential/commercial area. Building within the vicinity of the power lines is prohibited by law.



Customary land rights farming on La stool land, between the Accra International Trade Fair Center (in the background) and the Burma Camp Military Area.



Typical backyard livestock keeping in a residence on the University of Ghana Campus.

## The main urban agricultural systems

### Vegetable growing systems:

- Irrigated, market-oriented production of vegetables, relying on informal land access, usually along main drains and streams in Accra
- Customary land rights farming system: rain-fed agriculture with some dry season irrigation between Labadi and Teshie, by La residents for both market and home consumption
- Seasonal crop farming: rain-fed, seasonal agriculture relying on informal land access, with most produce for home consumption. Located in peri-urban and urban fringes.

### Animal raising systems:

- Commercial livestock farming: usually poultry, with a few examples of pigs, raised on a medium to large scale for sale to the urban market.
- Small ruminants and poultry farming: raising small livestock in densely populated areas, sometimes with a market orientation but more frequently as an investment or asset strategy.

### Other forms:

- Backyard gardening: small-scale gardening on own land or rented compound, usually for home consumption.
- Miscellaneous minor farming systems: export crop production, micro-livestock, snail farming, bee-keeping, large ruminants etc.

# Technical support services

## Accra, Ghana

UA in Accra is increasingly becoming an important component of urban food systems. As is the case with most cities the main constraints on the development of the sector have been limited access to productive resources: access to land, security of tenure, availability of water and other inputs, and a lack of support services.

Areas for intervention are:

### Land tenure security:

The authorities are developing legislation to create green zones specifically for urban and peri-urban farming. Building permits can be refused in designated green-belt areas to give existing farmers the long-term security they need.

### Provision of extension services is improving:

Information and training on bio-intensive farming methods is provided at weekly meetings with farmers groups.

### Provision of safer water for irrigation:

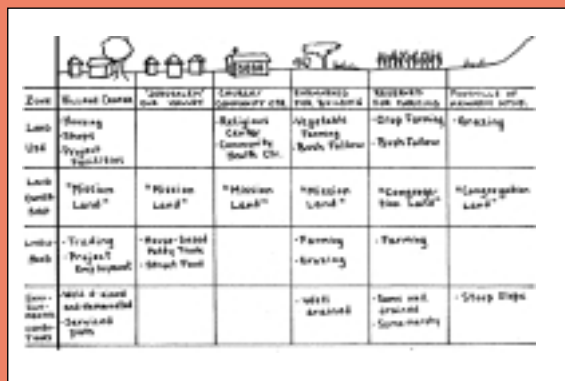
Much of the vegetable cultivation in Accra is irrigated with water from the cities streams and drains. Cleaner water provision includes the siting of a sewage treatment plant within the customary land rights farming area at La.



Photo of the plant.



A weekly meeting of the La Farmers Association.



Schematic presentation of Abokobi.

## Lessons Learned with Relevance to Other Cities

- Whilst urban agriculture is not a prohibited activity in Accra, official recognition of the practice together with the institution of the necessary administrative structures is needed for the sustained development.
- Contrary to popular belief, it is possible to formulate and implement policies and measures that address problems of land access and tenure.
- Provision and access to extension services is more effective when farmers groups are well organized.