E-mail bulletin with news of the International Network of Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RUAF Foundation).

In this bulletin you will find information on:

1. Results from the RUAF From Seed to Table Programme (2009-2011)
2. Update on ongoing RUAF projects
3. New RUAF projects in the field of cities’ adaptation to climate change
4. New issues of the Urban Agriculture Magazine
5. New postal and email addresses of the RUAF coordination office

1. RESULTS OF THE “FROM SEED TO TABLE” PROGRAMME (RUAF-FSTT)

The RUAF-FStT programme (2009-2011) focused on organizational strengthening of urban farmer groups and capacity development in these farmer groups and local support organizations regarding farming systems innovation, micro-enterprise development (in production and processing) and marketing (development of short value chains). The FStT programme was implemented in 17 cities in 17 partner countries in 7 regions. Results achieved during the entire project period can be summarized as follows:

Enhanced Capacity of Local Stakeholders
The FStT programme helped to build the capacities of 332 staff (42% women) of the local support, including NGO’s, government organisations, the local Multi-Stakeholder Forum and Universities, to better engage in the analysis, design, implementation and monitoring of sustainable urban agriculture businesses in production, processing and marketing and related innovation projects; as well as in lobbying for improved access to financial support and credit services.

Enhanced Income and Food Security of Farming Households
During the project period, in each of 17 RUAF partner cities a short value chain project has been implemented (in 1 city 2 projects) setting up one farmer-led enterprise with local urban producer groups for a variety of “Most Promising” products. These enterprises include the production and processing of (ecologically grown) vegetables or livestock products and its direct marketing to consumers, schools, supermarkets and restaurants. The Most Promising products were identified based on a participatory market analysis and the enterprises were designed in a participatory business planning process. Producer groups were supported with technical and organizational training through the implementation of several rounds of Urban Producer Field Schools and exchange visits.

It is worth mentioning that 2 out of 18 FStT projects received an award in the past 2 years: (1) The FStT project in Belo Horizonte received the 2011 certification of “best social technologies” by the Fundação Banco do Brasil de Tecnologia Social, while the Cape Town “Harvest of Hope” project won GOLD at the national Impumelelo Innovations for Sustainability Awards 2010.

All the From Seed to Table projects have promoted a wide range of technical (use of new varieties, seedling production, use of bio-pesticides, crop rotation or association, pest and diseases management, hygienic processing) and organizational innovations (joint production planning and marketing, record keeping, quality control, setting up new or improved decision-making and management structures and setting up of saving schemes/revolving funds). Fifty percent of all groups have set up a group savings scheme or revolving fund benefitting especially women (61%). On average 75% of the households involved in the 18 projects benefitted so far from an increase in income between 5-50% (average 10-25%). On average 85% of all households benefitted from improved food security (increased vegetable consumption, increased dietary diversity). Additional impacts are expected, but can only be measured after a longer period of time.
Enhanced Access of Urban Producers to Credit and Financing

In all partner cities, studies were implemented to investigate the demand and opportunities for financing urban agriculture activities by small scale producers. The studies helped to establish contacts with local credit and financing organizations and the design and implementation of lobbying strategies to enhance their involvement in financing urban agriculture. By the end of the project 23 institutions in 14 cities had connected to urban farmer groups to jointly design credit and financing schemes; 11 institutions modified their loan and financing conditions to enhance access of urban producers to financing (accepting group loans; lowering collateral requirements and interest rates), while 14 institutions increased their level of annual financing for urban agriculture.

Local and National Policy Influencing

In 14 out of 17 partner cities policies on urban agriculture have been or are being (re-)formulated. These include the formulation or update of municipal policies, laws, byelaws and ordinances on urban agriculture (such as Law 174/09 which establishes the Municipal Urban Agriculture Policy for Belo Horizonte, and the bye-law on wastewater irrigation for urban agriculture in Accra), the inclusion of urban agriculture into city master, land use and development plans (such as in Amman where urban agriculture has been successfully mainstreamed in the new master plan), or new financing schemes for urban agriculture activities (such as in Beijing and Shanghai).

In addition to local level policy influencing, RUAF-FStT also has been supporting policy and programme development on urban agriculture in 12 provinces/states or countries. This includes the development of specific policies and/or programmes on urban agriculture (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Colombia, Brazil, Western Province Sri Lanka) and its integration in the national agricultural policy or programme (Sierra Leone, India, Burkina Faso), food security policy (Benin), urban development policy (Ghana) or “green areas” policy (Burkina Faso). In Ghana and Nigeria, urban agriculture has also been integrated into the agricultural extension system. In India, it has been added to the national 12th five year plan on agriculture development. In Ghana, urban agriculture was included in the Medium-Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan 2011-2015, while policy recommendations were submitted to integrate urban agriculture into the new Urban Development Policy for Ghana. In Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Agriculture has included urban agriculture as a part of the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme in Western Area (Freetown).

More results of -and case studies on- the RUAF-FStT programme are presented in a number of articles in the Urban Agriculture Magazine no. 24: "From Seed to Table: Developing Urban Agriculture Value Chains", and in Urban Agriculture Magazine no. 25: "RUAF 10 Years". Both issues are available at the RUAF website (www.ruaf.org).

For further information please contact: Marielle Dubbeling, RUAF FStT global project coordinator (m.dubbeling@ruaf.org).

2. UPDATE ON ONGOING RUAF PROJECTS

Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture in Liberia

RUAF collaborates with CARE Netherlands and Welthungerhilfe (WHH) in two EC supported programmes on the enhancement of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) in Liberia. These programmes, in the cities of Greater Monrovia, Tubmanburg and Gbarnga, will come to an end this year. RUAF facilitates Multi-stakeholder platforms on urban agriculture and the development of city strategic agenda’s in these cities. The EU has approved a new programme led by WHH which foresees in continued support to urban agriculture, adding a nutrition and backyard gardening component implemented by Action Against Hunger (Action Contra la Faim).

More information with r.van.veenhuizen@ruaf.org; the coordinators of WHH: andre.stelder@welthungerhilfe.de and CARE Liberia: lynda.garvin@co.care.org or at the website on UPA in Liberia at: upa-liberia.wetpaint.com.

WASH and Food Security

RUAF is a thematic partner in the Dutch WASH Alliance (DWA), which started in 2011 a major five year water and sanitation programme with co-funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project seeks to sustainably improve access of the urban poor to water and sanitation. RUAF collaborates with DWA and partners in Nepal, Ghana, Kenya, and Ethiopia with a special focus on the productive use of household wastewater. With University of Development Studies in Ghana, ENPHO and BSP in Nepal, University of Nairobi and Practical Action in Kenya, and HCS-Ripple in Ethiopia, assessments have been undertaken in Tamale (Ghana), Surkhet (Nepal), Kajiado (Kenya), and Dire Dawa (Ethiopia). The results of the assessments have been discussed with multiple stakeholders in these cities as a start of joint planning of strategies and activities.
SWITCH
The EC co-funded SWITCH programme on Sustainable Urban Water management recently came to an end. RUAF partner ETC coordinated the action research and demonstrations in Lima, Beijing and Accra regarding productive use of waste and collected storm water in urban agriculture. Over the 6 years of SWITCH a wealth of information has been produced. The final report, a transition manual, a training kit and the book "SWITCH in the City", as well as all major documents are available at: www.switchurbanwater.eu

3. NEW RUAF ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF UPA AND CITIES’ ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Monitoring impacts of urban and peri-urban agriculture and forestry on climate change adaptation and mitigation

Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture and Forestry (UPAF) was recognized at the International Tripartite Conference on Urban Challenges and Poverty Reduction in ACP countries as having high potential for improving the urban environment and urban adaptation to climate change (UN-HABITAT 2009). UPAF is often credited with providing the following benefits:

- Reducing “food miles” by producing fresh food close to urban markets
- Reducing fertilizer use and energy consumption by productive re-use of urban organic wastes
- Recycling wastewater and freeing up water for other uses
- Enhancing rainwater infiltration
- Reducing the urban heat island effect by increasing the surface of green areas
- Enhancing carbon sequestration (urban forests)
- Providing better diets, urban food security, jobs and income

However, for UPAF to be promoted as an effective component of climate compatible development strategies and plans, and for it to benefit from climate change financing, there is a need for greater empirical evidence and quantification of these benefits. To this end, a multi-partner alliance was created and the project “Monitoring impacts of urban and peri-urban agriculture and forestry on climate change adaptation and mitigation” was initiated by RUAF with co-funding from the CDKN Innovation Fund. The alliance includes experts, decision-makers and representatives of international organisations and networks from the following organisations: Chinese Academy for Environmental Planning; Ministry of Environmental Protection, China; Ministry of Agriculture, Agrarian Development, Minor Irrigation, Industries and Environment, Western Province Sri Lanka; Ministry of Water, Public Services and Environment; Santa Fe Province Argentina; the International Water Management Institute IWMI, the Institute of Geographic Sciences & Natural Resources Research IGSNRR; the National University of Rosario; Council of the Science and Technology Centre; Plant Research International (PPO/PRI) of the Wageningen University; Adaptify; the School of Forestry of the University of Florida; The World Bank and UN-HABITAT.

The aim is to jointly design a conceptual and methodological framework for monitoring and quantifying the (potential) impacts of Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture and Forestry on cities’ climate change mitigation and adaptation and other developmental co-benefits of UPAF. Where possible, such a framework will build on existing work on GHG inventories and vulnerability assessments.

For further contact: Marielle Dubbeling (RUAF Foundation): m.dubbeling@ruaf.org

Integrating urban and peri-urban agriculture and forestry in city climate change strategies

In collaboration with UN-HABITAT, RUAF Foundation will support 3 partner cities in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Burkina Faso to integrate urban and peri-urban agriculture and forestry in their city climate change and disaster risk reduction strategies and plans. The project will run for the period March 2012 - December 2013. The potentials and limitations of various replicable models of UPAF (e.g. community gardens, “productive parks”, green roofs, vertical and hanging gardens in slum upgrading programmes, agro-forestry on steep slopes, horticulture and aquaculture in floodplains,...) for application in city and climate change programmes will be assessed and replicable designs / packages of “good practices” for each of these UPAF models (with information on the technical, socio-organizational and financial aspects of their application) will be prepared for use at city level.

The implementation of such UPAF models in the 3 cities will be closely monitored in order to collect additional data on the climate change impacts of the various UPAF-models, applying the indicators and tools developed in the above mentioned RUAF-CDKN project.

Results of the project will be used enhance the integration of UPAF in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and plans of other cities as well as in CC compatible development strategies, land use plans, urban greening and food security strategies, disaster risk management strategies; and climate change financing.
4. NEW ISSUES OF THE URBAN AGRICULTURE MAGAZINE

No 25 available online: “RUAF ten years”
The latest Urban Agriculture Magazine, no. 25 also includes an overview of other programmes developed by RUAF over the past 10 years and discusses challenges in the coming years. The magazine is available on-line and can be downloaded from www.ruaf.org.

Call for No 26: Sustainable financing of urban water, sanitation and UPA
In no 25, we called for the next issue on “Sustainable Financing of Urban Water and Sanitation and Agriculture”. In this issue we will publish a number of articles related to innovative financing and business approaches related to the nexus of water, sanitation, energy and agriculture in an urban setting. But we can still accept your experiences also. The extended deadline is now: 1 July, 2012. This issue of the UA-Magazine will be developed in cooperation with, and financially supported by, the Dutch WASH Alliance (DWA). Experiences on sustainable financing and business approach to sanitation, and on finance and business development in urban agriculture will included in this issue.

Linking water and sanitation, and solid waste management to food production offers opportunities for win-win situations by turning waste into productive resources, improve income and food situation of the poor, while potentially reducing the costs of waste management and reducing environmental damage due to waste disposal. Urban, peri-urban and rural producers need these low priced nutrients and irrigation water for their crops and animals (see earlier issues of the UA Magazine” 20, 21, 23). Increasingly there is agreement on the need for paradigm shifts from subsidies towards cost recovery in sanitation and from disposal to processing for reuse. Urban and peri-urban areas are hot spots for various resource recovery options. Challenges are in up-scaling, the economics of waste management and re-use; the involvement of various actors -first of all the private sector; and the need for appropriate regulation.

See the full call at www.ruaf.org.

You can send your contribution to the Editor UA-Magazine at info@ruaf.org.

5. NEW RUAF ADDRESS

The RUAF coordination in the Netherlands would like to inform you of its new office and email addresses:

Postal and visiting address: Kastanjelaan 5, 3833 AN Leusden, the Netherlands
Telephone: +31-(0)33-4343003
E-mail secretariat: info@ruaf.org (secretary: Mrs Desiree Dirkzwager)

Email addresses of the RUAF-coordination team:
Ir. Henk de Zeeuw (h.dezeeuw@ruaf.org)
Ir. Marielle Dubbeling (m.dubbeling@ruaf.org)
Ir. René van Veenhuizen (r.van.veenhuizen@ruaf.org)

Website: www.ruaf.org

Please, feel free to forward this bulletin. Back issues of RUAF Update are available on the RUAF website. You are very welcome to send us your comments regarding this e-mail bulletin.

Subscribe
If this message was forwarded to you and you wish to subscribe to the RUAF Update e-mail service, you can do this by sending an e-mail to ruaf-news-on@ruaf.org.

Unsubscribe
If you wish to unsubscribe to the RUAF Update e-mail bulletin, please send an email to ruaf-news-off@ruaf.org.