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## Urban food sovereignty: Food, land and democracy in Kampala

Christopher Yap

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# Urban food sovereignty: Food, land and democracy in Kampala

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**Abstract.** In urban centres across East Africa, the combination of the Global Food Crisis and unprecedented rates of urbanisation has resulted in chronic food insecurity for the urban poor. Urban agriculture is widely practiced across the region, particularly by low-income groups. The purpose of this paper is to consider how one response to the prevailing, inequitable world food system, Food Sovereignty, might be realised through urban agriculture and the ways that the realities of urban agriculture might be used to strengthen the Food Sovereignty Framework as it is currently conceived.

In this paper I explore the current and potential significance of urban agriculture in Kampala and review the evidence

for the contribution of urban food production to the realisation of Food Sovereignty with particular focus on the Right to Food, land reform and democratic control. I also outline some of the practical, social and legal challenges facing urban food producers and identify some opportunities for the city authorities to improve the support for pro-poor urban agriculture.

I argue that whilst urban agriculture is making a significant contribution to the realisation of the Right to Food at household level, a number of institutional and social challenges are restricting the impact of urban agriculture as an inclusive, pro-poor development activity.



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## List of acronyms

- CBO - Community Based Organisation
- CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- CFS - FAO Committee on World Food Security
- CGIAR - Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
- CSM - Civil Society Mechanism
- CSO - Civil Society Organisation
- FAO - Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
- GMO - Genetically Modified Organism
- ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- IFPRI - International Food Policy Research Institute
- IMF - International Monetary Fund
- KADFA - Kampala District Farmers Association
- KCC - Kampala City Council
- KCCA - Kampala Capital City Authority
- KRRS - Karnataka State Farmers Association
- KUFSAALCC - Kampala Urban Food Security and Livestock Coordination Committee
- MST - Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Landless Workers Movement)
- RDA - Recommended Daily Allowance
- RUAF - Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security
- NAADS - National Agricultural Advisory Services
- NGO - Non Governmental Organisation
- PROVE - Verticalização da Pequena Produção (Small Agricultural Production Verticalisation Programme)
- SACCO - Savings and Credit Cooperative
- UN - United Nations
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
- UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlement Programme
- UA - Urban Agriculture



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# 1. Introduction

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We are living through an unprecedented global food crisis. The crisis is often described in terms of the rising number of people hungry or the increasing price of food; in 2009 1.02 billion people went hungry every day (FAO, 2009) and since 2006 the global price of cereals has increased by 180% (FAO, 2012b). But the crisis has a number of dimensions. Population growth, climate change, rising oil prices, changing eating habits, the rise of agrofuels, increased financial speculation in food markets and the indiscriminate implementation of Neoliberal policies have led to a 'perfect storm'<sup>1</sup> of social and environmental degradation. Today, agriculture is a part of the global capitalist system and increasingly synonymous with unsustainability, inequality and injustice.

Over the past fifty years, Green Revolution farming technologies have transformed the world food system, contributing to the loss of biodiversity, irreversible soil erosion and the over exploitation of precious resources including water. Trade liberalisation and 'Modernising' development models inspired by Walt Whitman Rostow<sup>2</sup> have displaced countless small-scale farmers and food producers from livelihoods that are deemed antiquated, inefficient and unnecessary. Politically driven agricultural policies have led to an indefensible international system of subsidies and intellectual property rights protecting transnational agricultural corporations. In short, the prevailing world food system is characterised by sustained environmental exploitation and the persistent marginalisation and disempowerment of the world's most vulnerable people.

The effects of the Food Crisis are exacerbated by rapid global urbanisation; modern cities represent both the highest concentrations of poverty and the highest per capita cost to the environment. More than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas. This has risen from just 29.4% in 1950 and it is expected to rise to 67.2% by 2050 (UN, 2011). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the urban poor are juxtaposed with unprecedented rates of 'modernisation' and inequitable urban development. In many cases, the combined effect of the Food Crisis and rapid urbanisation is chronic food insecurity for the urban poor.

Resistance to the prevailing system has been widespread but slow to unite. In 2008, 'Food Riots' occurred in cities across the world in response to the high and volatile prices of staple foods and in 2011 citizens in Kampala rioted alongside opposition politicians over the increasing prices of food and fuel. However the riots were isolated

and their energy ultimately dissipated. Whilst the rise to prominence of 'Organic' farming represents alternative priorities and aspirations, it is very much a product of the prevailing political-economic paradigm, that is, a system characterised by trade liberalisation, the decreasing role of the state and stringent private property laws.

The historian Eric Hobsbawm wrote that the "death of the peasant class...[had] cut us off forever from the world of the past" (1994, p.289), and yet in 2012 internationally coordinated peasant movements, exemplified by La Via Campesina, represent the greatest challenge to the dominant, deleterious world food system. Formed in 1993, Via Campesina represents millions of smallholder farmers, landless-workers and artisanal producers worldwide. This dynamic and democratic organisation speaks on behalf of its members in the highest international policy circles on issues such as agrarian and water reform, workers' rights and Food Sovereignty.

Food Sovereignty is the right of people to define their own food systems, including where the food comes from, who produces it and how it is produced. The Food Sovereignty Movement is a challenge to the prevailing world food system that seeks to put producers and consumers, rather than markets and corporations, at the centre of decisions on food policy. At its core, Food Sovereignty is about the redistribution of power in favour of the poorest and most vulnerable people around the world, offering a radical path to sustainable development, self-determination and the preservation of human dignity. It is first and foremost a Peoples' Movement, a radical and spontaneous reaction to the various crises resulting from the current, unsustainable paradigm.

This paper focuses on Kampala where, like many urban centres in the sub-tropical region of East Africa, urban agriculture is widely practiced. Kampala is an important case study firstly because of the dynamic and relatively well-documented juxtaposition of urban development and urban agriculture but also because of the pioneering by-laws passed by the City Council in 2005 to legalise and regulate urban food production.

The purpose of this paper is to consider how one response to the prevailing, inequitable world food system, Food Sovereignty, might be realised through urban agriculture and the ways that the realities of urban agriculture might be used to strengthen the Food Sovereignty Framework as it is currently conceived.

In the context of Kampala I explore the current and potential significance of urban agriculture and review the evidence for the contribution of urban food production to the realisation of Food Sovereignty with particular focus on the Right to Food, land reform and democratic engagement. I also outline some of the challenges facing urban food producers and identify some opportunities for the city authorities to improve the support for pro-poor urban agriculture. I argue that whilst urban agriculture is

making a significant contribution to the realisation of the Right to Food at household level, a number of institutional and social challenges are restricting the impact of urban agriculture as an inclusive, pro-poor development activity. This analysis is based upon a desk review of a wide range of materials including primary legal documents, field reports, and academic and non-academic literature as well as consultations with experts in the field of urban agriculture based at the University of Makerere.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

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1. The term was first used in the UN 2009 report, *World Economic Situation and Prospects* in reference to the multiple causes of the global food shortages in 2008.

2. See Rostow, 1960, *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*.

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## 2. The significance and limitations of urban agriculture

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### 2.1. Introduction to urban agriculture

The FAO estimates that there are over 800 million urban farmers across six continents. One widely cited definition comes from Mougeot:

*“Urban agriculture is an industry located within, or on the fringe of, a town, city or metropolis, which grows and raises, processes and distributes a diversity of food and non-food products (re)using largely human and material resources, found in and around that urban area, and in turn supplying human and material resources, products and services largely to that urban area”* (2000, p.10).

Rapid urbanisation, resulting from natural growth, rural to urban migration and reclassification, is precipitating new land uses and the creation of the peri-urban. The peri-urban is distinct from the suburban for its high diversity of land uses; *urban* and *rural* activities can coexist. The peri-urban is also notable as a zone of complex rural-urban linkages. However, for the purposes of this paper, urban agriculture is taken to refer to both urban and peri-urban activities. Globally, people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds practice urban agriculture; the primary reasons are for subsistence, commerce, recreation, or a combination of these. However in East African urban centres, farming is largely informal and practiced by women for subsistence and commerce.

Urban agriculture is distinct from rural agriculture in terms of spaces utilised, farming systems and techniques. In this instance, rural agriculture refers both to Green Revolution technologies and traditional, indigenous farming methods. Urban practitioners make conscious, productive use of idle or otherwise unusable land; the constructive use of urban voids, institutional and communal spaces, rooftops and gardens represents not only a creative diversification of space but also a new way of *conceptualising* and interacting with the environment. The proximity to market for urban producers<sup>3</sup> is a comparative advantage, potentially reducing the time, distance and cost of transport and storage, shortening value chains in favour of producers. And whilst it is important to avoid *The Local Trap* as identified by Born and Purcell (2006), by which locally produced food are believed to be *inherently* ‘better for you’ or more environmentally sustainable, the relatively smaller distances between sites of production, sale and consumption do mean a greater *potential* for Carbon reduction in the future.

Modern cities also provide an abundance of organic waste, for which authorities must find complex and costly solutions. Urban agriculture has the potential to make productive use of organic waste, rainwater and urban grey water; the potential efficiency of urban agriculture is reflected along the supply chain.

Urban farmers grow a greater proportion of fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices than their rural counterparts. This is partly a response to the lack of space for efficient yields of staple crops, but also because fruits and vegetables represent higher nutritional and monetary value per cultivated square metre and thus, on a small scale, represent a better investment. Moreover, urban producers frequently combine traditional farming methods with innovative techniques to make best productive use of *new* agricultural spaces.

### 2.2. The current and potential significance of urban agriculture

Urban agriculture has the potential not only to alleviate hunger in urban areas and contribute to food security, but also for great economic and socio-political significance. It provides an important non-market source of food for vulnerable households. In Harare, 60% of food consumed by low-income groups was self-produced (Bowyer-Bower and Drakakis-Smith, 1996) and in Dar es Salaam, nearly 50% of 260 residents reported that urban agriculture provides 20-30% of their household food (Sawio, 1993 cited in Armar Klemesu, 2001, p.104). Urban agriculture can impact significantly on the health of urban residents by increasing the availability of fresh food, vitamins and minerals. Urban farmers also grow a range of homeopathic plants to provide medicine for those unable to afford formal healthcare.

Urban Agriculture is increasingly being recognised as an important livelihood strategy, providing jobs and security for the most vulnerable. It can provide both formal and informal employment opportunities not only for urban farmers, but also food processors, wholesalers and vendors as well as impacting spin-off industries along the entire food/value chain. Viewed as a livelihood strategy, we can interpret the urban crops and livestock as important material assets, providing a degree of security and insurance against poverty.

In Sub-Saharan East Africa, urban agriculture is largely an informal activity; like much of the informal economy it is dominated by women (Prain, Karanja and Lee Smith, 2010, p.18). Urban agriculture is consistently linked to the empowerment of women by virtue of its economic potential and the greater percentage of female practitioners. However this represents a particularly narrow conception of *empowerment*; a diluted and distinctly non-radical notion of *power* that has come to dominate discussions of gender and development in the Global South<sup>4</sup>. It is important to resist making *a priori* claims about the transformative potential of urban agriculture; within the current paradigm, the practice does not *necessitate* transformative structural or social change. In reality urban food production may be responsible for reproducing and consolidating existing inequalities. It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider the extent to which economic empowerment might serve as proxy for genuine transformational change, however it is important to note that the realisation of urban agriculture's potential in East Africa will be driven above all by women. Moreover, this paper is an attempt to consider how urban agriculture can be a means to female empowerment within the Food Sovereignty Framework.

In cities such as Kampala, where there is widespread gender discrimination as well as inter-generational, ethnic and class tensions, the practice of urban agriculture can 'bridge' fractured groups and promote inclusive urban development. Urban agriculture can be a significant force for social integration whereby disempowered and vulnerable urban dwellers have the opportunity to work constructively to create and define their own community and space. Urban agriculture can be instrumental in transforming a *space* into a *place*, both materially and socially, in the face of overwhelming marginalisation.

In some cities the social cohesion associated with urban agriculture has translated into a high degree of political organisation and activism. Urban producer associations, such as the *Huerteros* Network in Rosario, Argentina, have successfully lobbied the municipal government to improve their access to land and resources and participated in urban planning and budgeting (Santandreu and Castro, 2007).

### 2.3. Recognising urban agriculture

The first explicit multi-lateral declaration of support for urban agriculture was the 1996 UN-Habitat Agenda. The Agenda implores governments to incorporate green spaces and land for urban agriculture into local land use strategies and refers explicitly to essential inputs for urban agriculture, including access to land, credit and resources.

In 2000, the Quito Declaration became the first Declaration to explicitly acknowledge the role urban agriculture

plays in improving living conditions for the urban poor. The Declaration is significant for the wide range of stakeholders involved in drafting and signing the document. It refers to the role of urban agriculture in increasing the poor's food intake, generating income and jobs for the most vulnerable and improving the urban environment. The Quito Declaration was followed by a number of other city-based declarations, notably the Harare Declaration (2003) and the La Paz Declaration (2007).

Lastly, many individual cities have highly developed legislative frameworks, policies and implementation strategies promoting urban agriculture. Notable examples include Havana, Beijing, Lima, Vancouver and Rosario. A number of NGOs such as the Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RUAFA) are also facilitating urban producers worldwide through a combination of research, advocacy, extension services and capacity building programmes.

### 2.4. Challenges, constraints and the limits of urban agriculture

Today, pro-poor urban agriculture is receiving greater recognition and support than ever before, however a number of important challenges remain. Farmers from low-income groups face the challenges of securing access to land, credit and farming inputs, which often require an initial investment or security that is beyond the poorest would-be producers. The unregulated nature of urban agriculture in many East African cities combined with a lack of health education means that there are a variety of health risks associated with urban food production. Urban surface run-off, unsanitary drainage and animal waste can contaminate water used for washing produce and irrigation. *E. Coli* and *Salmonella*, increased exposure to mosquitos attracted to standing water and zoonosis are all real potential risks (Cole, Lee Smith and Nasinyama, 2008, pp.151-169).

In the past urban food production programmes, such as PROVE in Brazil, have suffered a lack of political commitment; PROVE was abandoned after the 2002 change of government. Furthermore, commitment to a Declaration of Support is often based on the personal interest of the signatory and not a binding institutional commitment (Cabannes, 2011, p.23). In other cases, the arbitrary conception of cities as *places of consumption* rather than *places of production* means that urban agriculture is perceived as irreconcilable with *modernity*. And with regards to Uganda, the World Bank noted:

*"One consequence of having food as the engine of agricultural growth is the dependence on the growth in domestic [urban] demand for continued impetus."* (1993, cited in Maxwell, 1999, p.1948).

This is to say that urban agriculture could unbalance or even undermine existing national development strategies.

Urban agriculture cannot fulfill its full potential, as described above, within the current, Neoliberal paradigm.

Its full social, political and environmental impact can only be realised after substantial reform. In the next section I shall describe how, within the Food Sovereignty framework urban agriculture can contribute significantly to pro-poor human and economic development.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

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3. The term, *urban producers*, is used to refer not only to urban farmers but also those involved in post-harvest production.

4. See Cornwall and Nana Akua, 2010, *Women's Empowerment: Contentions and Contestations*

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## 3. Food sovereignty, food security and the right to food

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The notion of Food Sovereignty did not develop in a vacuum; it represents one position in an ongoing postwar dialectic on the global food system. In order to meaningfully discuss Food Sovereignty it is important to outline the frameworks and events that led to its development. Food Sovereignty is most frequently contrasted with Food Security, however there are several areas of overlap; the most significant is with regards to the Right to Food. The purpose of this section is to give some explanation of Food Sovereignty, its origins and conceptualisation and how it relates to the Right to Food, the concept of food security and the Food Security Framework.

### 3.1. The right to food

The Right to adequate food is realised when every man, woman and child, alone and in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement (UN Social and Economic Council, 1999). The Right to Food was first described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

*“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food...”* (UN, 1948, Article 25).

It received binding legal status in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The ICESCR affirmed both the ‘Right to Food’ and the ‘Right to be Free from Hunger’. Both documents were products of the political context in which they were written, the former, crucially, coming directly after a period of unprecedented state intervention into agriculture during the Second World War. Human Rights define the relationship between two parties: the rights’ holder and the duty bearer. In the words of Jeremy Bentham “Wants are not means; hunger is not bread” (2002, p.330); initially, the Right to Food corresponded closely with the duty of the state to provide.

The Right to Food can be constitutionally protected by the state either explicitly or implicitly through the national legislative framework, it may be enforceable through the applicability of international treaties with higher status than national law or a combination of these. The UK for example had already signed the ICESCR when it incorporated the European Convention for the Protection of

Human Rights into British domestic law through the 1998 Human Rights Act, leading to a *dualist* system of protection. In 2011, the Right to Food was either explicitly or implicitly guaranteed in 56 countries. In at least other 51 countries the Right is directly applicable through binding international treaties, meaning that there are at least 106 countries legally guaranteeing the Right to Food (Knuth and Vidar, 2011, p.32).

### 3.2. Food security

The Food Security Framework refers to the prevailing world food system, developed over the last three decades with the evolving conception of food security at its core. Since the term ‘food security’ was first used at the 1974 World Food Conference, its definition has changed to reflect the broader political-economic climate. Advocates of Food Sovereignty charge that ‘food security’ holds a spurious, even dangerous, position at the centre of discussions on the global food system. At the 1974 Conference, ‘food security’ was conceived as:

*“[the] availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices”* (UN, 1974, cited in FAO, 2003).

The initial conception was state-centric, framing both the problem and solution at a national level with the state as the main actor and guarantor of the Right to Food. The term was coined to refer to role of the state in ensuring and protecting the availability of food for its citizens predominantly using the tools of market intervention, investment in technology to increase production and food aid.

In the 1980s, ‘food security’ was reconceived at an individual level, reflecting both the work of Amartya Sen and the prevailing current of Neoliberalism. In his seminal book, *Poverty and Famines* (1981), Sen argued that famine was not a result of the lack of food but rather the lack of access. This is to say that national or city wide food security did not *necessarily* imply increased food security at household level and that increased food security at household level did not *necessarily* imply increased individual food security within the household due to internal power relationships. In 1983 the concept was developed to include the impor-

tance of access to food. In 1986 this was expanded again to include *sufficient access to maintain an active, healthy life* (FAO 2003). The new paradigm saw the notion of food security redefined in terms of individual choice, purchasing power and consumption. The World Bank and the WTO actively supported trade liberalisation and the commercialisation of agriculture as the most effective means to food security. By 1994 the World Bank declared:

*“Food is a commodity. Access to it is largely a function of income and asset distribution, as well as of the functioning... of food production and market systems”* (1994, p.134).

In 1996 at the World Food Summit, the FAO made the first inclusion of *food preferences*. In part, this reflected the demands of the rapidly growing global smallholder movements, spearheaded by Via Campesina.

*“Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels [is achieved] when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”* (FAO, 1996, Item 1)

In 2006 the FAO defined Food Security under four headings: food availability, food access, utilisation and stability. ‘Food availability’ refers to the availability of sufficient quantity and quality of food, whether it is supplied through domestic production, imports or food aid. ‘Food access’ is the individual’s access to the adequate resources for acquiring food, including material resources and legal, political and social “*entitlements*”. ‘Utilisation’ refers predominantly to the non-food inputs of Food Security including clean water, sanitation and healthcare. ‘Stability’ pertains to both ‘Access’ and ‘Availability’. It is the reliability of adequate food through either natural or manmade crises and is related to the notion of *resilience*. Today, the concise definition reads:

*“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”* (FAO, 2012)

Advocates of Food Sovereignty argue that in reality, the concept of food security has been used to justify massive social, cultural and environmental degradation. As Michel Pimbert explains,

*“The mainstream definition of food security, endorsed at food summits and other high level conferences, talks about everybody having enough good food to eat each day. But it doesn’t talk about where the food comes from, who produced it, or the conditions under which it was grown”* (2008, p.50).

The Framework has been used to create and sustain the prevailing world food system; a system where unnatural food is unsustainably grown with the aid of damaging chemical inputs as a commodity for export, to be stored and transported by sea or air to distant places and sold at artificially low prices.

### 3.3. Food sovereignty and La Via Campesina

Via Campesina is an umbrella organisation for a number of disparate movements, including the influential *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST) and the Karnataka State Farmers Association (KRRS). The organisation, which originated as an advocate for agrarian reform, has come to represent wider political opposition to Globalisation. Their 1996 Declaration, *Food Sovereignty: A Future Without Hunger* reads:

*“Food sovereignty is the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory.”* (Via Campesina, 1996)

Based upon the knowledge, priorities and aspirations of small-scale food producers, Food Sovereignty is characterised by the reappropriation of the term peasant. Food Sovereignty preserves a number of important elements of the Food Security Framework, including the importance of *access, preference, nutrition and the Right to Food*. The language of the Movement is politically charged; advocates emphasise the importance of autonomy and control over the modes of production. It is a transformative process towards the realisation of the right to self-determination, the equitable redistribution of power, democracy, and social justice.

Via Campesina have expressed their vision of Food Sovereignty in seven mutually supportive principles. These principles form the foundation of the Movement to which other authors and groups have contributed. They are:

1. Food – A Basic Human Right
2. Agrarian Reform
3. Democratic Control
4. Protecting Natural Resources
5. Reorganising Food Trade
6. Ending the Globalisation of Hunger
7. Social Peace

Each of the principles represents a necessary but insufficient condition within the holistic framework. The fulfilment of one of the principles cannot be at the expense of another. This is in contrast to the Food Security Framework wherein, for example, mass food production is often, even routinely, harmful to the environment. This fragmentation is one of the greatest weaknesses of the Food

Security Framework. However, for the purposes of analysis, it is also necessary to consider the principles of Food Sovereignty in isolation, with the caveat that in clarifying the analysis, we are compromising it.

For the purposes of analysis, this paper focuses upon three of the Principles of Food Sovereignty: the Right to Food, Agrarian Reform and Democratic Control. This approach is informed by impressions made after preliminary reading on urban agricultural practices in Kampala and by a desk review that demonstrated the gaps in research relating to the remaining four principles, such as on the environmental sustainability of urban agricultural practices and food market dynamics for low income groups.

**1. Food as a basic human right.** This invokes not only the most recent conceptions of the Right to Food, but also food security as defined by the FAO. The Right to Food has been realised when all people within a community have physical and economic access to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food, of sufficient quantity and quality to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The Right to Food must be constitutionally guaranteed. The realisation of Right to Food, in isolation, does not necessarily imply positive, transformational change; the realisation of the Right could be both socially and environmentally unsustainable. Within the Food Security Framework, the Right to Food is frequently misrepresented as the duty of the state to feed its people. However, within the Food Sovereignty paradigm, the Right to Food is inextricably linked to social justice, environmental sustainability and human dignity. As Ziegler (nd) writes:

*“The right to food is a human right. It protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition. The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves in dignity.”*

Whilst the Right to Food forms the fundamental basis of both the Food Security and Sovereignty Frameworks it is more justly represented by Food Sovereignty.

**2. Agrarian reform.** The central issue of agrarian reform is land reform, justified by the axiom that, “The land belongs to those who work it” (Via Campesina, 1996). However as Borras and Franco write,

*“While land (re)distribution is the ‘heart’ of agrarian reform, post land (re)distribution support service packages and favourable rural development policies are the ‘soul’. The two are inseparable. It is in this context that one should consider the relationship between land reform and food sovereignty”* (2011, p.114)

Via Campesina make recommendations for the role of the state, which include the provision of extension services and support for decentralised credit schemes. *Ownership and control* of land implies “authority over the nature, pace, extent and direction of surplus production, distribution and disposition” (Ibid, p.108). Some factions of Via Campesina have a more radical conception of Agrarian Reform. João Pedro Stédile, one of the founding mem-

Figure 3.1. Author’s adaptation of Via Campesina, 1996.



bers of the MST, emphasises the need to move beyond the notion of ownership and reconceptualise farmers as guardians of the land (2002, p.100), that is, not to conceive of land as private property at all.

To date, the most progressive example of pro-Food Sovereignty agrarian reform is in Cuba. Whilst there is no national law on the Right to Food, the interests and livelihoods of small-scale farmers are protected by a number of separate laws. The 1959 and 1963 laws on Agrarian Reform limit land ownership and guarantee distribution to those who work it. Moreover the 1976 Constitution,

*“Recognises that small farmers have the right to legal ownership of their lands and other real estate and personal property necessary to work their land.”* (cited in UN Human Rights Council, 2008, paragraph 32)

The Cuban government has created a supportive environment for small-scale farmers to realise their Right to Food and achieve Food Sovereignty. Cuban producers are empowered through productive and dignified livelihoods, guaranteed and protected by the state.

**3. Democratic Control.** This refers to the need for decisions regarding food policy and agriculture to be made by producers and consumers. If democratic control is achieved it will be possible to identify the involvement of CSOs and CBOs in local, national and international policymaking. This should be reflected in the democratisation of policy making institutions, including the UN, and be accompanied by meaningful citizens’ engagement and participation in democratic process accompanied by good governance and accountability.

**4. Protecting Natural Resources.** This requires recognition that Green Revolution farming methods are unsustainable. This also means the end of ‘Biopiracy’ (Shiva, 1997), international patenting and the commercialisation of indigenous knowledge that threaten livelihoods and cultural integrity. Indicators include the sustainable care and use of natural resources pertaining vitally to the protection of biodiversity. Walden Bello emphasises the notion of “ecological stewardship” which relates to the protection of natural resources and the reconceptualisation of farmers as ‘guardians of the land’, as championed by the MST.

In 2007, over 600 smallholder farmers and artisanal producers met in Mali for the Nyéleni Forum discussion on Food Sovereignty. The Final Statement contains a renewed appeal to utilise indigenous knowledge to work *with* rather than against nature. This is linked to the broader rejection of GMOs by the Movement.

**5. Reorganisation of Food Trade.** This will mean a re-focus on production for domestic consumption and an end to food ‘dumping’. Peter Rosset, speaking in 2008, stresses the need to rebuild national grain reserves (cited in Bello, 2009, p.137). The reorganisation must reflect a reconceptualisation of food as a source of nutrition rather than a commodity for sale. Food prices should reflect the true cost of production and food should never be used as a means of accumulating foreign currency to pay national debts (Via Campesina, 1996, cited in Pimbert, 2008, p.44). The Nyéleni Forum emphasises the importance of proximity between the location of production and consumption.

**6. Ending of the Globalisation of Hunger.** This can be brought about by the withdrawal of international, multi-lateral institutions from agriculture. Via Campesina argue that the work of the WTO, World Bank and IMF in particular, undermines the attainment of Food Sovereignty in the Global South.

**7. Social Peace.** This refers to the end of “food as a weapon”. This relates to the reconceptualisation of food as an item of nutrition and is directed towards the increased oppression, displacement and physical violence towards small-scale farmers under the capitalist system.

### 3.4 The limits of food sovereignty

There are a number of *prima facie* limitations to the current Food Sovereignty framework such as the simplistic conception of the relationship between secure land tenure and food security. Over the last twenty years the link between land tenure and to food security has been represented by a linear model: secure tenure leads to increased agricultural production, which leads to increased income, which leads to increased consumption and finally to improved nutritional status. In reality, the linkages are far more complex. Maxwell and Wiebe’s conception of the relationship is pictured in Figure 3.2.

The lower half of this diagram represents the conventional areas of food security research, centred on access and *availability*. The right side represents the conventional areas of land tenure research, centered on *capital*. ‘Consumption and Investment Decisions’ are the critical but often overlooked point in the cycle. (Consumption in this instance is a form of investment in nutrition and health). This reconceptualisation of the relationship between food security and land tenure challenges the assumption that private land tenure is the most *efficient* way to improve food security (a position that could only be justified in a linear framework). In reality, all decisions regarding investment, consumption, production and exchange feedback into one another to influence household food security.

The Food Sovereignty framework as currently conceived does not advocate for private land tenure, although the conception of the relationship is as simplistic and linear as the one rejected by Maxwell and Wiebe.

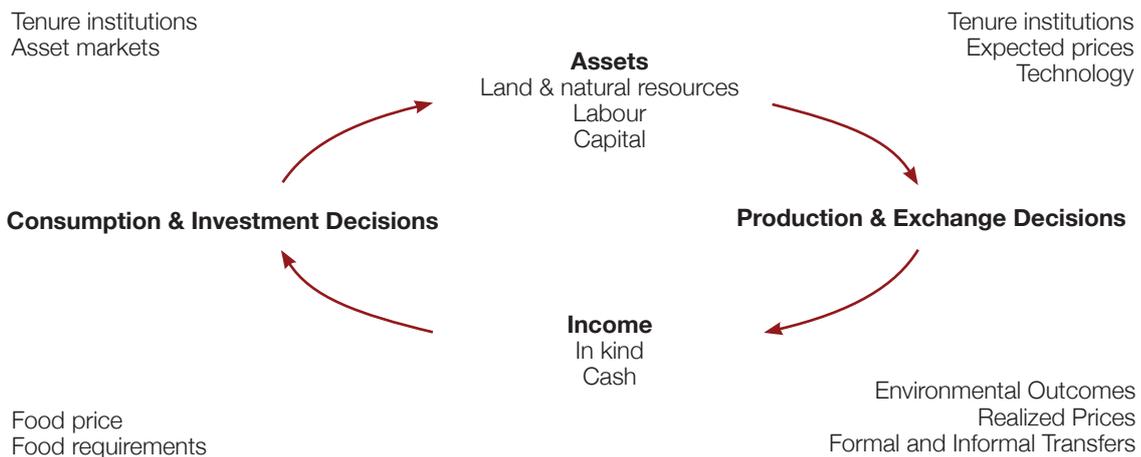
Whilst Via Campesina insists on the mutually supportive nature of the Framework, the linkages between the principles outlined above are not sufficiently explored. It is made clear that, unlike in the prevailing system, one principle cannot be prioritised at the expense of another. However Via Campesina makes no explicit discussion of the potential for feedback and interdependency within the framework. Is it possible, for example, to have Democratic Control without Social Peace? Could the attainment of Democratic Control facilitate Agrarian Reform? The principles of Food Sovereignty are far more interconnected than Via Campesina have described.

The rural origins of Food Sovereignty mean that the priorities of the Movement invariably relate, above all, to rural livelihoods. This is not to suggest that rural agriculture is a homogenous activity or that rural farmers are a united

community, but that it is possible to identify some phenomena that might be more widely experienced by rural communities than urban ones, such as the social and environmental impacts of Green Revolution farming. The harmonisation of urban and rural narratives regarding the global food crisis and an alternative future will strengthen the positions of all producers, through knowledge transfer, increased political awareness and social cohesion.

Lastly it is important to note that the evolving definitions of both food security and Food Sovereignty make definitive comparison difficult. However, the different contexts in which the terms are used mean that this imprecision has different implications. 'Food security' was conceived and developed inside international policy forums and represents a reductive, universalising conception of reality. Such a simplified definition is particularly dangerous when presented as an over-riding directive. By contrast, Food Sovereignty is decentralised, democratic and subjective; the concept is necessarily difficult to define. This is in keeping with the political philosophy of a movement that champions direct democracy.

Figure 3.2. "Land Tenure and Food Security: Reformulating the Links", Maxwell and Wiebe, 1999, p.838



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## 4. Analytical Framework

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Whilst Via Campesina is not universally representative of Food Sovereignty, their principles symbolise the foundations of the Movement; each remains a necessary condition and as such is an appropriate basis for analysis. This analytical framework will be used to consider the extent to which urban agriculture in Kampala can currently be considered a means to Food Sovereignty and also how urban agriculture might pertain to the underlying principles of Food Sovereignty in a way that are not currently reflected in the framework.

The framework combines structural, process and outcome indicators in order to make maximum analytical use of the available data. Each of the three principles of analysis consists of a number of 'objectives' and a number of ideal illustrative indicators. The indicators are based upon measureable and observable variables that would point to the realisation of the Food Sovereignty Principles. Whilst the following analysis is structured around this framework and indicators, it is beyond the means of this research to gather the extensive field data necessary for a comprehensive, quantitative analysis. However, this framework represents an important and novel methodology for measuring and evaluating three fundamental principles of urban food sovereignty.

### 4.1 Principle 1. Food: A basic human right

**Objectives.** The Right to Food has been realised when every person has physical and economic access to safe and nutritious food. The food must be culturally appropriate and of sufficient quantity and quality to sustain a healthy lifestyle. The Right must be constitutionally protected.

**Structural indicators:**

- Development of comprehensive legislative and institutional frameworks protecting the Right to Food.

**Outcome indicators:**

- Proportion of underweight children/stunted children in farming households.
- Proportion of people vulnerable to consumption of unsafe food.
- Proportion of food consumed that is self-produced by urban producers.

### 4.2. Principle 2. Agrarian reform

**Objectives.** Agrarian Reform has been achieved when land is owned by those who work it. The guaranteeing of access to productive land, credit, appropriate technologies, markets and extension services for small holders. Agricultural production will be primarily for domestic consumption.

**Structural indicators:**

- Development of effective land delivery system ensuring access to land to those that work it.

**Process indicators:**

- Increase in the number of credit and extension services available to urban producers.
- Proportion of farmers utilising extension and credit services.

**Outcome indicators:**

- Proportion of self produced food consumed by the household.
- Ratio of available productive land to number of urban producers
- Proportion of land owned and controlled by women.

### 4.3. Principle 3. Democratic control

**Objectives.** Democratic Control has been achieved when non-discriminatory producer associations are able to represent the interests of the members at local, national and international level through active participation and democratic decision-making,. CSOs and CBOs will be involved in multi-sector, multi-level policy making. Democratic control should be constitutionally protected.

**Structural indicators:**

- Development of Constitutionally guaranteed democratic process.

**Process indicators:**

- Proportion of urban producers involved in producer associations/CSOs/CBOs.
- Proportion of urban producers represented by producer's associations/CSOs/CBOs in municipal agricultural/food security policymaking.
- Proportion of urban producers represented by producer's associations/CSOs/CBOs in national agricultural/food security policymaking.

- Proportion of urban producers represented by producer's associations/CSOs/CBOs in international agricultural/food security policymaking.

#### 4.4. Limitations of the Framework

The limitations of this framework relate above all to the paucity of socioeconomic data disaggregated into farming and non-farming households. In order to make productive analytical use of the available data, it is necessary to modify the analytical methodology. The indicators outlined above, whilst not exhaustive, represent ideal measures of progress towards 'objectives'. With regards to the Structural Indicators in particular, the difficulty in defining how an objective is to be measured means that the analysis must be presented in the form of a report. For example, it is not possible to create a

scale by which Democratic Control, as defined by Via Campesina can be measured. It is therefore not possible to quantify progress towards democratic control. Similarly, an *ideal* legislative framework protecting the Right to Food does not exist in theory or practice and thus it is not possible to state conclusively the degree of progress towards its realisation. In these instances, the analysis will identify the *mechanism* by which a process is occurring, rather than the *degree* or *rate* of progress. In other words, there are instances when it is possible to say *how* urban agriculture is making an impact, but not *how much*. The areas of analysis in which it is not possible to measure progress towards an 'objective' indicate areas for further research and primary data collection. Lastly, as discussed above, for the purposes of analysis it is necessary to separate the principles and consider them in isolation. In reality, the three principles interrelate and influence one another substantially. I return to this issue in the case study.

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## 5. Case study: Urban agriculture and food sovereignty in Kampala

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### 5.1. Introduction to urban agriculture in Kampala

Uganda is a tropical, landlocked country in East Africa. The reliably heavy rainfall and warm climate mean it is particularly well suited to agriculture. The economy is based primarily on agricultural exports, such as coffee, tobacco and cotton, although exports of fruit, vegetables and fish are increasing significantly. Agricultural exports accounted for 60% of the increase in the overall value of exports from US \$401million in 2000 to US \$962million in 2006 (IFPRI, 2008). As such, agriculture and related industries are the greatest source of employment. Despite the national emphasis on agriculture, it has been estimated that between 2001 and 2003, 4.6million (19%) of Ugandans were malnourished; the under-five mortality rate in 2006 was 141/1000 and of that number, 40% was related to malnutrition (World Bank, 2006, cited in Milton, 2008, p.8). In 2010, 15.2% of the population lived in urban areas, however it is estimated that by 2050 this will have increased to 36.9% (UN, 2011). Urban and rural food security remain fundamental constraints to human and economic development in Uganda.

The capital city, Kampala, on the north shore of Lake Victoria is the site of the historic Buganda Kingdom. At an altitude of 1200m, the city consists of flat-topped hills, wide, open valleys and wetlands. Whilst the capital is a busy modern city, agriculture is a visible part of its life (Lee Smith, 2008, p17).

Urban farming has existed in Kampala since at least the 1890s, however since the 1970s the practice has grown significantly in response to national instability under Idi Amin, the decline of the *magendo*<sup>5</sup> economy after the 1986 change of government and decreased purchasing power resulting from structural adjustment policies (Maxwell, 1995). In 1992, 56.1% of the land in Kampala was used for agriculture (Department of Physical Planning, 1992, cited in Maxwell, 1995, p.1672). In 2003 around 49% of households practiced urban farming and of those farmers, 70% were women (Lee Smith, 2008, p17).

In 2005 the Kampala City Council (KCC) took the pioneering step of legalising urban agriculture through a series of Ordinances. The Ordinances prescribed minimum health and quality standards for meat, fish, agriculture, milk and livestock. However, the Ordinances were ultimately insubstantial; the bylaws remain “basically restrictive and

regulatory in nature, and focus on a punitive approach” (Cabannes, 2011, p.30). Moreover, the Ordinances contain no guidelines on the safe processing, transportation or storage of foods. In July 2011, the KCC was replaced by the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), which has led to the stagnation of some urban agriculture programmes (Zizinga<sup>6</sup>, personal communication, 25/7/12). The KCCA is under the authority of the National Government and led by a centrally appointed Cabinet Minister and Executive Director instead of a locally elected Mayor. Despite restructuring, the mandate and responsibilities of the council remain largely unchanged.

Farming has been identified in a range of urban environments including the Old and New Urban centres, dense urban slums, the peri-urban periphery, ‘transition’ areas that display both urban and peri-urban characteristics and in the undeveloped wetlands. In more central urban areas farmers often grow bananas and yams and keep poultry predominantly for subsistence. In peri-urban districts, farmers keep larger livestock and grow predominantly sweet potato and cassava. The majority of farming is for subsistence with only surplus sold locally. Urban agriculture occurs in private, public and institutional spaces, including the wetlands and river outflow areas where, after the 2005 Ordinances, the practice remains illegal.

Farmers use a variety of techniques including low-input systems, intercropping, monocropping and make use of both homemade and commercial fertilisers and pesticides. Due to spatial restrictions, 60% of cattle farmers practice zero-grazing (Prain, Karanja and Lee Smith, 2010, p.109). Urban producers often keep a combination of domestic and improved breeds of animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry. Improved breeds are more capital and labour intensive but have a higher commercial value whereas the produce from domestic breeds is primarily for household consumption.

### 5.2. Analysis: Evaluating the contribution of urban agriculture to food sovereignty in Kampala

#### *Identifying principle 1: Food – A basic human right*

**Structural Indicators.** The Right to Food is recognised as a *Social and Economic Statutory* objective in the 1995

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Food security is addressed in Objectives XIV and XXII. Objective XXII states:

*"The State Shall (a) take appropriate steps to encourage people to grow and store adequate food; (b) establish national food reserves; and (c) encourage and promote proper nutrition through mass education and other appropriate means in order to build a healthy state."*

However, within the Constitution, *Social and Economic Statutory Objectives* are distinct from rights guaranteed in Chapter Four (the Bill of Rights section), as such there is no legally binding provision for remedy or recourse mechanisms (Omara, 1995 cited in Milton, 2008, p.3). Despite the lack of an over-arching constitutional imperative protecting the Right to Food, there are a number of isolated pieces of legislation supporting the Right including the 1964 Public Health Act that aims to safeguard sanitation and housing including food storage, the 1995 Water Statute (reviewed in 1997) that aims to ensure access to clean and safe water for domestic purposes and most importantly the Uganda Food and Nutrition Policy (amended in 2007). It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider the full legislative and policy framework supporting the Right to Food, however it is important to note that despite an advanced albeit fragmented legislative framework, the Ugandan Government has failed to fulfill a number of international obligations regarding the Right to Food. The government has so far failed to submit a progress report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>7</sup>, violating Articles 16 and 17 of the ICESCR. Furthermore the government has not fulfilled its obligations arising from the 2003 African Union Summit, the *Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security*, which obligates countries to allocate not less than 10% of their budget to agriculture and food security.

**Outcome Indicators.** There has been a decrease in the prevalence of malnutrition amongst children in households engaged in urban agriculture as well as a significant increase in the proportion of food self-produced by the household. It appears that urban agriculture is responsible for an increase in the proportion of people vulnerable to consumption of unsafe food. Whilst it is not possible to define the extent to which urban agriculture is increasing the availability of food or increasing people's access to it, it is possible to identify the mechanisms by which this occurs using examples that we can take to be reasonably typical.

A study across Kampala's five Districts found, as expected, a strong correlation between household food security and wealth (Sebastian et al, 2008). The same study found a correlation between household food security and urban agriculture in lower income households through a combination of income generation and subsistence. Urban farming, particularly pig farming, was found to be a significant generator of income. There was also evidence

that in households that owned over a quarter of an acre of land, there was a weaker correlation between household food security and wealth, suggesting that the family were more self-sufficient than those with less land. Lastly, the study confirmed that women make up the vast majority of urban farmers and that in many instances female headed households were more food secure than male headed ones. A separate study in 2003 found that up to 60% of food consumed by low-income groups was self-produced (Cofie, van Veenhuizen and Drechsel, 2003).

A study by Csete, Levin, and Maxwell (1998) found that children were far better off nutritionally in households that practiced urban farming than in those that did not. The study found that in low-income households that practiced urban farming, there was 20.7% rate of malnutrition (indicated by the height-age ratio) compared to a malnutrition rate of 61.5% in non-farming, low-income households (1998, p.15). The study is a strong indicator of the relationship between urban agriculture and nutrition and child development in low-income groups.

The decreasing prevalence of malnourished children in farming households could be the result of wealth-generation as identified above or else the link could be more direct. In 2006, for example, 20% of Ugandan children aged between 6-59 months had a Vitamin A deficiency (Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, 2006, p.179). A small portion of one of the most ubiquitous crops in peri-urban areas, sweet potato would provide 192% of an adult's RDA of Vitamin A<sup>8</sup>.

The primary health risks in urban agriculture concern the use of contaminated water from agricultural or industrial outputs and the insufficient disposal of animal waste. Residents in the dense urban Banda Parish grow crops in both the wetlands and Kiwanataka drainage channel that discharges water into Lake Victoria from the city. The channel contains not only human waste from pit latrines but also agricultural and industrial pollutants, animal waste and is a site of open defecation. Local households were aware of the scale of pollution and by taste could tell the difference between yams grown in contaminated and uncontaminated areas. Farmers had adapted to the situation by growing yams in fertilised sacks and dry clay-soil areas and growing potatoes and cassava in the contaminated areas as the taste-difference was imperceptible (Lee Smith, 2008, p.20). This is to say they are managing rather than removing the risk. One study found significant levels of coliforms in locally grown vegetables; the main source of contamination was washing the vegetables in water contaminated by sewage (Serani et al, 2008).

**Conclusion.** It appears that urban agriculture is making a significant contribution to the realisation of the Right to Food in low-income households in Kampala. At the Outcome level, there is a clear link between urban farming and child nutrition in low-income households. Moreover

it is possible to legitimately suggest that urban agriculture is increasing physical and economic access to food at a household level through a combination of income generation activities and subsistence farming, although there is insufficient data to quantify the rate at which the process is happening. This conclusion is supported by a wide range of reports and research<sup>9</sup> that identify the mechanisms by which access to food is increasing as a result of urban food production. With regards to the Structural-level indicators, the greatest shortfalls are the legislative and institutional framework protecting the Right to Food, which are both fragmented and limited in scope. One particular area of concern is the lack of health education and regulation of potentially harmful inputs such as contaminated water.

### Identifying principle 2: Agrarian reform

**Structural Indicators.** In order to discuss the possibility of agrarian reform it is important to outline Uganda's unique land tenure system. The Ugandan Constitution outlines four forms of land contract: Mailo, Freehold, Leasehold and Customary Land Tenure. Mailo and Freehold are both forms of freehold tenure. Mailo tenure was created during the Colonial era when land taken from peasants was given to certain individuals to hold in perpetuity. Like Freeholders, Mailo landowners have an official title; more than 52% of the land in Kampala is owned under Mailo agreement. A Leaseholder can be in contract with either a Mailo or Freehold landowner, the tenant is only granted an official title after three years. Lastly there is Customary Land Tenure, which can come in two forms: Communal Customary Tenure and Individual/Family/Clan Tenure.

Customary tenure was abolished in 1969 but included in the 1995 Constitution and actively encouraged in the 1998 Land Act and 2001 Land Registration Act. Customary Land Tenure may be in occupation of any of the forms of private land as well as public land. Customary Land Tenants, *Kibanja*, may be evicted without compensation until they have occupied the land for twelve years, at which point they become *bonafide* after which their right to the land is legally recognised. In theory, a piece of land can be leased to an individual by a freeholder, which can then be leased to an individual/group by Customary agreement.

The systemic duality of legal and social ownership creates inevitable tensions. The majority of landowners do not occupy their land and the majority of people do not own the land they occupy. *Bonafide Kibanja* cannot be evicted without fair compensation. The vast majority of Kampala's citizens hold their land in Customary Land Tenure, however it is "regarded and treated as inferior in practice... disparaged and sabotaged in preference for other forms of registered tenures." (Republic of Uganda, 2011, 3.3:38)

Land tenure law in Uganda is severely discriminatory towards women. Tenure can only pass to a woman if no liv-

ing male adult relative can be found; despite composing 70% of farmers, in Kampala women own less than 7% of the land (Kiguli, 1995). The legal mechanisms designed to protect the rights of women, particularly widows, are frequently abused as 'Land Management Responsibility' is conflated with 'Ownership'; land is 'taken' from a widow by her late husbands male relatives.

In Kampala, Via Campesina's insistence on *ownership and control of the land by those that work* it is difficult to realise. The issue draws attention to an oversight in the Food Sovereignty Framework as conceived by Via Campesina, the MST or the Nyéleni Forum with regards to Agrarian Reform. In a rural environment, *ownership and control* of land is an appropriate condition of agrarian reform, however in an urban environment, it is less so for a number of reasons. First is the dynamic and shifting nature of urban areas. In cities such as Kampala, with high rates of rural-urban migration, dense slums and rapidly shifting population densities, *ownership and control* of land is too blunt a priority to reflect such complex and unpredictable conditions. Issues relating to land tenure must balance the rights of recent migrants (especially those displaced by Neoliberal agricultural policies) with the incumbents'. Secondly, *ownership and control* of land is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The urban poor can be fed and empowered through urban agriculture without the need for formal land titles on the one hand or the need to utterly reconceptualise the notion of ownership of land as the MST advocate on the other; that is to say, the 'ends' of Food Sovereignty can still be met. A 1995 survey found that less than 20% of land used for agriculture in Kampala was formally owned. The remainder was held through a combination of Customary Tenure, unauthorised subdivision, borrowing and informal access (Maxwell, 1995, p.1674).

Communal Customary Land Tenure of public and institutional spaces is an important instrument for Agrarian Reform. In order to achieve Agrarian Reform in an urban environment, access to land and usufruct are more important principles than either *ownership* or *control*. In Kampala, the low ratio of per capita wealth to land value means that the most important, productive lands for urban production are invariably public or institutional. The Ugandan system of Customary Land Tenure is sufficient to ensure a farming livelihood without formal ownership of the land. Communal Customary Tenure in particular enables farmers to gain access to public, and institutional land for cultivation or grazing within the city. The development of Customary Land Tenure is one way in which the Food Sovereignty Framework can be developed and strengthened to reflect the practice of urban agriculture.

**Process Indicators.** Urban agriculture is a socially acceptable socio-economic activity (Zizinga, personal communication, 6/8/12), which has been actively encouraged by KCC/KCCA and communities in response to the way

that rapid urban growth is currently outstripping the government's capacity to develop infrastructure and create jobs. There are currently several actors, including community organisations, international NGOs and governmental institutions involved in the provision of agricultural extension services for urban farmers in Kampala. The most prominent body is the Kampala Urban Food Security, Agriculture and Livestock Coordinating Committee (KUF SALCC), which is composed of members of local CBOs, KCC/KCCA, Government Ministries, Makerere University, the National Agricultural Research Organisation and CGIAR. The KUF SALCC is involved in developing extension services and advocating for urban producers across Kampala.

There are also several urban producer associations active in each of the five districts of Kampala. The most prominent organisation is the Kampala District Farmers Association (KADFA). Producer associations are broadly coordinated by the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), which aims to empower smallholder and subsistence farmers, whilst increasing democratic participation, increasing agricultural efficiency and productivity.

KCCA actively encourages urban producers to consult with Credit and Savings Cooperatives (SACCOs) regularly. However farmers face challenges accessing finance due to high interest rates of up to 37% and their inability to provide security against a loan (Zizinga, personal communication, 6/8/12). In response, a number of producer associations, particularly women's savings cooperatives, are pooling resources to provide loan security for members. However access to finance remains a major constraint to farmers.

Since the 1990s a number of international NGOs such as Living Earth and Plan International have been offering extension services in Kampala and advocating for improved institutional support. And more recently both NAADS and KUF SALCC have worked with Environment Alert, a Ugandan NGO that works with smallholder farmers to increase agricultural productivity whilst ensuring environmental sustainability through a range of enterprise development and resource management programmes.

**Outcome Indicators.** Legally the 2005 Ordinances dramatically increased the area of land available for urban agriculture, because before 2005, the practice was illegal. However, it is important to note that the Ordinances also specified areas of the city in which urban agriculture was specifically outlawed, including the wetlands where it is still widely practiced. The geographical proximity of the wetlands to the poorest urban areas means that the Ordinances have forced many of the most vulnerable urban producers into illegality; a study by Cofie, van Veenhuizen and Dreschel (2003) found that up to 60% of food consumed in low-income households was self produced.

**Conclusion.** At the Structural-level, the legal mechanisms already exist to guarantee communal access to

private, institutional and public land. Agricultural extension, credit and training services are institutionalised and effective but are restricted due to a lack of funds. However there remains structural discrimination against women. It is not possible to measure progress towards process indicators, however it is evident that farmers are utilising a range of extension services, working with the KCCA, international NGOs and other multilateral organisations. Lastly, whilst it appears there has been an increase in the proportion of food self-produced, again, it is not possible to quantify the progress made towards this target. The Ordinances greatly increased the amount of productive land available for urban agriculture but at the same time have pushed many of the poorest producers into enforced illegality. Overall, Agrarian Reform is being driven by urban agricultural practices, however systemic discrimination against women remains.

### **Identifying principle 3: Democratic control**

**Structural Indicators.** Democratic control is a fundamental condition of Food Sovereignty. Uganda is a Presidential Republic with multiple parties since 2005 and constitutionally guaranteed universal suffrage. However, since 2006, elections have been marred by violence, intimidation and the disenfranchisement of citizens. Under pressure from international human rights watch groups, the Ugandan government is currently revising the controversial Public Order Management Bill. In its original form the Bill would prohibit public meetings and demonstrations also giving the police the power to physically disperse meetings. The Bill represents a major threat to NGOs, CBOs and the media within Uganda but also an affront to the Right to Democratic Participation and the Right to Free Speech.

Civil Society plays an important role in Ugandan politics; the electoral law reforms in 2011 were led by the Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy. However the legislative framework remains restrictive. The Non Governmental Organisations Act (2006) and NGO registration regulations limit the areas of activity of both NGOs and CBOs; organisations for political advocacy are likely to attract government supervision. Registration of involvement in NGOs, CSOs or CBOs is mandatory.

Despite remarkable legislative progress towards gender equality, including the 1997 National Gender Policy and the incorporation of CEDAW into the 1995 National Constitution, Gender has not been mainstreamed or sufficiently institutionalised.

**Process Indicators.** Despite formal restrictions, urban producer associations are active and effective. Urban producers are represented in the KUF SALCC alongside policymakers, extension agents and academics. In the 1990s, Participatory Urban Appraisals<sup>10</sup> were used to bring the significance of urban agriculture to KCC offi-

cial. Civil Society Organisations made presentations at the 2003 District forums on the realities of urban farming and were consulted on the drafting of what were to become the 2005 Ordinances. The continuous participatory approach to research and policy making has brought a “breadth of perspectives and expertise” (Hooton et al, 2007, p.77), ensuring that even operating with nominal funds, the KUFSAALCC has impacted significantly on the legalisation of urban agriculture.

In addition to the parastatals, CSOs and NGOs outlined in the previous section, since 2005, a number of youth and women’s urban farming organisations have been established. Studies have found that by acting as a bridge between grassroots organisations and politicians, CSOs have played a crucial role in the revaluation of urban agriculture in Kampala (Lee Smith, 2005).

At the international level, Via Campesina has pressured the FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS) into creating the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM). The CSM, ratified in 2010, allows CSOs and NGOs to participate as non-voting members in the Annual Conference on World Food Security. The organising principle of the CSM is to represent CSOs fairly and without discrimination, giving priority to the issues of groups most affected by hunger, “recognising that victims of hunger are also the bearers of solutions.” (FAO: CFS, 2010, Paragraph 34) The CSM organises its members around a Coordination Committee that liaises with the CFS’s Bureau. Members of producer associations from Kampala attended the 2012 Annual Conference on World Food Security alongside Kampala based members of the FAO (Zizinga, personal communication, 6/8/12).

**Conclusion.** At the Structural-level, despite a flawed national democratic process, urban producer associations are well organised and well represented in policy-making circles at municipal level. Due in part to the personal commitment of key individuals and ‘champions’ of urban agriculture, producers have played a consequential role in the legalisation of urban agriculture in Kampala. Moreover the CSM represents a pioneering step in the democratisation of the international policy-making community. However the Ugandan government still regards civil society with scepticism. The greatest challenge to achieving democratic control of food production is the systemic marginalisation of women and the failure of the

Ugandan government and the KCCA to adequately institutionalise Gender into their structure and mandate.

### 5.3. Conclusions on the relationship between urban agriculture and food sovereignty in Kampala

Urban agriculture in Kampala is currently making a significant contribution to the achievement of Food Sovereignty. Most notably the practice is helping the urban poor to realise their Right to Food by increasing their physical and economic access to fresh produce. Producer Associations and CSOs are successfully, democratically representing urban farmers in municipal policy-making circles. And the nature of urban food production can be understood as a consequential means to agrarian reform, particularly with regards to self-sufficiency. Kampala is notable for its appropriate legal mechanisms enabling access to productive land and well developed agricultural extension services.

The case of Kampala also provides an important example of how the Food Sovereignty Framework can be developed to reflect the growing practice of urban food production with regards to access to land, which supersedes the importance of ownership and control in a dynamic urban environment.

The KCCA has taken a number of pioneering steps in support of urban agriculture particularly in regards to community involvement in policymaking. However a number of challenges remain, particularly with regards ensuring the health and safety of urban produce and the structural discrimination against women. The overarching challenge to the promotion of Food Sovereignty is the lack of finance designated for urban agriculture. This in turn reflects a broader issue, that the governmental support for urban agriculture is still reliant on a great deal of political commitment from key individuals.

Lastly, it is important to note the limitations of dividing up this analysis so starkly. As I have described, in Kampala, democratic control of food production led directly to producer involvement in the legalisation of urban agriculture, the first step towards Agrarian Reform. Urban food production serves as a microcosm of the interlinking principles of Food Sovereignty, and their potential to be mutually enforcing.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

5. Usually translated as ‘The Black Market’, characterised in the 1980s by smuggling and illegal currency transactions.
6. Alex Zizinga, Researcher at the Agricultural Research Institute, Makerere University
7. The agency responsible for monitoring compliance with the ICESCR
8. Based on 50g serving of cooked sweet potato in a 2000calo-

rie/day diet for adults and children over 4 years old. c.f. [www.healthaliciousness.com](http://www.healthaliciousness.com)

9. See Prain, Karanja and Lee Smith, 2010; Csete, J., Levin, C. and Maxwell, D., 1998; Cole, D.C., Lee-Smith, D. & Nasinyama, G.W., 2008

10. See David and Aliguma, 2003 *Farming in the City: Participatory Appraisal of Urban and Per-Urban Agriculture in Kampala*

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## 6. Opportunities for the promotion of food sovereignty through urban agriculture in Kampala

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This research potentially has a number of policy implications and it is possible to identify some opportunities for the promotion of pro-poor development through Food Sovereignty and urban agriculture by the KCCA and the Ugandan National Government:

**Promoting the right to food.** The government can extend the scope of the 2005 Ordinances so that Quality Assurance practices cover the entire range of processes related to urban food production. The new by-laws should incorporate regulation of the quality of agricultural inputs, particularly water and be integrated into a wider urban sanitation strategy. The new Ordinances should also cover the safe transportation and storage of foods and should be accompanied by the integration of a health and safety education strategy into existing extension services.

**Promoting agrarian reform.** The National Government can reform National land tenure in order to protect and encourage the adoption of Customary Land Tenure. The government must actively discourage the conversion of such land to Freehold. Legislative amendments should be accompanied by a structural revaluation of Customary Land Tenure, and particularly Communal Customary Tenure. The notion that Freehold Land is more valuable or marketable should be discouraged. This can be achieved with the drafting of an amended Land Act that provides for a Customary Tenure land registry system and the recognition and enforcement of decisions on land management made with regards to Customary Tenure. This can be supplemented by improved education, through inter-departmental communication and wider media campaigns on the value and viability of Customary Land Tenure.

The government should also strengthen and defend women's rights to land. Policy makers should recognise that customary mechanisms such as 'widow inheritance' were originally designed to protect a women's right

to land and that it is only through the misuse or misapplication of these laws that women are discriminated against. The solution is not to vilify customary laws but to acknowledge that men are frequently disregarding their cultural obligations and hold them to account. The police and judiciary must be encouraged to recognise their duty to uphold women's land rights particularly in regards to Customary Tenure.

**Promoting democratic control.** The government must ensure the integration and institutionalisation of Gender into urban agriculture development planning. The council must ensure that both men and women's interests are justly represented at each stage of development planning, particularly relating to issues of access to land, credit and technical training. KCCA should incorporate Gender at each stage of the planning process by using tools such as Gender Diagnosis, incorporating gender roles identification with disaggregated data at the household level, with Gender Consultation and Participation<sup>11</sup>.

**Integrating urban agriculture into the KCCA.** Lastly, the KCCA should more thoroughly integrate Urban Agriculture into its institutional structure. Currently the Department of Urban Agriculture falls under the Production and Marketing Department which itself falls under the Gender and Community Services Department. Whilst this adequately reflects the social significance of urban agriculture, institutional support could be improved by directly relating the Department of Urban Agriculture to other Departments including the Department of Health, Hygiene and Environment, Department of Works and Physical Planning and the Department of Finance. This should be supplemented by the creation of cross-departmental directorates and mechanisms based upon the establishment of multi-stakeholder committees to ensure continuous and productive inter-departmental dialogue and that urban agriculture is sufficiently represented as an urban development priority.

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### NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

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11. See Moser, 1993, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*.

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