

Multi-stakeholder Policy formulation and Action Planning, MPAP

Learning from Accra, Ghana

National-best urban and peri-urban farmer
award, Accra

IWM | Ghana

The case study¹ has been put together by the Dhaka Food System project, with support by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and in association with the Bangladesh Institute of Planners. The case studies provide relevant international references to stakeholders, to inform how to best integrate food system considerations into urban planning.

Introduction: what is this case about?

The Accra, Ghana experience, highlights how a multi-stakeholder working group was started to design a City Strategic Agenda for Urban Agriculture and to formulate Immediate Actions to be implemented as starting points. It illustrates in practice some aspects of the MPAP method that was used (Multi-stakeholder Policy formulation and Action Planning) and that has been tested successfully in a large number of cities around the world (figure 10). It draws from the city consultation approach that was developed primarily in Latin America, to develop action plans and priority actions programs (See Quito case in the present series).

1. Context: ACCRA urban and food challenges

Similar to Dhaka in Asia, the Greater Accra Region in Ghana is one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa, currently hosting over 4 million people (see [video, 2018](#)). Unprecedented growth and insufficient planning increased housing shortages, urban sprawl, and informal settlements with inadequate urban services: over 60% of the people live in slums. Another similarity with Dhakka, refers to vulnerability to floods that deeply impacted the region, for instance in 2015. Access to food remains a challenge, primarily for the poor: according to the world bank about 48% of population's income level is below the absolute poverty threshold, and 40% of the population is unemployed. This being said, people organize themselves in developing informal markets (see figure 1) and gardening to sustain the household livelihood (See figure 3). In addition, the gardening community also supply the city with 80% of its fresh vegetables, a figure decreasing quickly due to the city expansion eating up remaining arable land.

Figure 1. Open market in Accra



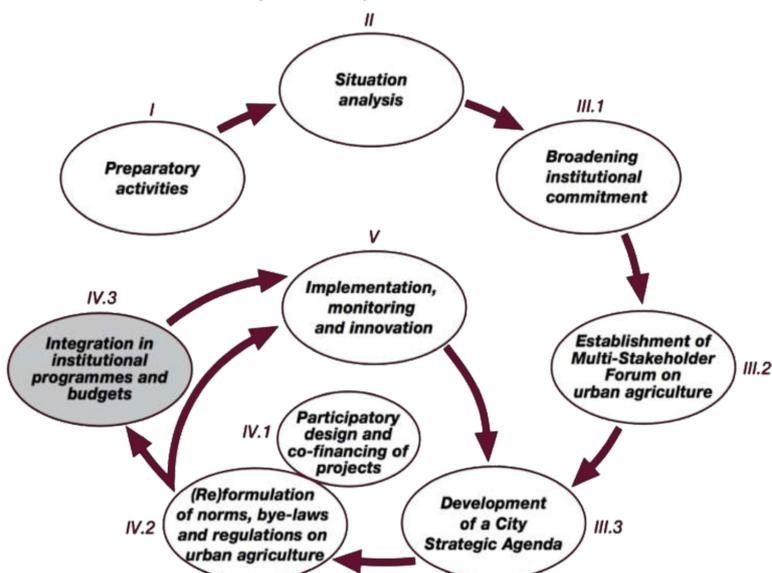
¹ This case study draws primarily on both references cited as well as field visits and exchanges with local actors.

2. Highlight on the case. Case description

2.1. MPAP in a nutshell

The main output of a MPAP “is the joint development of a city strategic agenda on urban and peri-urban agriculture. The Agenda will have to be operationalized into a series of operational plans regarding the design and planning of the various projects prioritized in the Strategic Agenda as well as the revision or development of new norms, bye-laws and regulations on (peri) urban agriculture”.

Figure 2. Steps in the MPAP



Source: RUAF Foundation, Guidelines for MPAP, Working paper series, 2007

A MPAP normally follows a set of steps, as illustrated in Figure 2, that are usually tailored to local realities and time constraints. The activities that will lead to the formulation of the UA City strategic Agenda are intertwined with the gradual involvement and broadening of commitment from a broad-spectrum of institutions and food related actors.

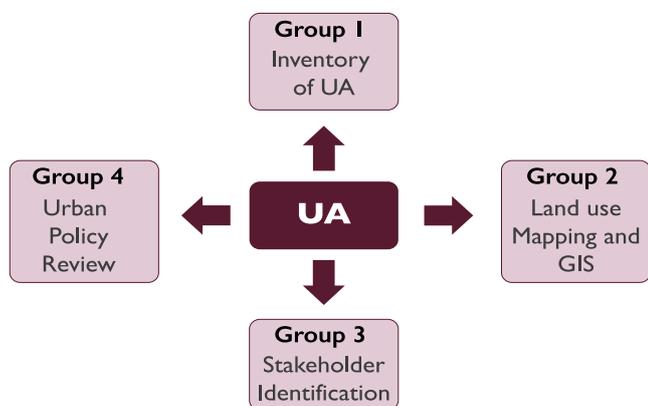
Figure 3. UA in Accra



Open-space farming, one of the two major urban farming practices in Accra

2.2. Some key aspects of MPAP relevant for Dhaka

Figure 4. Four groups for step 2 (situation analysis)



Step 2. setting up commissions (see figure 4)

To conduct the situation analysis, the stakeholders organise themselves into four different groups and commissions:

- **Group 1** identifies and assess the existing practices of urban agriculture in its broader sense (see figures 5 and 6)
- **Group 2** identifies existing land use maps and GIS resources and carry out an analysis of existing voids and food related land
- **Group 3** consists in a stakeholder mapping, assessing their current and potential engagement.
- **Group 4** reviews existing urban policies & planning documents and their relation to urban and peri urban agriculture, identifying opportunities, voids and bottlenecks.

Such decentralized and organized practice leads to empowering different actors in a complementary way and lead to mutual recognition among the different stakeholders, on an action based approach

Figure 5 and 6. Inventory of urban farming practices (rabbit and aguti raising)



Step 3.2 AGWUPA: multi-stakeholders' platform

The third step of MPAP, "broadens institutional commitment" and "establishes a multi-stakeholder forum on urban agriculture" (see figures 7, 9 and 11). An important aspect of anchoring UPA policies and programs at municipal level is the establishment of multi-actor committees that not only formulate municipal plans and priority action programs, but through time become a permanent group where the key actors involved in UPA will maintain a fruitful dialogue and maintain meaningful mechanisms for communication with local governments.

Figure 7. The Accra Working Group on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture, AWGUPA



Source: AGWUPA internal notes and fieldwork by author. Elaboration Yañez K. and Cabannes Y.

AGWUPA, the Advisory Working Group on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture, was set up as part of MPAP that was launched in the year 2004. It started with 15 members from various sectors that, signed a Multi-stakeholder Agreement in 2005, giving to the working group a much higher level of commitment and legitimacy.

- Public sector: local representative of the ministry of agriculture; health, town and county planning and planning and coordination;
- Universities and research: International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and Department of Geography and Agriculture University of Ghana; and
- Producers: Ghana Agriculture Workers Union and Crop Farmers Association. The participation of the producer's groups was extremely innovative in the context of Accra. It contributed greatly to a small scale, pro-poor component in the Action Plan.

A significant aspect of AGWUPA has been its capacity to maintain its activity once the Action Plan was approved and also to expand and diversify the number of its members that in 2010 counted 28 participants (See Figure 7). Importantly, the urban farmers have continued to participate through representation by three Vegetable Farmers Associations, one crop farmer representative, and one delegate from an Association of Livestock Farmers. AGWUPA also played an important role in holding local governments accountable to their commitments, while at the same time generating debate and ideas about emerging issues that related to UPA.

Step 4.2. Prioritisation of projects as the decision of stakeholders: heading for a two-speed, action-based planning approach

The City Strategic Agenda for urban and peri urban agriculture identified eight key issues to be addressed by Accra. What is essential to consider at this stage is the role of AGWUPA that discussed and prioritized these issues as the most urgent ones (See **Figure 8**). One of the key added values of the MPAP method is that it does not limit planning to a long list of strategic issues to be addressed but that offers to all the stakeholders the possibility to rank them by order of priority. As a result, as can be seen in the table, Policy and legislative support for UA came first, and education and public awareness on UA and urban food safety towards positive perception of UA came second. Interestingly enough, and this is quite counter-intuitive for conventional planners, land tenure an urban agriculture, in order to improve access to land through temporal arrangements came last. This did not mean that the issue was not important! On the contrary, it was such a hard node that trying to tackle it first would have probably to difficult.

Stakeholder prioritization led, and again here is another value added of MPAP, to formulate Priority Actions under each one of these issues, addressing a critical, but common, planning limit: where and how to start implementing the plan. Two Priority Actions were hence debated and approved:

Stakeholder Prioritization of issues in UA for Action

Figure 8. Stakeholder ranking of issues

Issue/Area	Priority Position
Policy & legislative support for UA	1 st
Education and public awareness on urban agriculture and urban food safety towards positive perception of UA	2 nd
Standards and quality assurance	3 rd
Promotion of UA enterprise	4 th
Capacity building for farmer associations: Facilitate the formalization of farmer associations	5 th
Development of collaborative UA projects/programmes among key stakeholders	6 th
Post-harvest handling and marketing	7 th
Land tenure and urban agriculture	8 th

Source: IWMI Ghana

Figure 9. Members of the The Accra Working Group on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture, AWGUPA



- The first one consisted in reviewing the existing agricultural by-laws of Accra Metropolitan Assembly. This exercise, conducted by the partners led to proposing amendments on cattle and domestic animals to be slaughtered in slaughter houses and changes in food hawkers permits and regulations.
- The second priority action was the launching of a *National best urban and peri-urban farmer award* during a national farmer day in Accra (See picture **top page 1**). This highly visible event made visible the variety and high quality of food produced locally, and just how many producers there were. The presence of the Mayor and the central government representatives, the mobilisation of the communities, and the echo given by the media helped to raise the profile of UA, as well as legitimizing the different stakeholders, and the producers on the first place.

2.3. Highlight on key dates over ten years

- **2000:** RUAF with IWMI office in Ghana as main partner start activities in UA
- **2005:** Start of Multi-stakeholder process, with one major challenge being to involve the farmers, the most vulnerable and excluded.
- **End 2005:**
 - Multi-stakeholder forum with about 55 participants and Multi-stakeholder Agreement.
 - The original core group expands into 15 members working group, called The Accra Working Group on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture, AWGUPA, chaired by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture [MoFA] providing
- **2006 and following years**
 - Both Action Plans are implemented.
 - The City Strategic Agenda is developed, followed by guidelines for its implementation
- **2007 onwards.** Some University of Ghana departments include UA in their curriculum
- **2010.** AWGUPA active members increased to 28 (See **figure 7**) with various producer's associations; Accra Metropolitan Government; Central government; universities and research; NGOs. The media joined during the policy and action plan process.

3. Key messages

MPAP introduced what we call a “double speed action-based planning approach”. On the one hand a city strategic Agenda for food and urban agriculture was formulated, looking for long term effects, but in parallel, short-term priorities actions were launched, showing that the exercise was not only words and papers, but real change. This might be important to consider in Dhaka’s context to increase legitimacy and interest in food planning.

- MPAP implies a series of steps, but it is recommended that each city develops its own process and calendar fit to local conditions (not one size fits all).
- The multi stakeholders’ platform grew steadily as an organic body based on action and planning. However, a key for success lies in its consolidation into something permanent. It is therefore recommended that the municipality gradually adopts a leading role (as in the case here where the Mayor was chairing AWGUPA) in order to increase its legitimacy and the possibility that the agenda will be implemented.
- Ensuring strong capacity to be able to establish linkages with stakeholders, from the lead institutions, is important; especially at the beginning of the process. Having a good facilitator is essential for success, ready to hold the role of secretary of the Multi stakeholder group.

4. To deepen your knowledge on MPAP and MPAP in Accra

Cabannes, Y., (2012) Pro-poor legal and institutional aspects of Urban and Peri-Urban agriculture. FAO: Rome, <http://www.fao.org/legal/en/>

De Zeeuw, M. Dubbeling & R. van Veenhuizen (Eds), 2010, Cities, Poverty and Food: Multi-stakeholder Policy and Planning in Urban Agriculture Leuden: RUAF, and in particular Larbi, T., & Cofie, O. (2010). Gradual Institutionalization of Urban Agriculture in Accra, Ghana (pp. 82–87).

<https://ruaf.org/assets/2019/11/Cities-Poverty-and-Food.pdf>

Videos

2008. A waste water irrigation in urban Accra, IWMI, 6’

<https://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/issues/wastewater/multimedia/6>

This documentary highlights the possible connections in Accra between UA and waste water as a resource.

2011. Trajectories of change: Land, Urbanisation and Urban Agriculture in Accra, 22’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-6EURne8RU>

This film explores the potential of urban agriculture to remain a living practice given the current trends of urbanisation in Accra, Ghana, through the lens of land and planning.

2018. Enhancing Urban Resilience in Ghana’s Greater Accra Region, 5:30’

<https://olc.worldbank.org/content/enhancing-urban-resilience-ghanas-greter-accra-region>

Overview of Greater Accra Challenges, current governmental answers and support provided by the World Bank.

5. Case studies

Case 1. Multi-stakeholder Policy formulation and Action Planning, MPAP Learning from Accra, Ghana, January 2021 / Cabannes Y / FAO / BIP: Dhaka

Case 2. Bangkok City Farm Program: promoting urban agriculture through networks, January 2021 / Cabannes Y / FAO / BIP: Dhaka

Case 3. Food Charters in Canadian Cities: a key milestone for building Food Strategies, Food Policies and Food Plans, January 2021 / Cabannes Y / FAO / BIP: Dhaka

Case 4. Quito 20 years’ experience in building an urban centred Agro Food System, January 2021 / Cabannes Y / FAO / BIP: Dhaka

6. Credits

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Figure 10. Multi-stakeholder Forum are an essential part of MPAP. Here in Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2007.



IWMI Ghana

Figure 11. AWGUPA meeting



IWMI Ghana