Urban and Periurban Agriculture and Social Inclusion
UPA MEDITERRANEAN FORUM

Workshops:

**WS 1 Governance of UPA projects**: Strategies for good governance between stakeholders of the UPA Projects

**WS 2 Sustainability of UPA projects**: Strategies for sustainable development of UPA Projects (Social, Economic, Environmental)

Findings of the UPA Workshops held on Barcelona. 8th June 2015

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Introduction

This document presents the findings of the two participatory workshops held within the UPA MEDITERRANEAN NETWORK FORUM, in the framework of the “SIDIG MED / Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture / Cross-Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean”, which took place 8th June 2015, Barcelona.

The UPA MEDITERRANEAN NETWORK FORUM started with a keynote speaker (Dr. Lluís Maldonado), which was followed by two successive discussion panels with the participation of different experts and members of UPA projects of the different Mediterranean cities and countries involved.

On the afternoon, the attendants were invited to participate in any of the two scheduled workshops, which were designed as two parallel participatory sessions. They consisted of groups of around 20 participants (see the list in page 5), who debate and actively brought up ideas and contrast opinions on the proposed topics for each workshop. After two hours of debate, a plenary session was held in order to share the findings of each group. The topics of the workshops were:

- **WS 1 Governance of UPA projects: Strategies for good governance between stakeholders of the UPA Projects**

- **WS 2 Sustainability of UPA projects: Strategies for sustainable development of UPA Projects (Social, Economic, Environmental)**

At the end of the plenary, and after sharing the workshops findings, Xavier Tiana, Head of International Relations for the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, thanked the active participation of attendees and their ideas. He considered that the work produced was excellent “food for thought” for the Urban Master Plan of Barcelona, and also a good starting point for writing a Project position paper with the help of all UPA partners. The ideas and experiences presented will be also very useful for designing future projects and for proposing new calls. Finally, he considered that the conclusions and the collaboration atmosphere among participants created along the workshops would be of interest for other networks, such as the Mediterranean Cities Network (Medcities).
This document has been prepared by the MOMENTUM Team, designers and facilitators of the workshops. It consists of an structured transcription of the contributions of the participants by means of a methodology that uses cards and pin boards.

The document contains:

- a synthesis of each workshop findings
- a detailed transcription of all the contributions made by participants at each workshop
- photographs of the boards

Note from the facilitators: Whereas the workshops were ran in different languages (English, French, Spanish and Catalan were used indistinctly by the participants), this document is written fully in English. That means some of the ideas written on cards by the participants have been translated. Although facilitators have tried to be as much objective as possible with the translations, keeping the original meaning and refinements of the ideas provided, we encourage participants to carefully review this document in order to, if needed, add some comments or clarify / enrich the text.
Participants

**Workshop 1: Governance**

Ana Vega  
Abdallah Abdul Wahab  
Abdelaziz Zaidi  
Mohamad Mounzer  
Claudio Bordi  
Franco Latorre  
Anna Codazzi  
Enric Serra  
Khaled Ben Abdessalem  
Luis Maldonado  
Tariq Abu Taleb  
Yago Cavaller  
Thabet Abdelhaleem  
Abu Abboud  
Clara Unzeta  
Victor Ténez  
Mohamad Saadie

**Workshop 2: Sustainability**

Stefania Ciccatello  
Paola Marzi  
Marcela Gomescasseres  
Noemi Martinez  
Esther Ros  
Yousef Walha  
Antoni Farrero  
Gilbert Aoun  
Mohamed Ben Imrem  
Asma Aoun  
Jose Luis Haro  
Giorgio Barbato  
Pierrick Migliaccio  
Xavier Recasens  
Laura Calvet  
Filippo Gotti  
Elena Argelich  
Mohammed Ayesh

**MOMENTUM Facilitators:**

Xavier Estivill  
Joan Casals  
Mireia Valls

**MOMENTUM Facilitators:**

Alfonso Stinus,  
Toni Blanco
Synthesis of the contributions of the 2 workshops

Workshop 1: Governance

In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the obstacles or difficulties we have to confront / manage in order to assure a good governance between stakeholders of UPA projects?

- Lack of a specific and unified legal and planning framework regarding UPAs
- Slowness of public administration in reacting towards society needs
- Lack of UPA projects prioritization by public authorities
- Existence of different visions and interests among UPA projects stakeholders that need to be aligned or integrated
- UPA is a new concept that has to be clearly defined and explained
- Practical issues around specific UPA Projects: troubles with facilities, work rhythms between actors involved, engagement & commitment, ...
- Cultural barriers: agriculture is seen as an under-developed activity

In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the opportunities / solutions / best practices we can use to assure a good governance between stakeholders of UPA projects?

- Promote an active participation of all the involved actors
- UPA has to be seen as a solution, as a tool for achieving different purposes: social inclusion, resiliency, economic development, ....
- Integration of UPA in new policies and planning instruments promoted by Public Authorities
- Commitment and enthusiasm of stakeholders around the UPA projects, with strong local authorities leadership
- UPA projects provide low cost solutions, since they usually are not much expensive
- Training and funding
- Knowledge and best practices sharing
Workshop 2: Sustainability

In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the obstacles or difficulties we have to confront / manage in order to assure the sustainability of UPA projects?

General comment of the WS2:
The workshop has revealed two different perspectives:
- Countries as Italy, France or Spain are more focused on the social aspects of UPA Projects
- Countries as Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan and Morocco are more focused on the economic aspects of UPA Projects.
Nevertheless, the workshop has also revealed similar points of view in main aspects of the UPA Projects’ sustainability, and generated some interesting debates, as demonstrated by the ideas shared in different issues:

- Unsatisfactory partners’ involvement and commitment
- Insufficient subsidies and income generation for economic sustainability
- Shortage of land
- Restriction of the use of land because of legal frameworks and urban planning regulations
- Difficult access to market
- Bureaucracy and slow decision making

In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the opportunities / solutions / best practices we can use to assure the sustainability of UPA projects?

- Building social legitimacy, self-management and strong Public Private Partnerships
- Using local urban planning to reserve green spaces because UPA projects are an opportunity to manage open spaces at low cost
- Establishing the quantity of land and the conditions required to assure just the goal of social inclusion, or also local economic development
- Finding backers and sponsors (NGO’s, private sector, etc.) to complement the income generation and the subsidies local governments.
- Promoting the implication of all partners by sharing goals from the beginning, and offering training and clear organization
- Simplifying administrative bureaucracy
- Disseminating UPA projects’ experiences
WS 1: Governance of UPA projects - Strategies for good governance between stakeholders of the UPA Projects

Question 1: In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the obstacles or difficulties we have to confront / manage in order to assure a good governance between stakeholders of UPA projects?

Lack of a specific and unified legal framework and planning regarding UPAs

- Lack of legal framework regarding the use of urban land for agricultural purposes
  - Relation with urban planning.
- In Italy, land planning is a big obstacle to UPAs. This is one of the reasons UPAs in Italy are mostly illegal.
  - Master plan takes a long time to get approved (ex. 10 years).
- Lack of legal and regulatory aspects to define the relation between different stakeholders.
- Not unified regulations, difficult to know and to manage for the public interested.
- Too many administrative procedures to follow (bureaucracy).
- Lack of strategic planning for integration between urban and periurban.
- Predominance of land planning over land management.
  - Land planning focuses on big projects and infrastructures, but not on the little ones.

Slowness of public administration in reacting towards society needs

- Too much “distance” between public administrations and citizens / groups of citizens willing to work in UPA activities.
- Slowness of public administration.
  - Society change faster than administration.
- It is decisive that NGOs, associations and private citizens make aware the public institutions to change their policies and regulations as the society is changing faster than the public institutions. Decentralization is a first step.
- People (all stakeholders) never behave as you expect to.
  - Regulation narrows too much the options not expected.
- Centralization: Lack of competence of the city. Unable to set the dynamic.
**Existence of different visions and interests among UPAs stakeholders that need to be aligned or integrated**

- The mentality of people whom you are working with; having difficulties to work as a team. Each of them sticks to a certain idea.
- UPA is a sector where different and competitive interests need to be integrated.
- Reaching consensus on project objectives, since each actor has his own interests.
- Identifying target communities for social inclusion (e.g. unemployment, women, etc).

**Lack of UPA projects prioritization by public authorities**

- Public authorities don’t include UPA as a priority in planning.
- Prioritizing funding streams for social inclusion.
- Knowing how to give importance to low budget activities.

**UPA is a new concept that has to be clearly defined and explained**

- The idea behind UPA is not clear (new concept).
- Clearly explain the role of UPA as a balance between urban and rural.
- Citizens around misunderstand the project due to lack of contact with it.

**Practical issues around specific UPA Projects: troubles with facilities, work rhythms between actors involved, engagement & commitment, …**

- Lack of having some of the facilities (e.g. water, electricity, …) which are not always continuously available.
- Adapt the work rhythms of every actor involved in the project.
- Dependence of people that may disengage for a variety of reasons.

**Cultural barriers: agriculture is seen as an under-developed activity**

- Cultural: urban is the unique model. Agriculture means under-development.
- Overcome cultural barriers.
- Promotion of the role of agriculture in the next generations.
  - Agriculture takes a lot of time to get money.
Question 2: In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the opportunities / solutions / best practices we can use to assure a good governance between stakeholders of UPA projects?

UPA has to be seen as a solution, as a tool for achieving different purposes: social inclusion, resiliency, economic development, ....

- UPA is an effective “multi-task” tool, to support social, economic and environmental objectives.
- UPAs are an effective tool of resiliency ( economical, social, environmental, cultural, etc.), but by strongly involving local authorities.
- Believe on the project goal.
- Stakeholders must be convinced that UPA is a solution. There is a difference of situations.
- Make UPA activities more attractive to solve common problems by a heterogeneous target.
- UPA as a leisure tool.

Promote an active participation of all the involved actors

- Participatory (BP) workshops for stakeholders and actors in the area.
- Instead of regulation maybe we just need to speak: swarm planning.
  - All the stakeholders should move together (swarm).
- More awareness of the importance of different actors involvement (government, civil society ...) for a project to be successful.
- Listen to all the actors involved by using participatory methodologies. Citizen commitment. Professional management.
  - Enablers. Social commitment.
- Having National Committees that are made up of different sectors including Government, NGO, local communities, women societies, etc. to take decisions.

Integration of UPA in new policies and planning instruments promoted by Public Authorities

- Make Government and Public (stakeholders) aware of the importance and benefits of UPAs to the Public and Communities. Awareness Raising / Education.
- It is time of having from “good practices” (pilot projects) to new policies and new planning instruments.
  - Keep the bottom-up, but getting the administration also involved.
- Integrate UPA within City Development Strategy (CDS).
- Master plan to include (UPA) concept. ALA’s incentives
  - At a national / regional level.
Commitment and enthusiasm of stakeholders around the UPA projects, with strong local authorities leadership

- Allowing the community to take share in decisions taken ahead, and holding them responsible for those decisions, such as recommending good things done of trying to correct when needed.
- Enthusiasm of NGOs, associations as an added value.
- Strong leadership: Mayor, City Council.
- There is a rising “slow life culture” (new economy)

UPA projects provide low cost solutions, since they usually are not much expensive

- In these projects cheap is powerful (if you are able to communicate it).
- UPA can provide low cost solutions and benefit large part of the population.
- Generally UPA projects have low costs.

Training and funding

- Continuous education and sensitization and funding.
- Training and funding.

Knowledge and best practices sharing

- Guidelines: best practices are not known; impacts, management.
- Share experiences, share knowledge, training, information.
- Deployment of open networks of knowledge.
**WS 2: Sustainability of UPA projects - Strategies for sustainable development of UPA Projects (Sustainability: Social, Economic, Political, Cultural, Environmental)**

**Question 1:** In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the obstacles or difficulties we have to confront / manage in order to assure the sustainability of UPA projects?

**Unsatisfactory partners’ involvement and commitment**
- Local governments are not interested enough on UPA projects and do not support them enough. In some countries, the involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture is also needed but very difficult to get. Also the lack of connection or coordination between the different ministries involved affects the project.
- Question: Who has to assume the leadership of the project: an association or a public agent?
- Risk of political change, with different government bodies that prioritize differently.
- Lack of strong involvement of local communities and funds after the end of the project. The sustainability of the project depends on the resilient organization of a collective of citizens and associations committed with the operation of the gardens, and also on the involvement of the beneficiary (the person who works in the garden). Those strong groups show the importance of UPA projects as a tool of social inclusion.
- Inability of UPA to provide social services for the entire local community. Urban gardens are tools that allow UPA to get closer to marginalized people and to get their confidence.
- Internal conflict within the project may arise because some participants do not follow the rules.

**Insufficient subsidies and income generation for economic sustainability**
- Projects are too dependent on public subsidies or from NGOs, which are very limited. When they run out, the project cannot survive.
- It is hard to find funding for hiring a professional that manages and energizes the project.
- Production is not big enough to cover the production costs and make selling profitable (too small quantities of products), so there is not enough return for those who work in the project.
Shortage of land

- The available land is not good enough to sustain the project and the people working on it. Voluntary work is not sustainable in time. The visit on the field to the Barcelona project developed in the ground of a future metro station is an example.
- Not enough land and infrastructures: low productivity. Projects in need of culture of dense fertilization, mechanization, and research of the right and sufficient land to grow food.
- Urban speculation makes access to land very hard, for instance in the Barcelona context.

Restriction of the use of land because of legal frameworks and urban planning regulations

- The existing legal framework and regulations are not good enough for UPA. The use of public lands by local communities is very restricted by current regulations.
- Urban planning legislation do not envisage urban and periurban agriculture.

Difficult access to market

- Access to market is hard because local community cannot compete with commercial actors.
- Absence of short food chains.
- Lack of marketing knowledge or activity.

Bureaucracy and slow decision making

- In some countries, like Italy, there are too many public agencies involved and with authority in the same issue, and all of them have long processes and procedures that make decision making very slow: they are an obstacle for the application of good practices for environmental sustainability.
Question 2: In order to promote UPA projects as a social inclusion tool, what are the opportunities / solutions / best practices we can use to assure the sustainability of UPA projects?

General comment of the presenters of the WS2 conclusions:
The workshop has revealed two different perspectives:
- Countries as Italy, France or Spain are more focused on the social aspects of UPA Projects
- Countries as Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan and Morocco are more focused on the economic aspects of UPA Projects.
Nevertheless, the workshop has also revealed similar points of view in main aspects of the UPA Projects’ sustainability, and generated some interesting debates, as demonstrated by the ideas shared in different issues:

Building social legitimacy, self-management and strong Public Private Partnerships

- Social legitimacy and self-management are more important than legislation, because they can provide capacity to produce services for citizens
- Strong Public Private Partnerships (PPP) can be built, based on conventions/agreements. By instance: to create a Land’s Bank on regional and local scales.

Using local urban planning to reserve green spaces because UPA projects are an opportunity to manage open spaces at low cost

- Local urban planning should reserve green spaces in towns
- UPA Projects offer an opportunity for public administration to manage open spaces at low cost (a part of maintenance and preservation cost can be covered by the projects)

Establishing the quantity of land and the conditions required to assure just the goal of social inclusion, or also local economic development

- Create tools and strategies to generate incomes for local communities as:
  - UPA Social enterprises
  - Agreements
  - Economic partnerships
- Diversify the goals to promote a global project (social, economic, urban, …)
- Focus on native plants and land resources with wild medicinal plants
- Focus on intensive agriculture (agronomic fish-crops production)
- Promote direct selling
- Facilitate new social enterprise ideas
- Promote local food
- Develop education to eat more and better
**Debate** about two possible goals for UPA Projects: social inclusion and economic development:
By instance, the fact that a family needs 1 ha of land with irrigation and direct selling to market to generate sufficient income means that:
  - with less than 1 ha of land by family you can work for social inclusion but not generate enough resources for a community economic development
  - with more than 1 ha of land by family you can work for both social inclusion and economic development of a community.
So, taking in account the environment and characteristics of each territory and culture, it is important to establish the quantity of land and the conditions required to assure either the two UPA Projects goals, or just the social one.
It is also necessary to expand the meaning of “economy” as “oikos”.

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**Finding backers and sponsors (NGO’s, private sector, etc.) to complement the income generation and the subsidies local governments.**

- UPA Projects need subsidies from the state or from backers and sponsors (NGO, private sector, ...), but they also need good PPP (Public Private Partnership) management.

**Debate:**
- Do Projects always need external financial resources?
- The more global the project is, the more resources can collect
- The projects always need a minimum subsidy from local administration
- The social and educational goals justify a part of the subsidies
- There are other incomes for the community that are different from the direct incomes of selling

- The UPA Project of community gardens has to generate resources to be sustainable, as:
  - Selling of products
  - Training
  - Entrepreneurship assessment
  - Corporate Social Responsibility
But it also needs some co-financing by public administration
Promoting the implication of all partners by sharing goals from the beginning, and offering training and clear organization

- Integrating social, economic and environmental criteria, with shared goals for all the partners from the definition phase of the project
- Selecting the right motivated beneficiaries and training them: by instance with the Mariana Foundation method.
- Adapting the projects to the cities and the citizens
- The individuation of some few clear rules, giving support to the associations for all the administrative processes and facilitating their knowledge
- Taking advantage of the will of all the persons and organisms that want to participate in projects like UPA, in particular the new generation of people interested in urban agriculture.

Simplifying administrative bureaucracy

- Administrative processes and procedures must be simplified to facilitate UPA projects.

Disseminating UPA projects’ experiences

- UPA Projects deserve to be known
- Social inclusion is very heartfelt (by instance in Roma).
Annex: Photographs of the panels work

WS 1: Governance of UPA projects

Inscriptions for Workshop 1:
UPA Projects Governance

1. Ana Vega
2. Elena Angelich
3. A. Abdul Wahab
4. A. Zaidi
5. M. Monzer Abdel
6. CLAUDIO BERDI
7. FASIO LI TAREZ
8. ANNA COMAZ
9. ENRIC SORRA
10. Khaled Ben Abdesslem
11. LUIZ MENDI
12. TARIQ ABU JALEB
13. YOGO CAVALIER
14. Thabet ABO ABUD
15. CLARA UNTET
16. VICTOR TEREZ
17. WBAMED SAADICH
18. LLUIS MALDONADO
19. CLAUDI RUI
20. 
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22. 
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