



LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY WORKING TOGETHER FOR FOOD SECURITY

9 recommendations on how to strengthen
civil society's role in advancing urban food
security in the Global South

IMPRESSUM

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Hot Ice Creative Studio, Prague

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1 INTRODUCTION

Hunger, food poverty and inadequate nutrition among urban dwellers in the Global South are often not only an issue of availability of food, but an issue of lack of access to it. This is merged with, and often further exacerbated by, trends of urbanisation—notably population growth in urban areas and the expansion of cities and sprawl of urban areas into formerly rural spaces. Combined with lacking social protections and stark urban and peri-urban inequalities, these conditions and developments are impacting most negatively on the lives and food security of disenfranchised urban residents, the so-called “urban poor”.^{*} These, in and of themselves, unfavourable conditions are further intensified by, for instance, anti-democratic developments, errant urban planning, lack of public food-related service provision for the urban poor and other vulnerable groups, global climate change and the internationalisation of agri-food markets. Taken together, these trends pose diverse challenges to a variety of local actors, authorities and initiatives concerned with food-related urban issues.

Due to a common lack of effective public food-related service provision in Global South urban areas, civil society organisations (CSOs) and initiatives often fulfil a wide range of roles to uphold some form of urban food and nutrition security. In many cities, civil society takes up many food-related tasks that should ideally be executed by local governments and authorities. As a result of being occupied with serving as the main provider of basic foodstuff, civil society often lacks capacities to broaden their impact by informing and influencing food policy-making and achieving more inclusive participatory and democratic urban processes and social change.

This paper focusses on the role of civil society actors tackling urban food insecurity in the Global South. Through an analysis of the causes and effects of urban food (in)security and the role of local governments in urban food governance, the paper maps the spectrum of interferences and obstacles civil society has to face.

Recognising the burdens, constraints and overall challenging circumstances civil society is confronted with, this report addresses a number of important questions: How can local governments contribute to averting these infringements and constraints? How, under these circumstances, can municipalities help to strengthen civil society contributing to food security in Global South cities? What strategies and mechanisms need to be developed to make this an effective and sustained effort? What changes need to be made to urban planning and policy-making processes to support civil society?

This report targets urban policy-makers and planners on all relevant governance levels—from municipal to neighbourhood—in the Global South. It recommends concrete steps to be taken by urban governments on measures necessary to strengthen civil society initiatives involved in providing healthy and nutritious food to urban areas.

Through an integrated, informed and sustainable approach to urban food security, civil society initiatives can be relieved of some of the burden weighing on them. Through municipal policies that safeguard their political, legal and financial security, the resilience of civil society can be strengthened and the impact of the work enhanced.

The recommendations this report articulates are based on a collection of reflections and experiences of researchers and experts from various countries in Africa and Latin America and on the review of literature on, *inter alia*, urban food security, urban food systems, food governance, and food security-related civil society initiatives in cities of the Global South.

^{*} When writing about urban food and nutrition security in this article, the authors refer to urban and peri-urban areas as well. The mesh of interdependencies, particularly in food-related issues, is dense and often inseparably entwined. Demographic changes due to migration, population growth and consequently expansions of urban areas into the rural hinterland, sprawl of infrastructure and its implications on resources, the environment, and management of these areas and therefore the populations' food and nutrition security, are reasons for this approach. Big cities and medium to small-sized cities alike are included in these reflections on urban food (in) security.

2 CITIES AND URBAN FOOD (IN)SECURITY

2.1 Urban food (in)security in the Global South

For most of human history, people have lived together in smaller communities. However, due to mass migration from rural to urban areas and population growth in cities in the last century, an unprecedented change in people's prevalent living conditions has taken place. Today, over 55% of the world's population resides in urban areas and this figure is projected to rise to 68% by 2050.¹

While traditionally urbanisation trends have concentrated in high-income countries, rapid urbanisation has also occurred in low-income countries (notably in Asia and a number of African countries) in recent decades.² Over the next three decades, the most precipitous urbanisation is expected to take place in low-income and lower-middle-income countries, where the majority of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people live.³

A major challenge will be to make sure that this urban growth is managed sustainably and does not come at the detriment of economic, social, and environmental circumstances. While urbanisation can drive economic growth, and with it have a positive impact on development, it can also cause specific types of poverty, inequality, and insecurity. This is felt most acutely in the growing number of informal settlements in urban areas in the Global South.

An important impact of urbanisation in the Global South is the effect it has on food and nutrition security, especially among the urban poor and other vulnerable groups. However, the linkages between urbanisation and food security are seldomly recognised or understood.⁴ The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on ending hunger (SDG 2) makes no mention of attaining food security in cities and SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities lacks acknowledgement of the critical role of food security.⁵

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations determines food security as being attained when “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”⁶ This definition recognises the multidimensional nature of food security and includes the following four aspects: food access, food availability, food use and stability of food supply.”

^{**} The focus on the concept of food security within this paper does not suggest it to be the most exhaustive concept, however the most utilised and relevant at this point. Other political concepts are only limitedly recognised within this publication, the concept of food sovereignty, as it is incorporated in the constitution of Ecuador, is mentioned in the context of strengthening agroecology.

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Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

World Food Summit, 1996





Urbanisation trends are affecting each of these aspects considerably. The ability of the agricultural sector to feed a growing and increasingly urban population, for example, is already under severe strain. Urban expansion into lands traditionally used for agricultural purposes can further complicate efforts to ensure sufficient food availability. In addition, urban areas' significant draw on potentially scarce water resources can exacerbate dry conditions for soils, thereby affecting crop yields.

At the same time, the expansion of urban areas and the rise in urban population also means that more food will have to be transported to and within cities. This adds stressors to rural and urban infrastructures, distribution networks and transport technologies, many of which are often already unsatisfactory or at its limits of capacity in the Global South.

Globally, cities account for about two-thirds of global primary energy demand and 70% of global carbon dioxide emissions.⁷ Climate change, land degradation, disruptions of natural ecosystems, water shortages, loss of biodiversity, rising inequalities, poverty, hunger and malnutrition are often causes of the expansion of and migration to urban areas, especially in the Global South.

However, expanding cities and towns, and their changing urban food systems, are not only impacted by climate change through an increase in extreme weather events, rising temperatures and by growing demands for land, water, energy or other resources; they are also impacted

by ensuing processes, such as changes of patterns in precipitation, rising pollution, biomass loss, soil erosion and disruptions in supply of and access to resources. A changing climate will, furthermore, lead to “plant and animal heat stress, less predictable seasons, crop and livestock losses [...] and changes in the regional suitability of certain production systems.”⁸ This, in turn, will have a significant impact on food production and the ability of agricultural land to feed a growing population.

Urban areas, including cities, towns, and their surrounding territories, such as suburbs, peri-urban areas, and conurbations, are at the heart of today's environmental, social, and political change. City and municipal governments are therefore critical actors in achieving many of the SDGs and in particular the goals of SDGs 2 and 11: to “end hunger and ensure access by all people (...) to safe, nutritious and sufficient food” and “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.⁹



2.2 The role of cities of the Global South in urban food security

Due to the relatively small size of territory they occupy and their often high economic prosperity, urban areas have the potential to address many pressing issues in a timely, tailored and inclusive way. This also holds for food security, which is a crucial aspect of making urban areas safe and thriving. Comprehensive and inclusive urban food policies can address issues related to poverty, hunger and malnutrition, socio-economic inequalities, climate change, protection of biodiversity and the resilience of food systems.¹⁰

However, in many Global South countries, particularly in Africa and to some extent in Latin America, a rushed and partial decentralisation of public authority has resulted in local governments being weakened, disorganised, and often under-resourced and under-staffed relative to the new range of responsibilities they are expected to take on. The lack of a simultaneous and systematic decentralisation and transfer of appropriate financial means to carry out the diverse range of decentralised tasks is a particular problem. Inadequate funding in most cases results in a lack of, or inappropriate, measures being taken to tackle pressing urban issues. This is also felt in the urban food system.¹¹

It is, in general, the local government that has formal responsibility in areas related to the urban food system. This includes the provision of financial and informational support; the provision of infrastructure, sanitation, electricity, and transport; formal and informal education and awareness-raising; and the regulatory environment of land-use planning, market regulations, advertisement, health protection and consumer protection.¹²

Limited capacity and ability within local government institutions to carry out their responsibilities often leads to informal processes, performed by non-state actors, to fill that governance void.¹³ In the past, this lack of capacity has often resulted in a growing shift towards privatisation in providing public social services. Unfortunately, this shift has come to the detriment of the urban poor, whose dependence on such basic services makes them particularly vulnerable to changes in the provision of food-related services.

Furthermore, apart from local government institutions on all levels (municipality, district and borough), other actors play important roles in urban food governance: faith-based organisations and groups, trade unions and associations, formal and informal businesses, civil society (including community-based organisations and initiatives, as well as national and international non-governmental organisations), political organisations, and governmental agencies.

Through this wide variety of actors involved, and the possible divergence between their respective interests, urban food governance is often characterised by uncoordinated, fragmented, and sometimes antagonistic processes and a lack of coherence in measures. Unfortunately, the urban poor and other vulnerable groups are hit hardest as a result of these limits in structured food-related governance. Their circumstances require an urban food system that is inclusive, integrated and coordinated.¹⁴

The often used, but misleading notion that food production is the sole key to attaining food security is a recurring problem in solving cities' food insecurity and creating effective governance structures. Supporting urban food production—for instance, through urban agriculture and farming—is important but has, in most places, only limited potential in improving overall urban food security. Its long-lasting effectiveness, for instance, is strongly dependent on the geographical location of the city and the agricultural fertility of the urban soils.

Local governments have a range of levers at their disposal that could have a positive impact on urban food security. These include, for instance, urban and spatial planning, designing regulatory frameworks on street vending and regulating and supporting compliance with food safety and hygiene standards. Moreover, local governments can facilitate broad stakeholder participation in local food governance and policymaking and, more broadly, adopt instruments aimed at enhancing economic opportunity and social protection.¹⁵



3 CIVIL SOCIETY AND URBAN FOOD (IN)SECURITY

In many of the actions necessary for achieving urban food security and countering existing and new challenges in cities of the Global South, civil society plays a critical role.

As civil society actors are often occupied beyond capacity with taking on many of the food-related service and delivery activities, their political roles are too often neglected. These roles include communicating the needs of the most disadvantaged groups, facilitating and participating in civil

actions aimed at improving urban food security, generating political will and interaction and improving policy-making processes to strengthen the resilience of the urban food system.

In many instances, this neglect of important parts of the democratic role of civil society can be traced back to wilful direct or indirect interferences.

Through informed urban planning, local institutions have a key role to play in building resilient, reliable and safe infrastructure. This includes urban transport systems and routes connecting cities with their hinterlands, energy infrastructure to ensure a steady and reliable supply of electricity and water, waste and sanitation infrastructure. Infrastructure improvements can contribute to avoiding food loss and waste, increase food access and availability, as well as secure stable food pricing.¹⁶

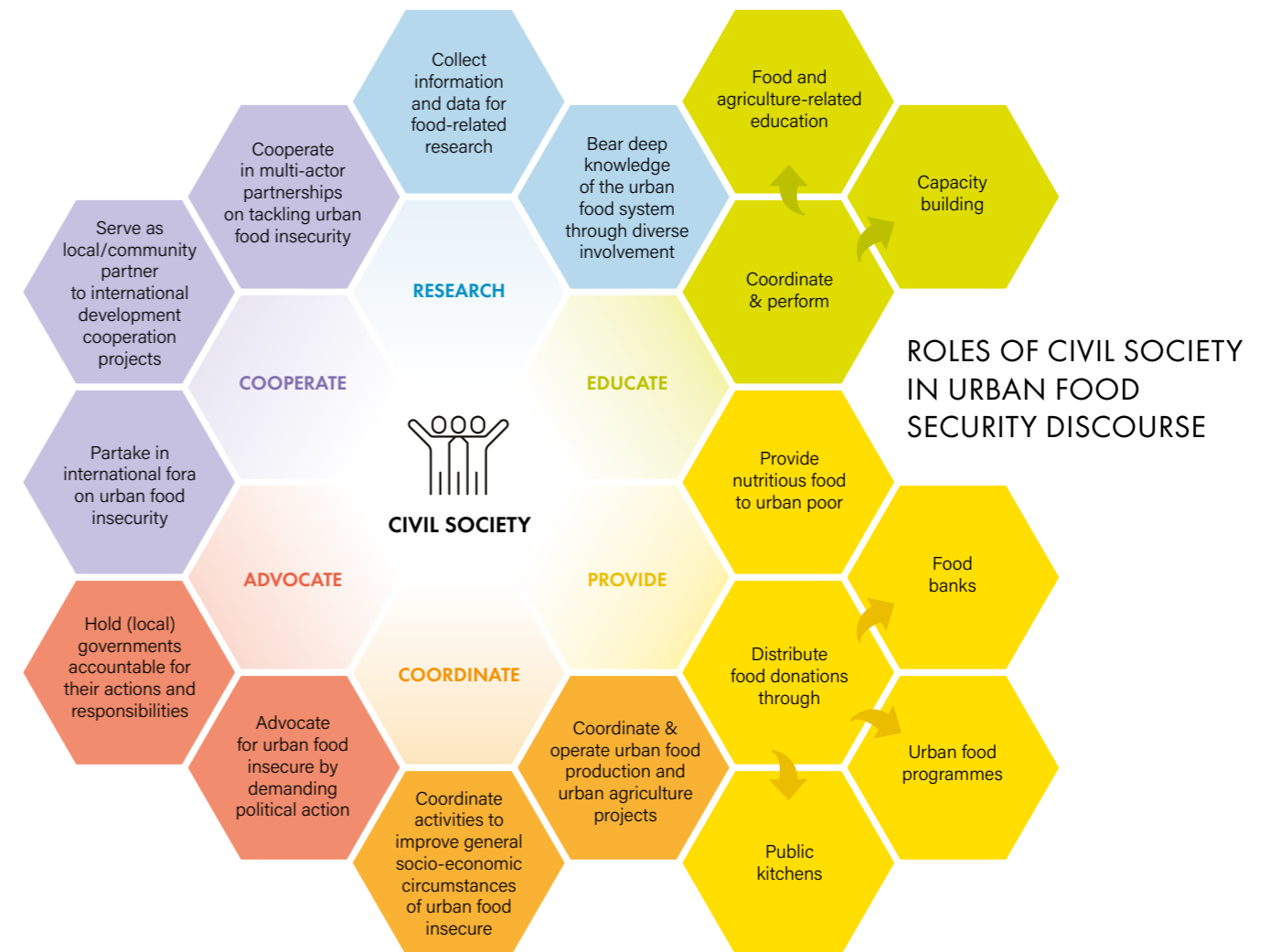
In many Global South cities, the quality of such infrastructure is very unevenly distributed, with low-income settlements often lacking basic utilities. This has considerable detrimental impacts on the food system of those settlements, with the health and safety of its residents at risk. Due to a progressing segregation of low-income groups within cities, low-income, informal settlements are often forced to move to remote, often hazardous locations within the urban area. Such settlements are often also more exposed to the effects of severe weather events and other impacts of climate change.

An ever-expanding city and errant planning decisions also tend to contribute to increased land-use conflicts between agriculturally and non-agriculturally used land. This competition for land can emerge from conflicts in infrastructural planning related to transport, commercial spaces, urban agriculture, housing and public service provisions generally.¹⁷

Consequently, city regulations on a range of issues can have considerable impacts on the accessibility and availability of food. These regulations include, *inter alia*, the opening hours and potential locations of markets and supermarkets, the authorisation or penalisation of informal trading, and the implementation of food safety standards.

In sum, local governments are in a prominent position to either positively or negatively impact their respective urban area and beyond. The fact that cities are becoming increasingly economically relevant, are somewhat disengaged from national developments, and that rural-urban migration and other demographic developments are bringing a growing number of voters to live in cities, is evidence that cities are gaining increasing political importance.¹⁸

Great potential for progress and change originates from the cooperation between urban governance and civil society initiatives enabling cities and urban areas to improve people's lives, even beyond city borders. Municipalities and city governments of urban areas of all sizes—from town to mega city—must play a key part in strengthening the role of civil society providing and supporting food security in Global South cities.



3.1 Civil society's role in advancing urban food security

Civil society's involvement in urban food security in the Global South is manifold: it involves a variety of actors, working on a range of issues and targeting different stakeholders. It can also take a variety of forms, including community-based organisations, social movements and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).¹⁹

In many cases, civil society actors unite a broad spectrum of different roles in advancing urban food security. They can act as the local (community) partners for food security initiatives as part of international development cooperation projects. They can collect information and data for research purposes or help manage food production in cities and provide nutritious food by setting up and coordinating urban agriculture projects. Furthermore, CSOs can operate urban food programmes, public kitchens and food banks and help distribute food donations from churches, grocery stores, farms or international organisations. Civil society can also coordinate and perform food and agriculture-related education and capacity-building. They can also tackle food security issues as part of other activities aimed at improving the socio-economic circumstances of people, households, communities and vulnerable groups.²⁰

As government institutions often fail to achieve food security for the entire population, in many instances non-state actors might be indispensable to feeding urban populations in Global South countries. However, this should not be a permanent solution to the problem as it is part of the government's mandate to secure people's livelihoods.



Civil society is prominently placed to demand local governments to fulfil their responsibility towards their citizens. By linking different, not obviously connected issues to food security based on grassroots knowledge and access to as well as sharing of technical data, civil society actors are invaluable partners in meeting these challenges timely, appropriately, and comprehensively. This, for instance, applies to addressing the interconnectedness of environmental degradation, climate change, and food security.

Based on deep understanding of the intricacies of the local urban food system and the specific needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized in society, civil society actors can contribute their valuable knowledge and resources to an inclusive policy making process, improving the situation of urban food insecurity and holding government officials accountable for assuming and committing to their (food-related) responsibilities towards urban dwellers.

Finally, to be able to carry out these roles permanently and effectively, civil society initiatives are highly dependent on sustainable funding and other means of support from a diverse set of sources. Some of this funding should be covered by municipal sources, which would also send a clear signal that the role of CSOs and the outcomes of their engagement is valued. Provided that cooperation between civil society and local governmental actors is implemented fairly and according to democratic standards, and is pursued under the common goal of improving food security, this can, in turn, ensure a relationship of reciprocal accountability between CSOs and local governments: civil society advises and influences policy-making and holds local authorities and governments accountable, while local governments hold CSOs accountable for using funds in accordance with agreements.



3.2 Challenges and interferences in the food-related work of civil society

Civil society initiatives working on food-related urban issues encounter many—deliberate or unintended—challenges and interferences that hinder them in fulfilling their critical functions within the urban food system. Therefore, their pursuit for securing a healthy, nutritional, sustainable and sufficient supply of food for the most vulnerable urban dwellers is often compromised.

CHALLENGES & INTERFERENCES

in the work of civil society working in urban food (in)security



3.2.1 Direct & political interferences

GENERAL, POLITICAL INTERFERENCES & ANTI-DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTS

In the past years, the political systems of many countries around the world have been affected by anti-democratic developments. These include autocratic tendencies in governance structures, insufficient safeguarding of the rule of law, endemic corruption, threats to civil liberties and inadequate functioning of government institutions.²¹

In many countries, political interferences in the work or free functioning of civil society are common. Such interferences include censorship, physical intimidation, criminalisation of civil society engagement, public vilification and stigmatisation and bureaucratic hurdles.²² These interventions significantly curtail the ability of civil society to offer a space for collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. This is often accompanied by a shrinkage of civic space, evidenced by a decline in toleration for dissent by political opposition.

Furthermore, restrictions placed on civil society actors critical of government leadership or working to counter injustices perpetrated or facilitated by the ruling regime, are not uncommon. These restrictions include, for instance, imposing limits on the right to associate, constraints on the acquisition of sources of funding and the revocation of licenses.²³

AN EXAMPLE

A recent example of how such interferences can negatively impact civil society's role comes from Brazil. Here, civil engagement in advancing food security has been much more progressive than in most low to middle-income countries. Consisting of two-thirds civil society representatives and one-third government representatives, the National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONSEA) of Brazil had been functioning as a channel for dialogue between the Brazilian government and civil society, with the common aim of formulating public policy against hunger. Together, the Secretariat of Food and Nutritional Security (SESAN) and CONSEA had made significant progress on reducing hunger in the country—they reached an important intermediate objective in 2014 when Brazil was taken off the FAO Hunger Map. However, in January 2019, as one of its first official acts, the then newly-elected Bolsonaro government dismissed employees of the SESAN and abolished the CONSEA without explanation.²⁴

ANTI-URBAN BIAS

A particular struggle urban civil society has to deal with is that urban areas are sometimes viewed as 'opposition strongholds'. This can lead to the ruling party at the national level ignoring those areas and foregoing effective governance, often through lack of offering sufficient financial resources to towns and cities.

As a result of this anti-urban bias, the urban food system relies heavily on either the private sector (for those who have the means to purchase food) or civil society, through outlets such as community kitchens, food aid, community gardens and urban agriculture projects (for those depending on these services).

This persistent anti-urban bias has been identified as an important factor undermining civil society political engagement on food-related urban issues. Furthermore, both international development agencies and national governments have been inclined to prioritise action on alleviating rural poverty and supporting agricultural practices over addressing urban poverty. The bias also manifests itself in the pervasiveness of governmental measures to dissuade rural-urban migration and in a persistence to ignore problems of informal urban settlements.²⁵

LACK OF OFFICIAL MANDATE & UNCOORDINATED GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

Another recurring obstacle to advancing food security in the Global South is that often no official mandate for setting food policies exists at the level of municipalities. This is particularly true for African cities.²⁶ Even at the national level, the food sector is too often understood as a matter for the private sector. Private enterprises in agriculture, trading and marketing are seen as responsible agents in feeding the population.

However, these efforts hardly ever lead to widely attained food security, especially not among vulnerable groups. Gaps between the assumed responsibility of the private sector and inadequate or lacking governmental action are then often filled by civil society to feed those (economically) incapable of accessing nutritious sustenance through the usual channels. This results in an increasing burden on civil society to ensure food security in urban areas in the Global South.²⁷



OVER-REGULATION & LACK OF TRANSPARENCY OF THE FOOD SYSTEM

While in many countries an effective urban food governance system is absent and food security is mostly an issue left to be dealt with through civil society initiatives, in others, over-regulation and a lack of transparency of food security governance is a problem.

Here, issues arise because different state agencies with different mandates and portfolios work on their respective areas (agriculture, health, infrastructure, cities, etc.) but with insufficient coordination amongst them, without a defined overarching strategic objective on urban food security and without adequate consultations with civil society stakeholders.²⁸ This lack of coordination and obscurity of responsibilities, too, place burdens on civil society working to improve the urban food system.

IGNORING ACTS OF PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS

Additional problems arise when incoming municipal administrations abandon initiatives and policies from the outgoing administration. Unfortunately, in many Global South countries, this practice is widespread and the resulting lack of consistency in policy-making or priority-setting significantly hampers progress in advancing food security and producing relief for civil initiatives providing basic food supply.²⁹

3.2.2 Indirect & other obstacles

In addition to these direct, political interferences with the work of civil society, infringements in their work can also stem from general, external or foreign circumstances.

RAPID URBANISATION

As mentioned before, rapid urbanisation trends in the Global South are impacting the urban food system.

With urbanisation expected to spike in low-income and lower-middle-income countries in the coming three decades, it is crucial to consider its impact on urban food security. Demographic changes, urban sprawl and climatic change-related stressors will cause transitions in peri-urban agricultural land, soil erosion and land, water and air pollution. This, in turn, may negatively impact the ability of areas close to cities to provide sufficient food.

35% of rainfed croplands and 60% of irrigated croplands lie within a 20km radius of urban areas. The loss of these areas may have dire consequences for the urban food system. Additionally, urban, peri-urban and near-rural agricultural lands are the only fertile spaces under the remit of municipalities and city governments in terms of urban food production. Thus, it is important to manage urban sprawl in a manner that it does not replace otherwise productive soils. Furthermore, in times of political instability, economic shocks and natural disasters, these spaces serve as "potential buffers" to food supply disruptions.³⁰

Deciding upon destruction or protection of these areas will determine the continued existence of these agricultural lands and can have an important impact on the food security of urban vulnerable people and the urban food system as a whole in times of rapid change. Moreover, bringing more municipal attention to urban, peri-urban and near-rural agricultural areas, has the potential to impact the livelihoods of many local families and farmers, as well as the relationship between agricultural producers and urban consumers.³¹

Civil society working in food-related fields within city borders as well as in peri-urban or rural areas will be equally affected by these trends, for instance, in their attempts to promote and support local food production and advocate for smallholders, traders and consumers along the local food chain.

ACTIONS AGAINST INFORMAL TRADING

Another major challenge to the work of CSOs and a functioning urban food system that reaches all corners of society is government action against informal (food) trading.

In many Global South countries, the creation of formal jobs can often not keep pace with the demographic pressures of rural-urban migration and natural population growth. As a result, many urban dwellers engage in various self-employed informal activities, especially in the food sector (in processing, sales and food delivery services).³²

However, in many of these countries, colonial-era street vending legislation that penalises sellers and buyers is still in place.³³ A desire of city officials to transform cities into more attractive, modern and well-managed places to attract investments and tourism can further foster this system that excludes and pressures informal traders.³⁴

Some acts of government harm the livelihoods of traders, hinder an important form of social interaction and exchange in the form of 'street culture' and have negative consequences for the urban food system. Examples of these acts are criminalising informal trading, excessively enforcing tax and regulatory compliance from participants in the informal food sector and pursuing urban planning and development schemes that do not consider informal trading.³⁵

Authorities often justify these measures by pointing to concerns over tax evasion, trespassing on private land, traffic congestion or food safety.³⁶ This ignores the fact that



informal markets and informal street trading contribute significantly to urban food security, through providing food access, in particular to underprivileged urban dwellers by selling in small quantities, reducing distance to markets and allowing for bargaining.³⁷

In many countries with such restrictions, civil society tends to play an important role in advocating for the importance of informal food-related activities, in particular as it relates to protecting the livelihoods of informal traders and consumption habits of the urban poor and disenfranchised.³⁸

UNINFORMED OR ERRANT URBAN PLANNING

Limited consultations with civil society in urban planning processes, or a lack thereof, often results in the prioritisation of developments that are inconsistent with strategies to improve the urban food system or food security goals in the public interest.

Decisions on district zoning and land use often lead to urban areas becoming "food deserts" as too little consideration is given to the establishment of markets or food stores.³⁹ A determining factor for the sustained success of planning decisions is for them to be underpinned by bottom-up knowledge of how the urban food system works, how changes can often best be spearheaded by the communities themselves, as well as by concerns over how the most vulnerable groups can be cared for.

A result of excluding this knowledge in urban planning is that the demand for civil society initiatives providing food to poor communities increases as more urban dwellers may lose their source of food and income.

(MIS)INTERPRETATION OF FOOD SECURITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE URBAN FOOD SYSTEM

Another obstacle is that different stakeholders or groups define "food security" in different ways. Too often, food security is narrowly defined as "filling stomachs", without proper acknowledgement of the need for the food to be nourishing and of adequate quality.

For many urban dwellers, the challenge to have access to *any* food is often great enough for them to not demand *healthy* food. Poor quality food, however, can have a detrimental effect on people's health and exacerbate underlying health concerns, which further harms their socio-economic circumstances and opportunities.

Civil society initiatives or actors educating on proper and nourishing food, as well as its handling and processing, is often contradicted by the promotion and authorisation of advertisements for unhealthy food in public spaces through (international) supermarket chains and food corporations.

Moreover, to successfully design a sustainable, self-sufficient and resilient urban food system, the effects of a dependency on (international) food aid and donations need to be analysed and fed into urban food policy-making. This includes assessing the consequences of depending on international food donations in 'normal' times and the ability of city governments provide food to its citizens in crisis situation. The existence of a decentralised, local agri-food sector can bolster the resilience of a city to safeguard food security in extraordinary times.

INTERNATIONALISATION OF NATIONAL (FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL) MARKET

The important role of civil society organisations in providing food-related services and advocating for urban food security is heavily impacted on by globalisation trends and pressures, and influence wielded by increasingly powerful international agri-food corporations.

Decisions by governments to give these corporations unfettered access to their national market can have a range of detrimental effects. For example, allowing the introduction of products at a lower price and quality than traditional, locally-produced foods, promoted and supported through efforts of CSOs, or the marketing of genetically modified crops, can threaten the livelihoods of farmers and devastate a country's traditional agricultural sector. This could also lead to a dependence on imports, foreign food aid and donations for food security (see above). Moreover, the widespread introduction of highly-processed foods, their marketing and donations of these (or other foods low in nutritional value) to food banks, can have deleterious health effects, including diabetes, heart disease and obesity.⁴⁰

This problem is particularly pernicious as these foods are often alien to traditional or indigenous diets, and the damaging health effects from their widespread consumption are thus more acutely felt.

PRIVATISATION

In the majority of countries around the world, international corporations play a dominant role controlling the production and distribution of food-related products and services.

Food-related resources have been controlled by closed networks of public-private actors acting to the mutual benefit of a relatively small number of organisations. A concentration of ownership and power is not a conducive environment for food policy change. It concentrates decision-making power within a political system in such a way that the more powerful actors are relatively insulated from civil society pressures.

The elites that control food production systems have developed an extended network around the food industry that involves clientelism, corruption and state capture. They are often successful in getting rules, norms, laws and standards adopted that keep this system in place and help to resist change.

"SUPERMARKETISATION"

A related issue is the growing "supermarketisation" in Global South cities and urban areas.

Few developments have changed the landscape of the urban food system as much as the rapid spread of supermarkets in the cities of the Global South. In many cities, supermarkets are considered symbols of modernisation and economic opportunity. Their steady rise over the last decades has had complex and far-reaching implications for the food system.⁴¹

City councils have continued to grant (national and international) supermarket chains tax incentives and permits to open new stores. This happened despite protests of local shopkeepers and interventions by civil society and academia. The main concern is the potentially disruptive power of unchecked growth of supermarkets on local urban economies and livelihoods.⁴²

However, officials justify this by claiming that food sold by supermarkets is of a better quality and produced under stricter safety regulations than other traders can provide or meet. Another common justification given is that supermarkets can guarantee prices for farmers and thus provide lower per-unit prices to consumers.

Whereas, critics argue that this unchecked growth of supermarkets may drive out traders relying on traditional agriculture and marketing. Under unfavourable circumstances, this may have devastating consequences for the whole food chain. It may destroy millions of jobs in agricultural production, in food processing and other food-related activities not related to the value chain of food sold in supermarkets.⁴³

Moreover, the irregular spatial distribution of supermarkets and disappearance of (often informal) local traders, may contribute to decongest inner city districts and areas, but may result in many of the urban poor having an even harder time to access food.⁴⁴

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that supermarkets tend to be far less responsive to the needs of low-income households in terms of the volumes they trade-in, the hours they operate and their inability to offer credit.⁴⁵ Changes in regulating informal trading (or banning it) and an increase in supermarkets may also diminish the social role that small-scale street vendors often play in strengthening ties between and within communities.⁴⁶

In times of crisis this dependence on supermarkets and parts of its food stuff being produced centralised or even outside of the country can have devastating consequences when borders are being closed, conflicts arise, or the food supply chain is otherwise disrupted.

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY SUPPLY

While the effects of climate change on food production and urban food systems are more obvious (see 2.1.), some of its other effects are less evident and therefore often fade from view.



Climate change will impact on the functions of processing, transport, retail, consumption and storage of food—particularly the shelf-life of products and their refrigeration. The effects of climate change will hit the urban poor the hardest since they are often located in the most vulnerable parts of the cities and thus have the lowest capacity to adapt to such changes.⁴⁷

Besides that, the demand for energy is changing and increasing. This is caused, *inter alia*, by changes in food production, transportation needs and storage requirements (e.g. refrigeration). For many of the urban poor, a lack of access to electricity and rising energy costs can contribute to their food insecurity.⁴⁸

In some Global South countries, the national grid is unreliable and fails to reach all parts of the country. Renewable energy technologies, in particular solar and wind-based, can support communities in providing energy for all relevant processes along the food supply chain: production, processing, preservation and cooking. An integration of renewable energy technologies in all areas of the food system can greatly benefit the sustainability and resilience of the food system.⁴⁹

Civil society organisations are often important partners in developing and deploying household and local small-grid renewable energy alternatives.⁵⁰ If not supported in this endeavour by official permissions for off-grid energy production, infrastructure development and supply of financial or technical resources, civil society may fail to facilitate a clean energy transition, which will then fail to unlock the related benefits to attaining urban food security in the Global South.



LACK OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

An overarching and recurring constraint to successful efforts of civil society in advancing urban food security, is a lack of engagement of CSOs in processes of decision-making towards finding appropriate long-term responses to urban food insecurity.

Due to a lack of funding, democratic deficits curtailing their ability to hold institutions to account, or a lack of capacity to work beyond providing basic food-related services, CSOs are often not able to play this important role. Moreover, policies and governmental initiatives often transfer certain critical food security tasks to civil society actors, even though they fall under the government's mandate.

Civil society makes invaluable contributions to advancing urban food security—indeed, some tasks are best executed by non-state actors—but it should not absolve the government of their responsibilities on these issues.⁵³ In this regard, civil society can also play a critical role in influencing political officials to act on international food-related commitments, like the SDG 2 on Zero Hunger and the human right to adequate food, advocating for citizens' interests and advancing food security.

LACK OF INTEGRATION OF AGROECOLOGY MEASURES

In countries where illiberal or autocratic tendencies are prevalent, democratic deficits persist and freedoms are restricted, civil society is often weakened. One of the consequences has been the insufficient attention given to the impacts that conventional food production has on the environment, which has traditionally been promoted by civil society.

As an innovative response to these environmental impacts and the injustices within urban food systems, in many cities, citizens in cooperation with CSOs have started exploring new and local forms of food production and distribution, corresponding to the principals of agroecology.⁵¹ In some instances, these initiatives have been able to rely on the support of local and regional jurisdictions, which can foster effective new partnerships between community groups and local government institutions.⁵² However, in many other cases the size of fertile surface available for urban and near-urban agriculture is rapidly shrinking as a result of urban sprawl into peri-urban and near-rural areas and due to densification (building new housing on vacant plots in urban areas).

Yet, if civil society is primarily occupied with a 'delivery-role' of providing food to those in need, it can be hindered in advocating for more progressive food policies and broader social change, as well as carrying out its role as government watchdogs, as they would be left vulnerable to governmental decisions.⁵⁴

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

In order to effectively influence and support urban decision-making processes on food-related issues, civil society actors need to be knowledgeable on the intricacies, vulnerabilities and opportunities of policy-making trajectories and structures. However, it is often the case that civil society is insufficiently informed about administrative procedures, differentiated political responsibilities and planning processes.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR URBAN GOVERNMENTS TO STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES

Even though the structures of civil society engagement and the relationship between municipalities and civil society in food-related issues differ greatly among different cities, regions, countries and continents, some common conclusions can be drawn, and recommendations derived. In order to strengthen the resilience of civil society organisations, and therefore the urban food system as a whole, this report suggests local governments adopt the following recommendations.



1 Institutionalise food security in urban governance and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach



2 Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the urban food system



3 Recognise the critical role of civil society in urban food security and ensure legal certainty and guarantees for their work



4 Acquire stable, sustainable financial resources



5 Place food security at the heart of urban planning and urban policy-making



6 Prioritise poverty alleviation as the main target in urban food policy-making



7 Mainstream climate action and agroecology in urban food policies



8 Promote food security education and capacity-building



9 Engage in networks, pacts and organisations



1 Institutionalise food security in urban governance and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach

There is strong evidence that the most effective urban food policies originates from policy-making processes and governance structures that are open and inclusive.⁵⁵

Municipal institutions should encourage, convene, institutionalise and participate in multi-stakeholder processes that are based on trust, equality and cooperation.⁵⁶ Such multi-stakeholder forums must include civil society organisations, businesses, farmers' associations, civil servants, municipal and administrative officials, urban and spatial planners, entrepreneurs, researchers and traders.

By bringing together such a diverse set of actors, interests and competences, fragmented, uncoordinated and antagonistic policy-action can be minimised or avoided. Instead, actors can cooperate in this space to move towards the shared goal of achieving urban food security for all. Based on a common vision that includes the perspectives and concerns of the different stakeholders, such a multi-stakeholder approach can function as an ongoing review process on the consequences of decisions, and thereby correct errant food policies.



To motivate such a complex group of actors to participate and consult in an inclusive body on urban food-related issues democratises the process and goes a long way in creating legitimacy and acceptance of decisions. To ensure long-term collaboration and constructive dialogue, the relevance of locally-generated knowledge needs to be recognised, common food-related values need to be agreed upon and open, vertical and horizontal cooperation and integration need to be created and strengthened. This includes a deep understanding among stakeholders of the urban political and regulatory systems to ensure effective, long-lasting and far-reaching measures.

A model that reflects this multi-stakeholder approach and has grown significantly around the world in recent years is the creation of **Food Policy Councils (FPC)**. The goal of FPCs is to provide a forum for advocacy and policy development that works towards the creation of a local food system that is ecologically sustainable, economically viable and socially just. FPCs act as food policy supportive networks articulating and empowering cross-sectoral partnerships of civil society, politics, academia and the business sector by generating and transferring knowledge and assembling societal learning processes. An interesting development has been increased communication and cooperation between FPCs, or similar forums around the world, which has facilitated mutual learning and the sharing of best practices.⁵⁷

Finally, since local governments only have limited influence over certain aspects of the food system, with much of the production, distribution and processing of food taking place outside of city borders, they are encouraged to cooperate with civil society working on food-related issues in the rural areas surrounding the city.

2 Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the urban food system

Each city or urban area has its own intricate, multi-layered food system—and each urban food system has its distinct roots that cause food insecurity. While each system is different, factors that commonly affect food production, distribution and access in Global South countries include extreme weather and climate events (e.g. droughts), environmental degradation (e.g. soil erosion and water pollution), conflict, high rates of population growth, land grabbing and land speculation, production for export only (e.g. biofuels and soja beans for feeding purposes in meat production), urbanisation trends of migration and urban sprawl, as well as poverty. Reforestation initiatives, as part of climate mitigation and adaptation measures, can also be a factor, if those areas were formerly used for food production.

One of the first steps in the development of urban food policies needs to be a comprehensive and in-depth assessment of the urban food system and related areas of food insecurity.

For this assessment to be comprehensive, it is important it identifies and carefully examines the different scales (neighbourhood, formal/informal settlement, district, etc.) and respective actors relevant to the food system. It should consider, *inter alia*,

- areas and causes of food insecurity and the food system vulnerabilities;
- origins and effects of urban poverty and other socio-economic variables;
- the channels of urban household food provision; consumption patterns;
- the geographical distribution and accessibility of markets and other food outlets;
- the role of informal trading;
- the actors involved and the relationships between them;
- the urban food governance system;
- urban infrastructure (transport, electricity, waste management, water and sanitation);
- the relationship between the urban area and surrounding rural areas and other cities and towns;
- the effects of globalisation and global trends on the urban area;
- and the city's geographic, climatic and environmental features and vulnerabilities.



This assessment should underpin subsequent measures, policies and incentive-structures. Only a profound analysis of the intricacies of the system can give conclusive information for successful and sustainable steps towards a resilient urban food system.

By creating a multi-stakeholder dialogue, critical stakeholders will be engaged and consulted in such an assessment, including local authorities and agencies, businesses, and civil society, notably community-based organisations and initiatives, including farmer organisations and women's groups.

Citizens should also be consulted as they can give the most comprehensive, detailed and profound insights into their food-related habits and the impact of actions and measures taken by the urban food governance actors. This is particularly true for the urban poor and other vulnerable groups and in light of their plights and needs. Their consultation should be a priority.

In many Global South countries, civil society organisations play a critical role in facilitating the transfer of such citizen information, data and evidence to official institutions (e.g. through surveys and food diaries), as they have often gained the necessary trust of local people.

3 Recognise the critical role of civil society in urban food security and ensure legal certainty and guarantees for their work

Good food policy-making in general, and urban food policy-making in particular, benefits from the increased involvement of, and alliance with, civil society. The involvement of civil society can contribute to a more transparent and fairer policy-making processes and can secure more legitimacy in its outcomes. In addition, due to their engagement in communities, CSOs are more strongly connected to the most disadvantaged people in urban areas and their involvement in institutionalised urban food governance structures thus tends to strengthen the trust of those most vulnerable to the process—the urban poor—in its outcomes.

However, due to democratic deficits in many countries around the world, space for civil society to work in is often restricted. Civil society organisations are being discouraged, intimidated and censored in exercising their duties. It is therefore critical that the rights and freedoms of civil society are safeguarded.

By strengthening existing laws and offering new protections for civil society, municipal authorities can provide legal certainty for CSOs to work—including on advancing food security. By safeguarding the rights to assembly and of association, for example, community-based associations, cooperatives and producers' organisations can be empowered to speak on behalf of their members.

In addition, municipalities and city governments can encourage civil society, consumers, farmers, processors and traders, to associate, engage and formalise structures of representation. This may be of particular importance for potential multi-stakeholder involvement in food-related policymaking processes. Considering the challenges that individuals face to participate in these processes, urban authorities should encourage (or at least not resist or undermine) the development of networks that can represent different societal groups in the policy-making process.

4 Acquire stable, sustainable financial resources

To ensure that civil society initiatives and projects are stable and measures sustainable, mechanisms need to be found to allocate financial resources to fund programmes addressing persistent urban food system challenges. Since it is often the case that the existing official programmes to improve urban food security are either not enforced or not effective, funding needs to be extended to programmes outside of this realm of national or provincial administration.

In many countries, processes of political decentralisation did not include, or were not adequately accompanied by, fiscal decentralisation measures. This left many local authorities without access to adequate resources. However, city governments have at least some discretionary powers over (re)directing financial resources—however inadequate or insufficient—towards programmes that promise to be more effective. Strong negative factors, such as corruption, lack of transparency and unaccountable municipal financial management, however, need to be abandoned in order to establish a successful urban food policy-making process.

By diversifying revenue sources, supporting measures providing guarantees for credits, or offering grants and subsidised lending mechanisms, local governments can support local food entrepreneurs, projects, initiatives and structures to improve urban food security.⁵⁸ Local governments can, furthermore, devise incentive structures and exemptions that support civil society. This includes, *inter alia*, a distinct tax exemption for non-profit or public-benefit organisations, which would relieve initiatives of additional financial burdens. Financial mechanisms must be developed to redirect investment to sustainable alternatives, to develop regulatory frameworks to promote legal security and to encourage private-public partnerships for stimulating small and medium investments.

Once provided and facilitating effective initiatives, cities need to refrain from (suddenly) withdrawing funding, since this has the potential to destroying the progress made and the structures introduced. For the advocacy work of civil society to be successful and sustainable, resources must be enhanced and continuously provided. This is particularly true when it comes to advocacy in favour of food insecure people and their suffering.

5 Place food security at the heart of urban planning and urban policy-making

Urban planning and policy-making—and therefore urban development—should be aligned with the dual aims of eradicating food insecurity and poverty. Otherwise, their impacts might not be neutral, but negative.

URBAN PLANNING

Thus, based on a comprehensive assessment of all levels of the urban food system, and in consultation with all stakeholders, urban food security needs to be integrated into existing and new urban planning measures.

These include:

- decisions on the (re-)locations of markets,
- the distribution of waste disposal sites,
- the development of transport, energy, water and sanitation infrastructure,
- the provision of drinking water,
- regulations on informal trading,
- permits for locations for urban agriculture,
- and the promotion of urban agriculture and agroecological practices.

It is important that in these measures, the plight and needs of the most vulnerable are taken into account. Furthermore, policies that allow civil society to operate freely and without constraints should be implemented—this will also allow CSOs to fulfil the kaleidoscope of functions they have on advancing food security.

For this to succeed, urban planners need to be aware of the (potential) consequences of their planning decisions on the availability of food as well as its accessibility. The process of urban food planning must institutionalise cross-sectoral participatory approaches, where key actors from different sectors engage in a dialogue on problems and solutions and the intersections of different political agendas.

Urban planning in general—and urban food system planning in particular—must reach beyond the physical boundaries of the city itself and into its rural hinterlands. Setting a strong priority on the well-being and food security of the urban poor and other vulnerable and disadvantaged residents provides city officials with a clear overarching guideline for their actions, decisions and long-term planning.⁵⁹

URBAN POLICY-MAKING

Urban policy-making also needs to be underpinned by food security concerns.

For example, in issuing licenses or permits to investors, supermarkets or other global enterprises, policy-makers should ensure (e.g. through requirements attached to the licence or permit) that their investments and actions do not have a harmful effect on the food security of residents, especially not the poorest urban communities. In fact, policy-makers can go further by incentivising investors to integrate a commitment to improving food security among the most vulnerable into their plans, or moving supermarkets to integrate local farmers' products into their range of goods. Finally, policy-makers should analyse how to balance the growth of supermarkets and the role of informal traders and how to allow for a combination and coexistence of both.

Furthermore, policy-makers should strive to keep (and, where needed, expand) existing channels and systems of informal food access, as these are often vital for feeding the urban poor. If appropriate and necessary, measures may be implemented that create formal structures for informal workers, such as mini-jobs or solo-self-employment. This development must recognise the particular vulnerabilities of the workers themselves and their role within the urban food system, as well as the vulnerabilities of their customers towards changes not in sync with their needs and precarious situation.

Such a comprehensive approach that places food security at the heart of the different levels of urban planning and policy-making can strengthen all aspects of the urban food system, reduce tensions between the different actors involved in it, and improve their coordination and cooperation—especially between civil society and government institutions. Furthermore, to ensure all parties to comply with agreed policies and decisions on food security, effective mechanisms to verify compliance, and penalise those in violation, need to be installed.

Sharpening regulations and policies governing urban food systems has the potential not only to improve the situation of urban food (in)security, but also to protect the environment, improve peoples' health and shape the local economy.

6 Prioritise poverty alleviation as the main target in urban food policy-making

In light of the important links between poverty and food insecurity, the number one co-target of urban food-related policy-making and action needs to be poverty alleviation. Conversely, food policy-making that is not based on a comprehensive assessment of the urban food system (see recommendation 2), or that fails to take into account the vulnerable food trading and consumption patterns of the urban poor (see recommendation 5), can marginalise them even further and exacerbate their struggle to have access to adequate and nutritious food.

An example comes from harsh restrictions placed on the informal food trade (see 3.2.2). To prevent this, cooperating with stakeholders active in improving socio-economic conditions of urban communities—in particular civil society actors working with the most vulnerable communities—is vital.

A cooperation of food kitchens and other bodies working in food supply to urban disadvantaged, with local farmers and producers of food may strengthen a deeper integration, decentralisation and localisation of actions against and prevention of urban food insecurity.

An important measure in this regard is to (partly) transfer food provision from the private sector to the public sector. The responsibility to feed the population lies in the hands of urban government institutions and those should thus take control of food delivery services, particularly if private channels fail to reach everybody. In doing so, they will need to rely on advice and information from civil society actors, who often have better insights into the struggles of the urban poor and, in some instances, may be the only provider of food and nutrition services.

By this assumption of municipal responsibility for food-related service delivery, local governments can lift some of the burden off civil society for providing food to the urban poor. This relief of burden could also enable civil society organisations to engage in other functions and roles of capacity-building and policy-making.





7 Mainstream climate action and agroecology in urban food policies

Bearing in mind the impacts of climate change on (urban) food security, the sustainability challenges related to rapid urbanisation, population growth and expanding agricultural capacity—and the many interlinkages between these issues—it is crucial to mainstream climate protection and agroecology in urban food policies (see 3.2.2).

Food policy-makers and urban planners should assess the effects of policies on, *inter alia*, agriculture, biodiversity, soils, water supply, electricity generation, transport infrastructure, ecological sustainability, climate resilience, housing conditions and livelihoods, to make the urban food system resilient against the worst impacts of climate change, and to make sure that its functioning doesn't come to the detriment of sustainably managing natural resources.

Food loss and waste, food system-related labour and the social, political and economic framework conditions also need to be considered in devising effective instruments to respond appropriately to these challenges. These instruments include the development of reliable urban energy grids, powered by renewable sources (wind, solar, biomass), which can boost irrigation and unlock more refrigeration capacity in order to prolong the storage life of products.

Such reliable access to electricity can thus greatly enhance people's food security. In rolling this out, civil society has an important role to play in identifying the specifics and needs of food-related energy demand, assessing people's abilities to engage in and afford this technology, and advising on the effectiveness and efficiency of grid development.

Instruments can also involve the promotion of measures of agroecology and sustainable agriculture in the hands of local smallholders and family farms to preserve fertile agricultural land and prevent soil erosion, desertification and therefore farmers' loss of livelihoods.

Furthermore, agroecology protects the climate by reducing energy use and increasing carbon sequestration. Shorter distances between rural and urban areas and a local supply of diverse and healthy food reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Furthermore, distributed food production facilities enable the diversification of political influence on the food system, and vice versa.



This decentralisation allows civil society for a wider potential impact on the food system and food-related policymaking and planning. Adapting this approach from early on can avoid the municipal budget from being overwhelmed or human and natural capacities being overburdened at a later stage.⁶⁰

Once again, civil society is an invaluable partner to engage in these processes. Civil society actors are often in a unique position to offer insights into the natural limits of the food system and its vulnerabilities to climate change and environmental degradation.

Local grassroots knowledge on effects of climatic and environmental changes or citizen-generated solutions in agricultural practices and (urban) organic farming can help build the resilience of the urban food system. Civil society has been a key partner in efforts of agroecology and, in many cities, has taken a leading role in also popularising 'agriculture in the city', revolutionising urban and peri-urban agriculture.⁶¹

Civil society can also support the deployment of renewable energy-based mini-grids for households of communities. The huge potential of job creation through renewable energy development, deployment and servicing can reduce unemployment and strengthen income security and consequently reduce food insecurity.⁶²

Again, through their often strong connectedness to local communities, civil society can play a role in building more trust between urban government institutions and vulnerable urban communities when it comes to implementing extensive climate mitigation and adaptation measures.



8 Promote food security education and capacity-building

Within a multi-stakeholder process of developing effective urban food policies, distributing and expanding knowledge on the intricacies of the urban food system and building capacities among stakeholders to achieve food security is key. However, the education of, and capacity building within, broader parts of society is equally important.

Establishing and enhancing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can provide guidance here. ESD promotes sustainable lifestyles and develops knowledge, skills, understanding, values and actions to empower all people to engage as actors of change. By, for instance, updating curricula, providing training opportunities and collective learning platforms on issues such as environmental protection, food security, social and economic equity, ESD can be institutionalised and made available for communities.⁶³

Once again, civil society is an invaluable actor in this domain. It can educate communities on how to attain food security and what constitutes nutritious food. It can disseminate citizen-generated evidence and solutions, inform communities on how to safely handle and prepare food and raise awareness of the health implications of certain diets and foods.

Furthermore, civil society can demonstrate how consumption patterns may affect farming traditions, agricultural practices, the environment and the overall sustainability and resilience of society. City and municipal governments can team up with CSOs on specific food and nutrition education initiatives and financially support such campaigns.

Finally, informing the public on the role that civil society plays within the urban food system is another layer of raising awareness within society, but also among government agencies and officials. A deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, the vital role of CSOs among actors within the urban food system helps to strengthen their position and could in the long run remedy some interferences with the work of civil society.

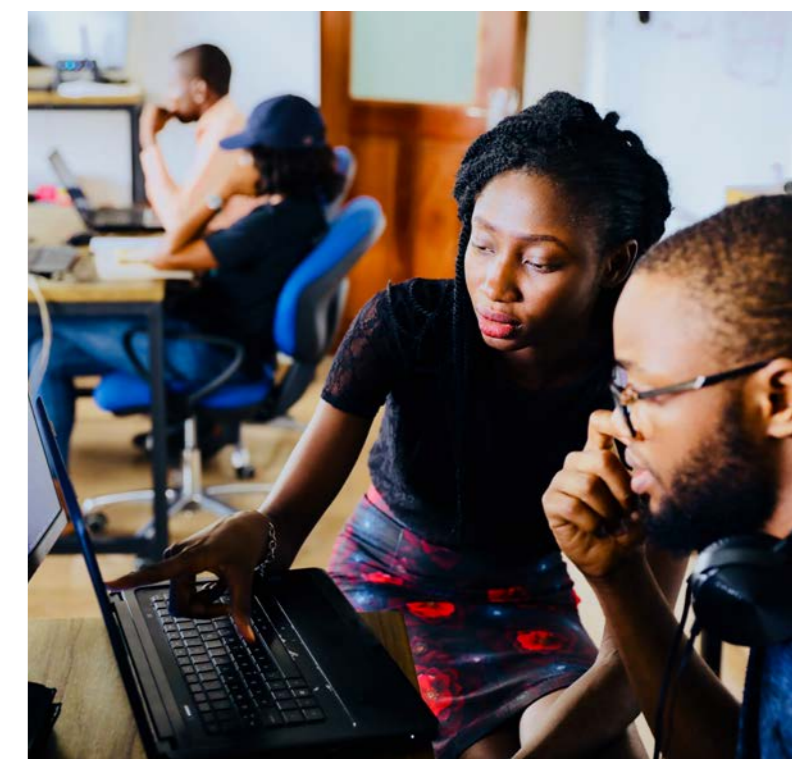


9 Engage in networks, pacts and organisations

To engage in networks or international pacts of cities with a focus on urban food security issues—such as the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP)⁶⁴—can provide a neutral and impartial forum of discussion, education and capacity-building.

These fora can be particularly instructive for local governments when it comes to considering modalities for engaging civil society in urban food governance issues. By getting involved in these networks, municipalities can learn from other cities on the advantages of civil engagement, the relevance of citizen-based knowledge and capacities or the advantages of partnering with a resilient civil society.

In addition, these fora can offer civil society organisations or associations of small and medium-sized urban food entrepreneurs a seat at the table and thus improve their negotiating power to influence relevant food policy changes.



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