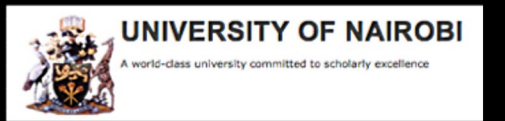




Food Planning and Innovation for Sustainable Metropolitan Regions (FOODMETRES)

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Nairobi Case Study Kick-Off Event
July 3rd, 2013



The event was co-organised by the African Studies centre in Leiden, The Netherlands, and the University of Nairobi, Kenya. It forms part of a larger European Union funded project entitle Food Planning and Innovation for Sustainable Metropolitan Regions (FOODMETRES), lead by Wageningen University and research Centre (WUR).

July 3rd, 2013, Nairobi.

On July 3rd, 2013 the Nairobi Case Study of FOODMETRES took place at the University of Nairobi. 20 people attended the event, with a broad range of interests, including the academics, urban farmers, the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, the Nesalf - a forum for urban farmers - planners for the Nairobi City council, whilst the Governor of Nairobi was represented by the Town Clerk, who also delivered the key note and opening address. The event was largely organised by Theresa Mbatia of the Geography and Environmental Studies department of the University of Nairobi and facilitated by Sam Owour, head of the department.

An important context to the event was the introduction of the new constitution. This constitution designated Nairobi as a new county, which raised questions about the Nairobi County Council's ability to implement food policy beyond the county borders.



Nairobi Case Study:

Food Planning and Innovation for Sustainable Metropolitan Regions – FOODMETRES – is a European Union funded project that aims to identify innovations for shortening food chains. The identified innovations should both increase urban food security and employment, and reduce the ecological footprint of urban consumption. The University of Nairobi, and the African Studies Centre in The Netherlands, conduct the Nairobi case study of FOODMETERS.

FOODMETRES studies the impact of food chains and chain innovation on the environment, society, and the economy. Are shorter chains more sustainable? 'Shorter' can mean fewer steps in the chain, but also, a shorter distance between production and consumption. This can influence land use in and around the city, and the organisation of the chain.

To explore if shorter food chains increase food security and employment, and reduce the ecological footprint, FOODMETRES will develop scenarios for selected chains and innovations.

The Nairobi case study will produce the following:

- Spatial analysis of urban food consumption in Nairobi.
- Food chain analysis for selected crops
- Analysis of food planning and governance
- Identify chain innovations (shortening)
- Analysis of urban open spaces as sources of food
- Analysis of the socio-economic and environmental-economic value of selected food chains.
- Scenarios: how do the selected innovations perform compared to the different sustainability indicators, including land use?

FOODMETRES aims to work with stakeholders in the region: civilians, farmers, parties involved in the chain, governmental and non-governmental organisations. At several stages in the project workshops will be organised to ask for feedback and to share knowledge. For more information, please visit our website: www.foodmetres.eu

Case study regions are Rotterdam, London, Berlin, Milan, Ljubljana en Nairobi.

Citizens, businesses, farmer groups, Governmental and non-governmental organisations will be invited to participate in FOODMETRES.

In Nairobi we identify sustainable solutions to urban food insecurity. What are the ecological and socio-economic implications of food chain interventions such as cooperatives, bulking stations, processing, storage etc.

In the assessment of sustainability of shorter food chains the Nairobi case study of FOODMETRES pays special attention to urban food security, regional markets, employment and policy implications.

List of Participants:

1. Elijah Agevi, Research Triangle Africa
2. Samuel Mwangi, CCN (DOE)
3. Margret Ndungu, Ministry of Agriculture,
Livestock Development and Fisheries.
4. Francis Wachira, Urban Farmer. (Maringo Estate,
Makadara)
5. Peter Machoka, Urban Farmer. (Jitegemee Kenya
Pamoja Initiative. Viwandani Location, Mukuru)
6. Caren Onyango, Urban Farmer. (Jitegemee Kenya
Pamoja Initiative. Viwandani Location, Mukuru)
7. Virginia Wanjohi, Youth Development Empowerment.
8. Stellar Muhovi, Geography - UON
9. Lydia Muthama, Technical University of Kenya
10. Rabani Muriuki, New Mutindwa Nursery Tree
Planting Forest.
11. Diana Lee-Smith, Mazingira Institute.
12. Paul Omanga, FAO Kenya
13. Peter Makachia, Technical University of Kenya
14. Mary Kimani, University of Nairobi
15. Sebastiaan Soeters, African Studies Centre
16. Bernard Ndolo, SNV-Kenya
17. Kuria Gathuru, Mazingira Institute
18. Davindar Lamba, Mazingira Institute
19. Lawrence Esho, Technical University of Kenya
20. Samuel Owuor, University Of Nairobi

After a round of introductions, the FOODMETRES project was outlined very briefly by Sam Owuor. The strategy to introduce the FOODMETRES project very briefly at this stage was deliberate, in order to see how relevant concepts designed within the broader FOODMETRES project had any traction in an organic debate about short chain delivery in Nairobi. Sebastiaan Soeters of the African Studies Centre presented the FOODMETRES project in more detail after the lunch break, leading into the group activities.

“The bye-laws governing urban farming and other short supply chains are outdated, and need to be reviewed”.

Mr Gakua, the Town Clerk, who represented the Governor of Nairobi County, then provided a belated opening address (he was supposed to open the event at 9 am, but was held up by other business, and arrived at 11:30. He spoke of the need to reformulate outdated policies regarding urban farming, which many of the participants, involved in urban and peri-urban farming in one way or another, welcomed. Mr Gakua's address brought with it some media attention. The FAO representative, Dr Omanga, and Davinder Lamba of the Mazingira Institute especially welcomed Mr Gakua's observation that policies relating to urban and peri-urban farming need to be reconsidered. This is a radically different stance which local government has taken to urban farming in the past. Peter Mochaba, an urban farmer from Nairobi, noted that when he started a chicken hatchery, all his chickens died because the water from the stream nearby had been heavily polluted by nearby industries, and asked Mr Gakua if in the future standards may be set to limit water pollution. The tension between urban farming and industrialisation, as a development objective, really revealed itself in this instance. It appears that the Nairobi County has, to date, given its preference to the development of large scale industry and manufacturing, where it has competed with other development objectives, even environmental objectives (in urban areas). Whether or not this may change in the future, remains to be seen.

An Overview of Urban farming and Urban Food Security & Planning for Urban Farming

The morning session began with several presentations from key stakeholders. Dr Omanga from the FAO gave an overview of the nexus between urban food security and urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA). Dr Omanga showed the benefits of urban farming, but also the challenges and problems faced by both policymakers and urban farmers including use of polluted waters, waste from farming, and land pressure. Dr Omanga's presentation set out a useful context for the remainder of the day.

Dr Omanga's presentation was followed by that of Diana Lee-Smith, Director of the Mazingira Institute which serves not only as an urban farming research institute and an advocacy platform, but also hosts a platform for urban farmers. Diana Lee-Smith's presentation, entitled, "Planning for Urban Farming", began by noting that the debate around urban and peri-urban forms of agriculture (short chains), was at a crucial juncture in that the Nairobi County Council (NCC) was, for the first time in over 30 years, moving towards embracing the benefits of UPA, a radical shift away from the rejecting UPA. To her the crucial questions related to planning and zoning policies, and less - at this stage - to the practice of urban farming. She noted that "planners and policymakers have been left behind by urban farmers", and civil society organisations, including academics, should focus their attention towards developing sustainable policies, rather than developing sustainable farming practices (at this stage). She illustrated different types and scales of UPA, which occur in Nairobi. backyard animal husbandry being the most frequent, because it required little land. In many instances, she noted, this type of farming was fairly sophisticated. She ended by highlighting some results from recent research conducted by the Mazingira Institute, most notably; 1. that urban farming was done proportionately more by the middle-class than the urban poor, (although, because the urban working classes were far larger in numbers, in absolute terms, UPA is done more by poorer community members), 2. that UPA does provide for increased food security, and 3. that urban livestock production provides extra income and healthier children.

“We need to learn from what planners are doing in, for instance, Rotterdam, and use it for own urban planning”

Dr Lawrence Esho, an urban planner from the Technical University of Kenya delivered a presentation on Agriculture as an Urban Form. He outlined examples from other planning initiatives in which he was involved, notably, Kisumu. He showed how Kisumu had developed from a series of large plantations into an urban centre that has retained much of its agricultural heritage, albeit now in an urban form. He showed that given the right policy environment, people in Kisumu developed a built-up environment which made space for the inclusion of agriculture.

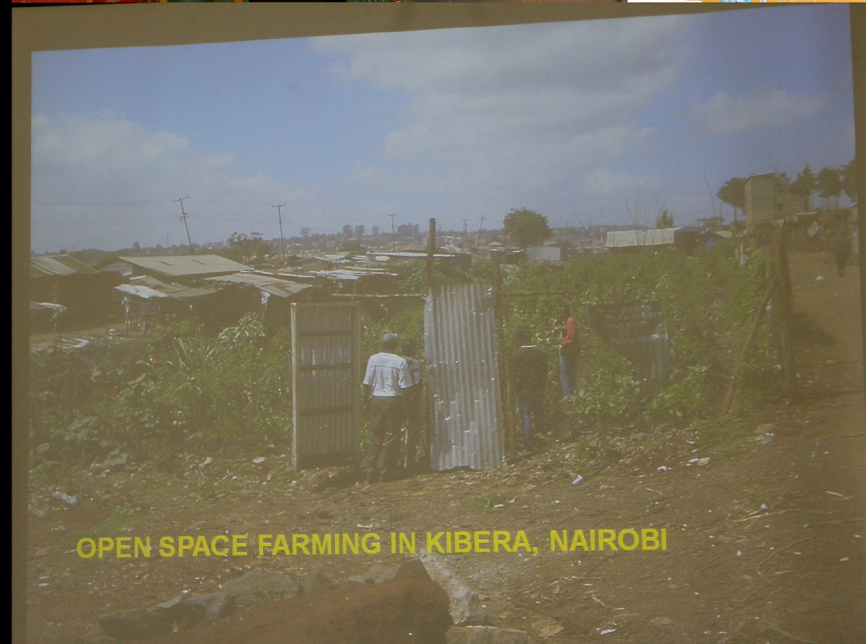
Dr Omanga, FAO

The Urban farming/food
security nexus.



Diana Lee -Smith

Open Space Farming in
Kibera slum, .



Dairy Farmers Co-operative,
peri-urban Nairobi.





Diverse Stakeholders: Academics,
Ministries and Urban Farmers.
(Left to Right)



Diana Lee-Smith
A comprehensive study of Urban
Agriculture in Kampala.

Urban Farms in Nairobi,
adjacent to Kibera slum.



Diana Lee-Smith, recent
research findings.



RESEARCH FINDINGS ON POVERTY & UPA

- More high and middle income do UPA than poor (in relation to their numbers)
- The poor are food insecure mainly due to lack of land for UPA
- UPA brings food security and higher incomes
- Urban livestock production brings wealth and healthier children



Dairy Logistics, Limuru. (20km from Nairobi).

Outlining FOODMETRES Nairobi: Concepts and Challenges:

The afternoon session began with Sebastiaan Soeters, the FOODMETRES Project Researcher from the African Studies Centre (ASC) outlining the main contours of the FOODMETRES project. He noted that FOODMETRES sets out to assess the environmental and socio-economic impacts of food chains with regard to the spatial, logistical and resource dimensions of growing food, with special emphasis on metropolitan production regimes geared towards feeding urban populations. Within this broad ambition, he pointed out that FOODMETRES was a project designed by European academics with expertise of European food systems, which lead to a number of challenges in conducting the Nairobi case study. He noted especially, the complexity of the Nairobi's food system, given the large number of individual actors involved throughout the chain, the informal nature of the food systems, the many number of parallel food chains (supermarkets, dukas, kiosks, vendors, open air markets etc), the lack of data, the

fragmentation of organisations, institutions and policies (also as a result of new constitution), the lack of emphasis on environmental dimensions, especially on consumption side, and finally, the lack of policy transparency. These challenges, he noted, makes it difficult to integrate the Nairobi case study into the project as a whole.

Despite this, he noted four critical and guiding questions in the Nairobi case study:

1. Can we identify who is consuming what, and importantly, where? And how does this relate to the spatial dimensions of production?
2. What are the ecological dimensions (measured in "land hectares") of urban food consumption, with an emphasis on metropolitan and local food regimes geared towards feeding urban populations?
3. What are the environmental and socio-economic impacts of urban food consumption at the sub-location level?
4. If consumption patterns change, either as a result of an increase in income, or a change in policy, for instance, what will be the environmental (land hectares) and socio-economic impacts?

“The crucial questions relate to planning and zoning policies, and not to the practice of urban farming. Planners and policy-makers have been left behind by urban farmers, and civil society organisations, including academics, should focus their attention towards developing suitable policies, rather than developing suitable farming practices.”

- Diana Lee-Smith, Mazingira Institute

Group Work: Discussion.

Three urban farmers were split up, and assigned a group of participants representing different interests. Each group was given a hypothesis to discuss. They were to feed back the contours of the discussion that took place. The three hypothesis were:

1. Food planning has no place as an integrated component of the urban planning in Nairobi because there are, more important concerns faced by urban planners.

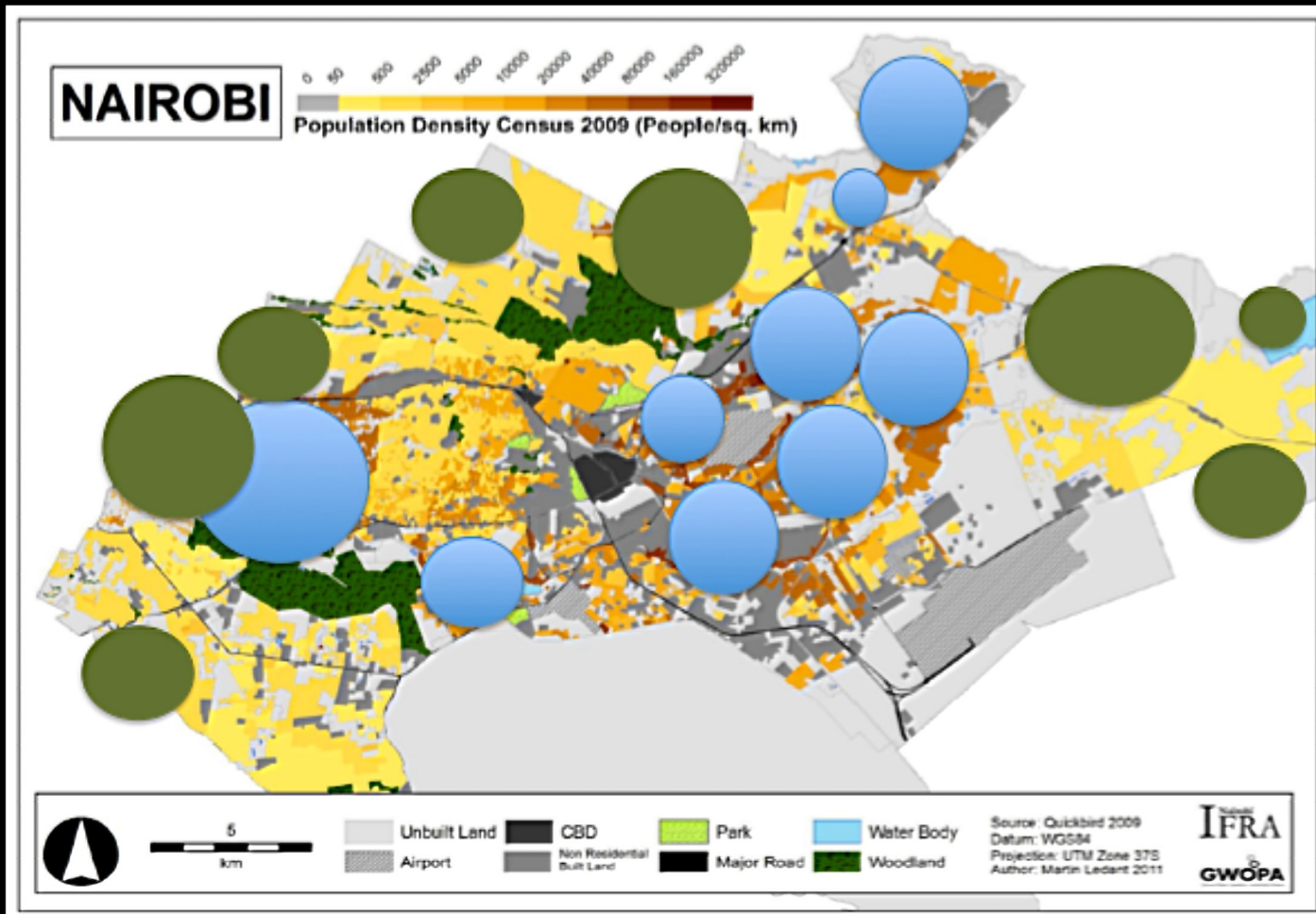
“In the urban planning we have bigger concerns in housing, assuming the food can be supplied by rural farms, therefore, increasing infrastructure from rural areas is a bigger concern; if you have a good transport system it will take less time and money to get food from the rural areas. If you have good infrastructure, the farmers will be more willing to send food, therefore the urban should focus on transport to rural areas. with rapid urbanisation, you need proper planning for food for these growing cities. Otherwise people will be underfed, and strategic reserves are important, because you don't know what will happen tomorrow.”

2. Short Supply chains, including urban agriculture, do not provide a meaningful food security solution for Nairobi because it is too small scale, and the land used for urban farming may have better urban uses.

“Less actors in the chain, makes food cheaper and so the shorter the food chain, the better for the poor and middle class, making short chains more desirable. Furthermore, the shorter the food chain the safer the food will be. Supermarkets buy the best produce, which is also the most expensive, and only the rich can buy from the supermarkets. The quality gets less as you move to down the order, with dukas and kiosks accessing worst quality produce, until you get to the bottom feeders, who are only able to access the worst produce. One youth foundation in the slums decided that nobody in their community was to eat a meal without good quality vegetables (they were bottom feeders), and so they decided to grow their own vegetables. You can be assured you get the best goods from the source. There are reservations however about scale. What happens in 2020, given that Nairobi is growing so fast? That is a different discussion.”

3. The Urban Food Security agenda should not be guided by environmental considerations because it threatens the volumes of food production in the short run and Kenya's ecological footprint is low in any case.

This group was rather less constructive on account of the fact that many of members had never heard of an ecological footprint, and therefore did not know what it meant. The group agreed however that the food security agenda should be guided by environmental considerations, although this seemed largely to be the view of Dr Omanga from the FAO, rather than a consensus of the group as a whole.



Map of Nairobi; production (green) and consumption (blue) hotspots

Concluding Remarks:

The workshop was vibrant, and at times quite tense. The stakes are high amongst actors, and synergy is low. Stakeholders are not working towards a common goal. The new constitution however may change that, with local government more receptive to the food security (not the environmental) benefits of short(er) supply chains. A number of interesting things emerged, the most fundamental of which is that making the Nairobi case study fit into the broader FOODMETRES conceptual framework is going to be challenging. The relevant debates within the FOODMETRES framework are very different in the case of Nairobi than in other FOODMETRES case studies. The tension between policies relating to short supply chains and practitioners (advocacy groups) is fairly severe. The role of policy innovations should get a larger role in the Nairobi case study than perhaps in other studies.

In contrast to the policy debates, ecological footprints appear to have no organic traction with discussion about food chains more generally (short or long). That is not to say that it is not important, rather it does not frame the debate. The drivers of shortening supply chains in Nairobi have a strong food security dimensions, rather than an environmental or food experience dimension.

Discussion about food chains from Nairobi's environs (Surrounding districts where a large component of Nairobi's food supply derives from) was largely absent from discussion amongst stakeholders. Although there does appear to be some data on these Metropolitan Farming Systems (MAS), they are not linked to urban consumption. The chain is largely ignored, the focus instead lying on farming practices. It is thus difficult to get chain actors (other than producers) enthused about FOODMETRES. How to move beyond producers is a question which deserves immediate attention.