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Opportunities and Constraints of Urban and Periurban Agriculture — A Case Study of Vegetable Production in N'Djaména

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Abstract

Demographic growth and increase in urbanisation are some of the challenges in regard to urban and periurban Agriculture (UPA). N'Djaména, the capital of Chad, has grown rapidly in recent years and today has an estimated population of nearly one million people. Accordingly, in the past decade the consumption of vegetables in N'Djaména increased and reached currently about 30-45 kg person⁻¹ year. Vegetable production in N'Djaména's peri-urban and urban areas makes an important contribution to both food demands and nutritional needs of the urban population. It also provides a regular income to producers throughout the year and has a positive impact on public health.

The objective of this present study was to gain an overview of urban and peri-urban agricultural practices by analysing at first its institutional, technical, agronomical and other constraints, followed by examining the social and environmental positive aspect of UPA for vegetable growers in N'Djaména and finally to propose recommendations.

Data were obtained from the survey by administering a standardised questionnaire to 5 randomly selected associations of vegetable producers within and in the fringe of N'Djaména. Supplementary data were collected through key person interviews (n = 120) and field observations. The cultivated vegetables, which this study considers, are tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) and salad (*Lactuca sativa*).

The result shows that the main driving forces for vegetable producers to become engaged in urban agriculture are food security and income generation. The availability of land is very often (particularly along the Chari River) the crucial element for people to become occupied in UPA, but even more so is its access. The survey has shown that about 20 % of the producers are owner of their land and availability of and access to input (such as seed, fertilisers, herbicides, etc.) and irrigation water constitute a limitation of production by more than 40 % of producers. The study established that because of important social role of UPA, 95 % of the interviewed vegetable producers desire to continue their activities.

Keywords: Chad, urban agriculture and peri-urban agriculture, vegetable production