



Tropentag, September 18-21, 2016, Vienna, Austria

“Solidarity in a competing world —
fair use of resources”

Improving Resilience of Cities through Urban Farming

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Abstract

Statistics show that many of the poorest people living in Kampala City have moved there from rural areas to seek jobs and other opportunities, which are often not as available as expected. The poor in the city often struggle with food scarcity and malnutrition. Many households in the city that fail to get a source of income are turning to urban agriculture farming for survival in terms of nutrition and income generation. Given the role urban farming plays in addressing challenges of food and nutrition insecurity, Kampala Capital Authority (KCCA) is spearheading interventions to promote urban farming in Kampala city through dissemination of skills and knowledge on kitchen gardening and organic waste recycling.

The unique feature of Kampala's urban farming systems is that they are based on organic farming principles that prohibit the use of chemicals such as fertilisers, and pesticides. Among the services KCCA provides urban farmers practicing organic farming are plant clinics that support plant protection through identification of pests and diseases and recommendation on control methods that comply with organic farming principles. Studies are underway to understand how local ecosystems can be induced to provide biological control against pest and diseases.

Organic producers in Kampala are coordinated and supported by an umbrella organisation the National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU) which provides certification services, extension services and linkages to niche markets. Use of organic waste for urban agriculture is viewed by KCCA as a sustainable management of waste because of its contribution to the resilience of the city through reduction of GhG emissions generated by the transport of food from outside the city, preserving and restoring soil organic structure and water holding capacity making urban farming more draught resistant and improved water infiltration in the soil to prevent floods. The major source of waste for making organic fertiliser is KCCA managed markets and city households but the safety and efficacy of this fertiliser for urban farming are still unknown thus throwing up a number of major research and innovation issues. Research findings on these issues can readily inform investment decisions on waste management systems.

Keywords: Kampala, urban agriculture