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Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Systems: The Case of Urban Agriculture in Maputo and Cape Town

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Abstract

The international community set the goal “Zero Hunger” as one priority in its global commitment of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. One priority is given to urban areas; cities are growing fast but economically highly unequal and access to safe and healthy food remains problematic. Sub-Saharan Africa is the most rapidly urbanized region in the world, especially in the urban informal areas. In this context, urban agriculture has been a popular response in contributing to income generation and food and nutrition security and has come into the focus of scientific research.

The aim of this study is to investigate innovation and knowledge exchange systems to identify successful ways of dissemination for organic cultivation methods in the city of Cape Town and Maputo. For this purpose, we use the Innovation System Approach, where we look at all involved stakeholders in the innovation process, their role, networks and applied knowledge exchange mechanisms. Using an action research approach and based on qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the urban farmers and main stakeholders, the study looks at ways of agroecological practices, challenges and constraints of production and commercialisation. We also expect to find out what are the reasons and motivations for farmers to adopt those practices.

The assessment of innovation and knowledge exchange system allows us to identify drivers and barriers for a successful dissemination. Based on the results, a multiplication strategy can be developed and results could be transferred to policy makers and urban planners. Considering the vision of making Urban Agriculture more sustainable, this can contribute to urban food and nutrition security on the one hand, and on the other hand to a more sustainable city in terms of environmental friendly areas with benefits for the community.

Keywords: Agroecological practices, food and nutrition security, innovation system approach, participatory guaranteesSystem, Southern Africa, urban agriculture