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## How to design sustainable urban food policies for a secure and nutritious future in Chiang Mai, Thailand: A case study of combining approaches

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### Abstract

Urbanisation is a global phenomenon that brings about multifaceted changes. These changes include not only population migration, economic growth, and infrastructure development but also public health implications. Transformation from rural-like to urban-like activities in food systems and food policies has made these systems more complex than in the past. Chiang Mai's food system is facing several challenges, including a loss of agricultural land due to urbanisation, food insecurity in rural areas, unsustainable agricultural practices, limited market access for small-scale farmers, insufficient food waste management, and climate change impacts. Addressing these issues will require collaborative efforts from the local government, civil society, and private sector. The objectives of the study are to understand food systems related to food consumption practices in urban and peri-urban communities in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and to check on and, where deemed necessary, co-design community goals and practices of sustainable food consumption for policy planning.

The study focuses on four concepts: 1) studying of food systems through methods such as documentation, observation, open-ended interviews, Fundamental Geographic Data Sets (FGDs), community mapping, and mental mapping to depict food systems and to identify stakeholders, 2) assessing dietary intake of people in target areas, 3) assessing key drivers and uncertainty in food system changes and exploring directions to improve food systems, and 4) emphasising on a value chain of a selective local food product. Expected outputs will be a set of foundational information on food systems, drivers and unpredictability in food system transformations, and possible ways to improve food systems. Visions acquired from diverse actors related to food systems will give possibilities for desired future food systems. A food value chain analysis will also strengthen this study and contribute to a more holistic approach.

To conclude, the active participation of communities is crucial for advancing policies and programmes that foster sustainable and resilient cities. This study underscores the significance of involving relevant stakeholders to gather different perspectives on shaping the future of food systems. Ultimately, this approach is expected to yield tangible benefits for these communities as part of the project's positive outcomes.

**Keywords:** Community, food security, food systems, sustainability, Thailand, urban