RUAF GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP: STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2018-2023

A partnership to make urban food systems work better

Coming up to celebrating 20 years since its formation in 1999, The Global Partnership on Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Food Systems (RUAF) is charting its direction as the leading international community of practice, developing innovative solutions to food systems and policies in towns and cities. In order to stay at the cutting edge of developing and applying knowledge, RUAF works with city and municipal governments that are adapting and changing their policies as urban food systems evolve rapidly in the 21st Century. These changes are both fast and ongoing; national and global institutions, as well as cities themselves, are realising and acting upon the need to make urban food systems work better.

RUAF’s strategic direction for 2018-2023 is to support and promote knowledge exchanges between cities and towns on specific issues of sustainable food systems, drawing on the considerable expertise and experience in its Global Partnership.

RUAF has already developed vast expertise, captured in its knowledge base. Currently, the partnership consists of nine organizations: three international research organizations, three cities, and three non-governmental organisations. Together these represent a further dense network of partnerships in the global North and South. The RUAF Partnership will continue to grow and to further intensify its networking in all regions, and to share this experience with associated cities and municipalities through mutual learning and capacity building.

To promote inclusive and resilient urban food systems, the RUAF strategy 2018-2023 is guided by three principles:

- The universal right to food
- Sustainable and resilient cities
- Multi-stakeholder engagement

And by its three strategic goals:

1: Promoting localised systems of production and consumption for more inclusive food systems
2: Strengthening the resilience of urban food systems
3: Strengthening the role of cities in food policy governance

Mobilising knowledge for mutual learning, capacity building and policy influence

RUAF regularly synthesises its local, national and international knowledge exchanges, advocacy and learning activities. It disseminates this synthesis on-line through the Urban Agriculture Magazine (UAM), RUAF papers and up-dates, as well as partner publications and international meetings.

RUAF has so far engaged with over 100 local and international partner organisations and worked in 50 cities in more than 40 different countries. RUAF supports local and subnational governments, urban producer organisations, NGOs, CBOs, research centres and other stakeholders, with training, technical assistance, action-research and policy advice. RUAF receives funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS), the EU, IDRC (Canada), UN HABITAT, Ministry of Environment Norway, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), CDKN (UK), the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), OXFAM, CARE (Netherlands), Welthungerhilfe (Germany), the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation and the CGIAR, as well as municipalities.
RUAF plays an important role in global processes such as in the Technical Advisory Committee drafting of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (2015), as well as ensuring urban agriculture and food systems are included in the New Urban Agenda, the key outcome of UN Habitat III (2016) which will guide global efforts around urbanisation for the next 20 years.

**Current RUAF partners** include the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) based in Colombo, Sri Lanka; the Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGSNRR/CAS), based in Beijing, China; the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada; the City of Toronto, Canada, Food Strategy team and the Toronto Food Policy Council, the City of Ghent, Belgium, CONQUITO, the Economic Promotion Agency of the Municipality of the Metropolitan District of Quito; and the NGOs Economia e Sostenibilita (ESTA) from Milan, Italy, Mazingira Institute, Nairobi, Kenya, and RUAF Netherlands.
Each RUAF partner comes with its own network of contacts and ongoing activities in the fields of urban food systems, including urban agriculture. In fact, RUAF’s vision for resilient and equitable urban food systems includes urban agriculture, its original mission. RUAF supports arising global agendas including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA), in response to the increasing urbanisation of poverty and challenges that cities and city regions face in ensuring secure access to food, productive livelihoods and resilient development for their citizens.
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**Strategic Goal 1:**

**Promote localised production and consumption for more inclusive food systems**

**Sphere of Control**
- Activities:
  - Support UPA innovations and farming systems
  - Analyse market demand and link producers with consumers
  - Enhance local capacity through training
  - Enhance access to land and productive resources
  - Promote more equitable and inclusive approaches
  - Set up practical ways to implement right to food and food sovereignty at local level
  - Promote decent (youth) employment and training
  - Build evidence and share and disseminate
  - Train local staff and identify urban agriculture and forestry models for climate change mitigation and adaptation

**Sphere of Influence**
- Immediate Outcomes
  - Local support organisations assist groups of small-scale urban producers and other market actors in the analysis of market demand and in the establishment of direct linkages with potential buyers.

- Intermediate Outcomes
  - Municipalities, NGOs, and other actors initiate food projects with urban poor and disadvantaged groups for access to nutritious and affordable food for social inclusion.
  - Local governments integrate UPA and forestry into climate change adaptation strategies and in disaster risk reduction.

**Sphere of Interest**
- Shorter more visible food chains that strengthen local urban and peri-urban agriculture production and value chains

**SDG Development Outcomes**
- More viable, inclusive and resilient urban food systems

**Strategic Goal 2:**

**Strengthen the resilience of urban food systems**

**Sphere of Control**
- Activities:
  - Developing tools for participatory and multi-stakeholder assessment, planning, and monitoring
  - Providing training, education in system thinking, and on CRFS
  - Planning and developing CRFS strategies and governance models
  - Monitoring and evaluation of CRFS plans and strategies
  - Support technical innovations, on waste, food and energy
  - Creation of new enterprises and jobs, and circular economy business models
  - Safe use of waste and waste water in UPA
  - Adding value to waste streams

**Sphere of Influence**
- Immediate Outcomes
  - In more cities, stakeholders undertake participatory diagnosis, assessment and planning of their CRFS, and policy development to enhance food governance and include food and agriculture into other sectoral policies, climate change action and urban planning.

- Intermediate Outcomes
  - Increased reuse of solid and liquid wastes in urban agriculture, applied research, safe reuse practices, and municipal resource recovery strategies and programmes that combine productivity with reduced environmental impacts

**Sphere of Interest**
- Integrated territorial policies and strategies for resilient CRFS

**SDG Development Outcomes**
- More viable, inclusive and resilient urban food systems
- Waste, energy, water and food sector synergies optimised
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**Sphere of Control**
- Activities:
  - Support national, regional and international city networks
  - Support city-city learning and exchanges

**Sphere of Influence**
- Immediate Outcomes:
  - Active networks among local governments and peer to peer inter-city exchanges and learning on UPNA and CFFS assessment and the design and implementation of food policies and programmes.

**Sphere of Interest**
- Intermediate Outcomes:
  - Capacities built of cities in food policy governance
  - Knowledge, produced, systematised, documented and disseminated
  - More viable, inclusive and resilient urban food systems

**Strategic Goal 3:**
**Strengthen the role of cities in food policy governance**
- Activities:
  - Knowledge generation: implement and synthesis case studies and innovations on new and emerging topics
  - Exchange and disseminate information and stimulate learning and reflection, opening up debates, critical thinking.
  - Participate in and facilitate international meetings and exchanges
  - Support lobbying and agenda setting at international level

**High presences at International meetings, in strategy-building and in lobby and advocacy**

**SDG Development Outcomes**