URBAN AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA

A Bibliographical Survey
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Compiled by

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Centre for Urban Research
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Preface

The usefulness of bibliographies is questioned occasionally because scholarly literature and interest usually transcend national and disciplinary boundaries. This bibliography about urban agriculture in Africa is of particular importance today due to the dearth of information about it and the increasing interest in urban agriculture in major centres of learning around the world. Hardly a month passes without some new contribution to the literature dealing with urban agriculture. To the scholar and the librarian, this development poses a serious problem of bibliographical control. This problem is particularly apparent in the libraries and research centres in Africa, most of which are neither adequately stocked nor able to provide access to the catalogues of titles available.

Some significant attempts have been made to improve this situation recently and periodic publications of various bibliographies have been done. However, they cover Africa in general rather than urban agriculture in particular because of the interdisciplinary nature of the subject. Whatever the title, the published bibliographies for Africa are so limited in scope that they point only to a small portion of the extensive literature in this expanding field. The bibliography is intended to help remedy this situation, insofar as Africa's urban agriculture is concerned.

This bibliography is a comprehensive compilation of works dealing with urban agriculture in Africa. The major aim of it is to serve as a simple and practical tool for individuals interested in the topic. The reader will notice, however, that on first sight various titles do not clearly point to urban agriculture as such. Because of the difficulty in distinguishing urban agriculture literature from titles fitting in closely related fields, we decided to include the latter titles as well. As a result, titles on urban food security, urban nu-
trition, urban food distribution, street foods, and urban environment are also included in the bibliography. The breadth of the topic is briefly outlined in Chapter 1 (Introduction), which offers a very concise overview of the phenomenon of urban agriculture in Africa.

The bibliography is a listing of all materials that have ever been published or written on the subject of urban agriculture in Africa up to 1998. This records all books, chapters in books, discussion and conference papers, periodical literature and all types of academic theses, dissertations and unpublished documents. All the periodicals which were sourced are listed in the front matter of this book.

In order to have easy access to the entries, the bibliography is organized in a sequence form from 001 to 516 and categorized into six chapters, namely Africa General, Northern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa. Apart from Chapter 2, which contains the entries dealing with Africa in general, the five regional chapters are organized alphabetically by respective countries in the region. An author and region and country index is also included at the back of the book for easy reference.

In order to have a complete bibliography, we consulted many journals, bibliographies and books dealing with agriculture and animal husbandry worldwide. While it is easy to gain access to public documents, it is not always easy to gain access to academic theses and dissertations and other unpublished manuscripts. The entries dealing with other unpublished manuscripts are, therefore, particularly important to all serious researchers. This bibliography is primarily an informative guide to the literature on urban agriculture in Africa. Since bibliographies are never complete, users of it are advised to look at specialized occasional publications that continue to be published. The Council of Planning Librarians publish occasional exchange bibliographies on the Less Developed Countries. The unpublished official documents of the African governments have been duplicated and are now available worldwide. Because of the scattered nature of the official unpublished documents in Africa, the archives must also be consulted. Finally, there is a wealth of information on urban agriculture of various local, regional and national governments as well as United Nations bodies such as
the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

Although comprehensive in subject coverage, this bibliography, like any other bibliography, is not exhaustive. It is intended as a beginning for further studies on the subject. It is not only intended for specialists in African studies, urban agriculture, urban studies and regional planning, but it is hoped that it may be helpful to other users such as policy makers in Africa and many others including social scientists, historians, business and marketing professionals, politicians and lawyers studying contemporary Africa. For this reason, there is heavy emphasis on the periodicals, reference works, and other sources of information that can lead the reader to more specialized sources necessary for the intensive study of the important area of urban agriculture.

R. A. Obudho, Dick W.J. Foeken
May 1999
Acknowledgement

This volume would not have been possible without the help of numerous people who were consulted. But because of limited space we cannot express our gratitude to all of them. To each and every author named in the Author index and their respective publishers, we express our sincere thanks.

We must acknowledge the assistance we have received from colleagues at the University of Nairobi Library, Kenyatta University Library, Moi University Library and Egerton University Library, all in Kenya; University of Dar es Salaam Library and Ardhi Institute Library both in Tanzania; Makerere University Library in Uganda; State University of New York at Albany Library, New York, and the United States Library Congress, Washington, D.C., both in the U.S.A.; and the African Studies Centre Library, Leiden, The Netherlands. It is impossible to enumerate the many librarians and curators of collections who have given freely of their time and knowledge in providing us complete access to their libraries. We register a deep sense of gratitude for their help.

We also received support and encouragement from various colleagues internationally who have constantly fired our interest in the subject of urban agriculture. We acknowledge the support particularly of our Kenyan colleagues at the University of Nairobi; Kenyatta University, Nairobi; Moi University, Eldoret; Egerton University, Njoro; African Urban Quarterly Limited, Nairobi, and Centre for Urban Research, Nairobi.

Thanks are due to our students who helped us with the library search, research, typing and proof reading of the manuscripts. Special thanks are due to Mr. Gibson I.O. Aduwo, Mr. Peter Abwao, and Mr. Samuel O. Owuor who did the research and rechecked most of the references. We also
acknowledge the cooperation of the employees of African Urban Quarterly Limited and the Centre for Urban Research. Last, but not least, we must express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Mrs Angeline M. Ayuya for typesetting the word processor and ICIPE Science for editing and publication.

While we thank all the above, we would like to absolve them of any errors found in this bibliography. All the errors, if any, is our responsibility and should be addressed to us at the address above.
Introduction

Although different definitions of urban agriculture exist, the easiest way to describe it is as any agricultural activity within the boundaries of an urban centre. This definition encompasses all kinds of crop cultivation (including e.g. ornamental plants) as well as various types of animal husbandry (also including e.g. bees and fish). During the last two decades these activities have been on the increase in most Less Developed Countries, in Africa in particular. This is mainly due to a number of factors such as continuing rural-urban migration, economic recession and structural adjustment policies, resulting in for instance growing unemployment rates and rising food prices. Hence, urban poverty increased substantially, inducing many urban residents to start producing some food themselves.

Several types of urban agriculture can be distinguished. First, there is the so-called backyard farming, also known as on-plot farming, i.e. cultivating crops and/or keeping animals in one's own compound near the house. On-plot farming usually concerns middle-income households. The second type is the so-called off-plot farming, i.e. farming on land that belongs to somebody else. This is typically being done by low-income households and can be found along roads, rivers and railway lines, under power lines, in parks and in the middle of roundabouts, among others. Finally, farming is common in the outskirts of urban centres, on previously rural land that became
part of the urban centre due to boundary extensions. In these zones, both small-scale and large-scale farming can be found. However, as the urban centre grows, these areas gradually lose their ‘rural’ character and farming becomes increasingly of the other two types.

Farming by urban residents is done for either subsistence or commercial purposes or both. For the poor, increasing their food security is usually the main motivation; for some, it may even be a survival strategy. Nevertheless, many of the poor also sell some of their produce in order to be able to pay other basic household needs. For the middle-income households (and high-income households as well), commercial considerations are usually of more importance than among the poor, although the consumption of own-produced vegetables and milk is often highly valued. On the whole, subsistence farming is dominant in the African urban centres.

The latter is one of the reasons that the majority of the African urban farmers are women. Traditionally, in most parts of Africa, the women are responsible for the household’s food provision. Another reason is that women usually have a lower educational level than men and hence have more difficulties with finding some kind of employment. Farming may be the only option left to them. Several studies found that the number of female-headed households was disproportionally high among the urban farmers. It has also been shown that it is usually not the recent migrants who practice urban farming. For those who do not own a piece of urban land, one has to be settled and dispose of the right network in order to be able to get access to a piece of land.

The crops grown concern mostly the basic food crops such as maize, beans, cassava, sorghum, rice and yams. A wide range of vegetables are also cultivated, part of which is often sold because of its perishability and because there is usually a ready market for it. Some urban farmers do grow crops solely for commercial purposes, however, such as tomatoes, spinach and lettuce. This seems to be more common in West Africa than in Eastern Africa. Tree crops are not very common, which is related to the uncertainty in terms of land tenure many urban farmers face.

Although animal husbandry is somewhat less common than crop
cultivation, many urban households do keep some animals. Most common is poultry, mostly for commercial purposes by selling chicken and eggs. Goats and sheep can also be found in all African urban centres. This applies to cattle as well, although sometimes less visible because quite a number of them are kept in zero-grazing. Pigs are less common, partly because the market for these animals is usually small in Africa, but also because it tends to cause a nuisance for the neighbours, inducing the local authorities to forbid this practice. Some farmers keep rabbits or ducks while a small number are involved in bee-keeping. Fish ponds, quite common in Asian urban centres, are hardly found in African urban centres.

Urban farmers face various constraints such as irregular rainfall, droughts, flooding, waterlogging, poor soils, destruction by animals, pests and diseases which are not different from the problems faced by rural farmers. Other problems, however, are more specifically related to the urban context and are particularly faced by the poor who practice off-plot farming. Examples are uncertainty regarding land tenure, theft of crops, lack of capital and inputs and threat of eviction or destruction of crops.

In most African countries, urban farming is illegal. Bylaws usually date from colonial times and simply forbid any agricultural activity within the boundaries of urban centres. However, as the practice has become so widespread during the last two decades, a change in policy has also occurred. During the 1960s and 1970s, policies were usually restrictive in the sense that harassment or destruction of crops were common measures taken by the local authorities. During the 1980s, however, a gradual shift from restriction to allowing took place. Nowadays, it is usually allowed, as long as it does not cause a nuisance in the sense of too tall crops (like maize in which criminals can hide and in which mosquitoes are assumed to breed), danger for the people's health (e.g. animal deposits), foul smells, noise and traffic accidents, among others. In some urban centres such as Dar es Salaam, for example, the local authorities encourage people to practice urban farming in order to raise the level of food supply.

Urban agriculture is considered by many as an environmental hazard because of the danger of soil erosion and the use of contaminated water for irrigation purposes while crops cultivated along road sides are prone to air
pollution. Since urban farming tends to be more intensive than rural farming, the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides can have a great impact on the urban environment. Animals cannot only cause stench but also overgrazing and traffic accidents. Recycling of sewage water and of urban solid waste turning it into compost are often propagated as a kind of panacea for both urban crop production and the improvement of the urban environment. Although environmental awareness is growing in Africa, such measures have not yet been put into practice.

The above is a very concise and general summary of some of the findings of the studies included in the bibliography. Although the bibliography contains over 500 entries, the knowledge of urban agriculture in Africa is still very fragmentary. This is due to the fact that most studies focus on one or two aspects of urban farming only and usually in one specific urban centre (usually the national capital) or even a specific part or project within that centre. As Mougeot (1994, entry 113) rightly observes, particularly lacking are, for instance, studies in which urban farmers and non-farmers are compared, as well as studies in which various aspects and effects of urban agriculture are analysed.

The bibliography shows that the knowledge of African urban agriculture is geographically scattered as well. If the five distinguished regions of the continent are compared, there appears to be a heavy bias towards Eastern and Southern Africa. Studies done in Northern Africa are almost completely absent. If the country studies are compared on a linguistic basis, the bias is even more conspicuous: 75% of the country-specific entries concern Anglophone countries, only 14% being Francophone and the remaining 11% 'other' (mainly Portuguese and Ethiopia). Not surprisingly, then, among the eight countries with more than 10 entries in the bibliography, seven are Anglophone, the only exception being Ethiopia. The three East African countries — Tanzania, with 57 entries, in particular — and Zimbabwe are the highest ranking countries. Finally, a number of countries have no entries at all, indicating that either there has so far not been done any research on the topic or the compilers of this bibliography were not aware of it. Among the larger countries in this category, one finds Algeria, Angola, Chad, Guinea, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Morocco and Niger.
2

Africa general


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Northern Africa

GENERAL

(No entry)

ALGERIA

(No entry)

EGYPT


LIBYA

(No entry)

MOROCCO

(No entry)

SUDAN


TUNISIA


Western Africa

GENERAL


**BENIN**


**BURKINA FASO**


CAPE VERDE
(No entry)

GHANA


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**GUINEA**

(No entry)

**GUINEA BISSAU**


IVORY COAST


LIBERIA

(No entry)

MALI


32
MAURITANIA

(No entry)

NIGER

(No entry)

NIGERIA


SENEGAL


SIERRA LEONE


THE GAMBIA


Central Africa

GENERAL


CAMEROON


CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC


CHAD

(No entry)

CONGO BRAZZAVILLE


CONGO KINSHASA


**EQUATORIAL GUINEA**

(No entry)

**GABON**


**SAO TOMÉ AND PRINCIPE**

(No entry)
Eastern Africa

GENERAL


BURUNDI
(No entry)

DJIBOUTI
(No entry)

ERITREA
(No entry)


KENYA


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**RWANDA**


**SEYCHELLES**

(No entry)
SOMALIA

(No entry)

TANZANIA


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***UGANDA***


Southern Africa

GENERAL


ANGOLA

(No entry)

BOTSWANA


**COMOROS**

(No entry)

**LESOTHO**


**MADAGASCAR**

(No entry)

**MALAWI**


**MAURITIUS**

(No entry)

**MAYOTTE**

(No entry)
MOZAMBIQUE


NAMIBIA

(No entry)

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA


REUNION

(No entry)

SWAZILAND

(No entry)

ZAMBIA


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<td>57</td>
<td>Annette van Andel</td>
<td>Changing security. Livelihood in the Mandara Mountains in North Cameroon.</td>
<td>1998</td>
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