



Short Title: Urban vegetable gardens for better diets in the informal settlements of urban Kisumu

Consumption of poor diets is still evident in many developing countries, especially among low-income consumers. The Kisumu Food System Lab in Kenya, under the HealthyFoodAfrica project, is working with food system stakeholders to improve diets of the people in the informal settlements of urban Kisumu. Urban gardens are often promoted to make nutritious foods available, accessible, and affordable to the people. This project uses innovative approaches to ensure urban gardens lead to improved diets in a sustainable way.

First, we use a bottom-up approach of engaging the community in identifying diet-related problems and solutions using community Action Plans. Second, after identifying different types of urban gardens, the project's technical experts guide residents to select the type of garden that best suit them based on space, their nutrient value & preference. Together they discuss best types of vegetables to produce. Third, the project works with the Kisumu County to support agricultural activities e.g. best agricultural practices, pest & disease control, and water usage. Given that availability and access to nutritious foods does not always guarantee consumption, the project is working with the ministry of health and nutrition county officials to disseminate nutrition information to the target beneficiaries so that they can consume more of the vegetables as they produce them in their urban gardens.

We expect these interventions to lead to improved diet diversity for the target women, children, youth and men. Since the activities are implemented collab-

oratively with the county and beneficiaries, the approach & findings can be used to set up similar interventions in other informal settlements within the county and beyond.



Urban farming in Kisumu, Kenya.

