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The Urban Agriculture Stakeholders' Monthly Newsletter: February + March 2011

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Yes, we are still here! Sorry we've been silent.

In February, Tiffany Tong completed her 6-month internship with our office and was replaced by Olive Bailey, who will now be filling the role of Urban Agriculture Project Officer. Despite the changes in our office, we have been making a lot of progress in the area of urban agriculture with our partners. Here is what has been happening in February and March:

Legitimization of Urban Agriculture

The legitimization process is in full swing. Municipal Strategic Plans on Urban Agriculture have been drafted by each municipality along with maps of proposed zones for urban agriculture. In March, we organized two meetings to give the municipal agriculture departments an opportunity to present their draft plans and receive feedback from stakeholders. On March 4th, the plans were presented before a group of 25 farmers representing various farmers groups, who showed their support for many of the proposed strategies for legitimizing and enhancing urban agriculture in Dar es Salaam.

March 17th marked the Urban Agriculture Stakeholders' Consultation, organized in conjunction with Dar es Salaam City Council. The event took place at Karimjee Hall. Attendees included representatives from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives, National Environmental Management Council, Dar es Salaam City Council, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the Canadian High Commission, farmers groups, University of Dar es Salaam, and Ilala, Temeke, and Kinondoni Municipal Councils. We are preparing a Summary Report of the consultation for April 1st. If you did not attend the workshop and would like to receive a copy of this report, please email me at bailey.olive@gmail.com.

The next step will be for the Municipal Agriculture and Livestock Departments to revise their draft plans based on feedback collected from the meetings and to then submit their plans to the Municipal Planning Sub Committee for approval. In addition, we will be working with stakeholders to set an action plan for the planning and implementation of the urban agriculture zones.

Tanzania Food Garden Network

The Dar es Salaam Food Garden Network is now called the Tanzanian Food Garden Network. The reason behind the name change is to increase the visibility of the network and keep the opportunity open for creating a wider network across the country in the future.

The Network continues to develop and a draft constitution has been formulated. The next step is to develop a first annual strategic plan setting goals, activities and timelines for the next year. Once this is completed, we will apply for registration and funding to support our activities. Our next meeting is planned for mid-April.

As always, if you know of any grants that we could apply for or any urban agriculture groups interested in joining, please let us know!

Community Demonstration Projects

We received a number of applications for community demonstration project funding earlier in the year. Currently, we are wrapping up reporting on existing community demonstration projects and carrying out an assessment of our operations to determine how many new projects we can accommodate.

Funding

Over the past few months we have been working to mobilize funds to scale up our urban agriculture initiatives, including our facilitation of the legitimization process for urban agriculture in Dar es Salaam. We have continued to refine our comprehensive funding application package to showcase our achievements and future plans to help improve the livelihoods of urban farmers. We will be submitting applications as funding calls arise.

As always, we would really appreciate it if you can let us know of any funding opportunities available!

Durban Peer-Exchange

In February, we were fortunate to participate in the Sustainable Cities International- Network Africa Program peer-exchange in Durban, South Africa. The Dar es Salaam delegation was represented by Kinondoni Municipal Council, Dar es Salaam City Council, Envirocare / SAFINA, and our local staff. We made a presentation on our urban agriculture projects in Dar es Salaam to the international audience present and several interesting connections were made with groups engaged in similar activities in Durban, Dakar, and Porto Alegre in Brazil.

Looking forward

In April we will be continuing to facilitate the legitimization process for urban agriculture and provide support to municipalities by facilitating information sharing, connecting stakeholders, and working with stakeholders to set an action plan for plan approval and implementation. We are also looking forward to revisiting the TFGN after a two-month hiatus and supporting their efforts to register and develop a strategic plan. We are also beginning to investigate synergies between our urban agriculture and solid waste management activities, such as composting of organic material for use on urban farms.

Remember: we're always looking to meet interesting groups, potential partners, and to hear suggestions or feedback! Please contact us at landline +255 22 266 4279; or cell +255 766 607 438 or +255 755 271 161; or email at bailey.olive@gmail.com or MZivhave@icsc.ca. Until next month!