



## Villa María del Triunfo, Peru: Urban Agriculture Policy <sup>1</sup>

**Name of the policy:** Urban Agriculture Policy of the City of Villa María del Triunfo

**Start date:** August 2005

**End date:** Ongoing

### CONTEXT

#### GOVERNMENTAL DECENTRALIZATION CONTEXT

##### City context

After Brazil and Argentina, Peru is the third largest country in South America, with an area of 1,285,215 km<sup>2</sup>, making it one of the 20 largest countries in the world. It is the fifth most populous country on the continent, with 28,220,764 inhabitants, and 39.3% of the population live in poverty.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The **Inclusive Cities Observatory** is a space for analysis and reflection on local social inclusion policies. It contains over sixty case studies on innovative policies for interculturality, community development, access to basic services, gender equality, human rights, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty, among others. The initiative has received scientific support from Prof. Yves Cabannes from the University College of London (15 cases) and a team of researchers from the Centre for Social Studies (CES) at the University of Coimbra (50 cases), which has worked under the supervision of Prof. Boaventura de Sousa Santos. The Observatory aims to identify successful experiences that can inspire other cities when designing and implementing their inclusion policies.

The Inclusive Cities Observatory was created by the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights. **United Cities and Local Governments** (UCLG) is the international platform that represents and defends the interests of local governments before the international community and works to give cities increased political influence in world governance. The mission of the **Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights** is to contribute to constructing a common voice for the cities of UCLG in the areas of social inclusion, participatory democracy and human rights. It also aims to guide local governments in designing these policies and to that end, fosters political debates, the exchange of experiences and mutual learning among cities around the world.

For further information: [www.uclg.org/cisdp/observatory](http://www.uclg.org/cisdp/observatory)

<sup>2</sup> National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (NIS). Population Census - 2007.



Its capital is the province of Metropolitan Lima, which is home to more than eight and a half million inhabitants (98% urban), according to NISI figures in 2009, and it accounts for almost two-thirds of Peru's economic activity and industry. The province of Lima is divided into 43 municipalities, which are represented by a mayor and a city council with their own powers.

The municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo has a population of 378,470 inhabitants (FONCODES 2006), and is located 17 kilometres south of Lima. It was created on December 28, 1961 by Law No. 13796. The capital of the municipality is Villa Maria del Triunfo, which lies at an altitude of 158 metres above sea level and has an area of 70.57 km<sup>2</sup>. It is divided into seven areas: José Carlos Mariátegui, Cercado, Inca Pachacútec, Nueva Esperanza, Tablada de Lurín, José Gálvez Barrenechea and Nuevo Milenio.

One of the main features of the municipality is its rugged terrain, which includes ridges and hills ranging from 200 to 1000 m above sea level, and slopes ranging between 7 and 43 degrees. As a result of this topography, the effectively urbanized (built-up) area amounts to less than one third of its total area (21 km<sup>2</sup>). Despite the geographical features of the city, urban agriculture is an activity that has taken place informally in Villa Maria del Triunfo for a long time. In 2000, the Municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo promoted it as a strategy to improve food security and to generate complementary family income for poor and extremely poor households.

### **Governmental decentralization context**

In 2004, the municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo called on various institutions to develop the town's Coordinated Economic Development Plan. The preparation of the Plan involved working with four sectors: Commerce, Services, Production and Urban Agriculture. The inclusion of urban agriculture as a sector was the focus of much discussion among those involved. However, the final decision was taken based on the following considerations: a) The specific political will to promote urban agriculture, b) The availability of vacant spaces, c) The existence in all areas of urban agriculture as a traditional cultural expression of the population, d) Its feasibility as a low investment strategy for generating possible income and e) As a strategy to combat poverty.

Later that year, the Urban Agriculture Division was created<sup>3</sup>, as the body responsible for promoting and developing urban agriculture in the city, to which end it receives an annual percentage of the municipal budget for undertaking this activity in the city.

The new municipal government was elected in January 2007. However, the new local authorities of Villa Maria del Triunfo continued to follow the broad outlines of action contained in the city's Coordinated Economic Development Plan. They also produced the Municipal Institutional Strategic Plan, in accordance with the city's Coordinated Economic Development Plan, which includes and institutionalizes urban agriculture as a strategy for fighting against poverty.

In September 2007, Council Resolution No. 021-2007/MVMT approved the Ordinance for the Reinforcement of Urban Agriculture as a permanent and legitimate activity in the city of Villa

<sup>3</sup> This body is on the third hierarchical level, and answerable to the Local Economic Development Office.

María del Triunfo, and as a strategy for fighting against poverty that contributes to local economic development.<sup>4</sup>

**Institutional level of policy development:** District

## **SOCIAL CONTEXT**

The origins of the population of the city of Villa María del Triunfo lie in the huge waves of migration that took place in Peru during the twentieth century. As a result, 41% of its population comes from the country's inland areas. 57.3% of the population lives in poverty and 22.20% in a situation of extreme poverty (FONCODE S 2000). The malnutrition rate is around 15% and at least 23% of children under 8 years of age suffer from chronic malnutrition.

Its population is mostly young, with 75% under 39 years old. 77% of the city's economically active population is engaged in formal and informal trade, 18% in service activities and only 5% in productive activities (industry and manufacturing) (VMT et al., 2005).

The climate of Villa Maria del Triunfo is variable and temperate, with constant high atmospheric humidity and cloud cover during the winter. The total annual average precipitation is 0.10 mm/year<sup>5</sup> (an extremely arid rainfall value). The ambient temperature has a high of 29.2°C and a low of 12.9°C, with a mean of 18.6° C.<sup>6</sup>

## **COMPREHENSIVE NARRATIVE**

### **Description of the policy**

The Urban Agriculture Policy of the city of Villa María del Triunfo is divided into four areas of implementation: 1) food security, providing access to safe and healthy food for the poorest parts of the city's population, 2) the generation of additional income for the families of the farmers by the sale of their surplus production, 3) environmental and urban improvement because it generates green and healthy living spaces, promoting green planting and animal husbandry, and is an alternative for the use of vacant lots with urban agriculture and 4) equality, because it promotes non-discrimination and equal opportunities for men and women.

### **Background / Origins**

In 1999, the Municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo identified the need for a municipal policy that would promote urban agriculture as a strategic activity that could contribute to improving the

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<sup>4</sup> Diario El Peruano, Legal Regulations No. 352724, Friday 07 September, 2007, Lima, Peru.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Lima Este (La Molina) Weather Station, 2004-2008.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Las Palmas Weather Station, 2004-2008.

food security of its poorest inhabitants (complementing and diversifying food consumption in terms of both quantity and quality) and enable supplementary family incomes to be generated.

The local authorities took an became increasing interest in the contribution made by urban agriculture, and participated in regional events and opportunities for reflection and discussion involving various Latin American cities that had previously implemented municipal urban agriculture programmes and projects. The local authorities of Villa Maria del Triunfo were encouraged by the experiences of the other cities, and decided to incorporate urban agriculture in the Healthy City strategic area of the municipality's Comprehensive Development Plan for 2001-2010.

The Urban Agriculture Division was established in 2004, and was allocated approximately 35,000 US dollars under the category of investments from the municipal budget as co-financing funds for the implementation of various urban agriculture projects.

### **Policy objectives**

The aim of the urban agriculture policy in the city of Villa Maria del Triunfo is for urban agriculture to be recognized as a permanent and legitimate activity in the city, strengthening food security, income generation, environmental and urban improvement and equality between men and women.

### **Chronological development and implementation of the practice**

While urban agriculture was part of the City of Villa Maria del Triunfo's Coordinated Economic Development Plan, there was no information or documentation regarding this activity in the city. There was also no urban agriculture policy in the city, or the tools to implement it.

In 2005, the Municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo asked IPES<sup>7</sup> and the RUAF Foundation<sup>8</sup> for advice on formulating urban agriculture policy for the city and planning and implementation tools. The first step was a participatory diagnosis to identify: a) the main actors directly and indirectly involved in the activity, b) the current and potential areas for the development of urban agriculture, c) the production systems d) the legal framework facilitating or promoting the activity in the city. This diagnosis involved the active participation of the city's urban farmers.

Subsequently, after the actors have been identified, a multi-actor coordination and consultation space was created, comprising 21 institutions from civil society, which was called the Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Forum. The Urban Farmers Network, involving the 570 urban self-registered farmers in the city, was also established.

Based on an analysis of the information constructed, the limitations and potential of urban agriculture in the city was identified with the members of the Urban Agriculture Forum, and the

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<sup>7</sup> IPES-Promoción del Desarrollo Sostenible: [www.ipes.org](http://www.ipes.org)

<sup>8</sup> RUAF-Foundation: Resource Centres of Urban Agriculture and Food Security: [www.ruaf.org](http://www.ruaf.org)

Urban Agriculture Policy and a tool for policy planning called the Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan (2007-2011) were created.

In 2007, a proposal for a Framework Ordinance was formulated which recognized urban agriculture as a legal activity in the city. This was approved, together with the Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan as a planning instrument for the activity in the city, by Council Resolution No. 021-2007/MVMT.

Several priority initiatives within the Strategic Plan have been financed by members of the Urban Agriculture Forum. Examples include the implementation of a technical training programme and the production of an urban agriculture manual for the city's urban farmers, with funding from the Agraria La Molina University and IPES between 2006 and 2007. In addition, urban agriculture week has been held in the city since 2007, where Urban Farmers Network is responsible for organizing the urban farmers in the city to participate in planned activities such as fairs, competitions, parades, etc.

The Forum members currently hold meetings throughout the year, at which they coordinate the implementation of the initiatives in the Strategic Plan. For example, Urban Agriculture Week takes place in Villa Maria del Triunfo each year, with resources provided by members of the Forum. The Urban Farmers Network also has its own dynamic: members meet regularly and plan activities, manage resources, etc.

### **Agents involved**

The Municipality of Villa Maria del Triunfo was responsible for designing the Urban Agriculture Policy of the city of Villa Maria del Triunfo. However, this process involved a series of carefully arranged and planned initiatives involving the participation of various stakeholders, including the RUAF Foundation (Netherlands), IPES-Promoción del Desarrollo Sostenible, the Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Forum and the Urban Farmers Network.

### **Beneficiaries**

Since its inception, the policy has sought to benefit all the urban farmers in the city of Villa Maria del Triunfo and their families, who are mostly migrants, women, children and elderly people, living in poverty and extreme poverty in the city. It does so by providing supplies and equipment, training and transferring vacant land for their use, for the implementation of urban agriculture in order that they can obtain food and non-food products either for their own consumption or to generate additional household income through the sale of surpluses. Today, there are over 570 families of urban farmers in the city (self-registered in 2007).

### **Participation processes implemented**

The Urban Farmers Network began to take shape in 2002. Its origins date back to an initiative undertaken by a group of eight families in one of the seven districts of Villa Maria del Triunfo, who sought access to training and the provision of supplies provided by the municipality's Urban Agriculture Programme. This initial group appointed a coordinator, who was responsible for managing the training and gaining municipal support for their gardens. Other families were

encouraged to organize and join when they saw the achievements in the implementation of community gardens. The City thereby recognized this type of self-managed organization by the by farmers, who achieved greater effectiveness in their promotion and in the use of financial and human resources than when they did so as unorganized farmers.

In 2005, progress was made in the reconciliation and the structuring of the groups, based on the participatory diagnosis process regarding the state of urban agriculture in the city, which involved the active participation of urban farmers. Discovering common problems and challenges brought the farmers together, and in May 2006 led them to consider the challenge of organizing themselves on a larger scale. They decided to start by reinforcing their structure at zone level, and to that end elected coordinators for each area as representatives and spokespersons. That same year, the coordinators were sworn in at a public event before the members of the Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Forum.

Bearing in mind that Villa Maria is a physically and socially fragmented city at zone and district level, the progress made in organizing the farmers is a major qualitative step forward for the city.

In addition to providing visibility for the farmers, the organization and formalization of the Urban Farmers Network aimed to strengthen and empower them in management in the city, creating conditions that enable them to participate in decision-making, such as participatory budgeting and local coordination committees (e.g. on gender and poverty) and actively contribute to the development of the city.

### **Institutionalization processes**

There is a multi-actor space for structuring and coordination for the implementation and updating of the Policy Plan known as the "Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Forum" and the Urban Farmers Network. There is also a municipal office (a division of the Urban Agriculture Office) that implements the projects in the Plan for which the local government is responsible.

### **Financing**

The policy is publicly funded. Although international cooperation maintains an active presence, funding urban agriculture projects and initiatives in the city, the only information available is for the amount (56,800 US dollars) received from the RUAF Foundation for the formulation of the policy.

### **Key results and achievements**

In 2011, the Urban Agriculture Policy in the city of Villa Maria del Triunfo had the following outcomes/impacts:

#### *Documented information on Urban Agriculture in the city*

- 01 Urban Agriculture Policy Paper: Villa Maria Planting for Life: Situation, limitations, potential and actors in urban agriculture in Villa Maria del Triunfo (website: [www.ipes.org/au](http://www.ipes.org/au)).

### *Legal framework*

- 01 Framework Ordinance recognizing urban agriculture as a legal activity in the city (Council Resolution No. 021-2007/MVMT). 18 Ministerial Resolutions, Decrees, Circulars and Laws dealing with the various aspects of urban agriculture.
- 01 The Sub Urban Agriculture Division with a municipal budget for the implementation of urban agriculture projects in the city.
- The Urban Farmers Network of Villa Maria del Triunfo was established and strengthened as an umbrella organization for the city's urban farmers, and was legally recognized by the local government.

### *Participating population*

- 2,850 urban farmers engaged in this activity in household, community and institutional gardens.

### *Institutionalization*

- 21 national institutions implement and monitor initiatives within the Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan in the city.
- 01 The Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Farmers Network was legally recognized by the local government (Municipal Resolution No. 060-2008/MVMT), with political advocacy and resource management responsibilities.
- The "Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Week" takes place each year (3 Weeks have been organized, in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010) with funds raised and contributed by the members of the Urban Agriculture Forum.

### **Main obstacles**

The main obstacles identified were as follows:

- The instability of political posts in the Urban Agriculture Division, representing the Municipality in the Urban Agriculture Forum requires a constant effort, awareness-raising and negotiation with the new authorities.
- There are no qualified human resources (technical and professional) able to attract national and international funds to generate financial resources to implement the policy's measures and support the city's urban farmers.

### **Replicability or adaptation of policy elsewhere**

Some helpful suggestions for other governments interested in promoting urban agriculture in the city are:

- a. It is necessary to reinforce the skills of local stakeholders and provide them with tools for concerted action and to find the resources necessary for the promotion and development of urban agriculture in the city.

- b. Promote the formulation of policies and planning instruments for the promotion and development of urban agriculture in their city, from the perspective of social inclusion and gender equality.
- c. Empower local actors to strengthen their organization and capabilities/skills, promoting equitable relations based on equality and equal opportunities, optimizing the local resources available and implementing pilot projects highlighting the contributions of urban agriculture to food security, urban environmental management and local economic development.

## **SUMMARY**

The Urban Agriculture Policy of the district of Villa Maria del Triunfo officially began with the adoption of the Framework Ordinance recognizing urban agriculture as a legal activity in the city (Council Resolution No. 021-2007/MVMT). That same year, a planning instrument for the policy called the Strategic Plan (SP) for Urban Agriculture in Villa Maria del Triunfo (2007-2011) was produced on a participatory basis.

The Villa Maria del Triunfo Urban Agriculture Forum and the Urban Farmers Network participated in the design, development, implementation and participatory management of the policy.

The aim of the urban agriculture policy is for urban agriculture to be recognized as a permanent and legitimate activity in the city of Villa Maria del Triunfo, strengthening food security, income generation, environmental and urban improvement and equality between men and women.

Today, there are over 2850 urban farmers in the city (self-registered in 2007).

The main results and impacts generated during the formulation and implementation of the urban agriculture policy are: 1) documented information on urban agriculture in the city of Villa María del Triunfo, 2) the creation of favourable legal frameworks for the promotion and development of urban agriculture in the city and 3) the institutionalization of the policy in the city.

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#### Acknowledgements / Credits

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