Integrating Food into Urban Planning

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Urban agriculture in Lima metropolitan area

One (short) step forward, two steps backwards – the limits of urban food planning

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5.1. A mega-city with mega-urban problems

According to data from the 2007 National Census, 77 per cent of Peru’s population live in cities, and just over half live in coastal regions (55 per cent). Metropolitan Lima, the capital, is the fifth-most-populated city in Latin America, having 43 districts, and is home to nearly a third of the country’s 31 488 000 inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática [INEI] 2007).

Considered to be the second-largest city in the world which is located in a desert, receiving only 25–100 mm of rain per year, and with only 3.7 m² of green area per inhabitant, Metropolitan Lima faces severe environmental problems. The Rimac River is the main source of water for all uses, including for irrigating the 12 500 hectares dedicated to traditional peri-urban agriculture which still remain on the urban periphery.

From 1990 to 2004, rural-to-urban migration – spurred by internal armed conflicts – led to a nine-fold increase in Lima’s population, bringing about an accelerated process of urbanisation which severely impacted on the traditionally agricultural areas surrounding the city. Just as the urban pressures from the waves of internal migration began to subside, the country embarked upon a decade-long economic boom (with gross domestic product [GDP] growth of six per cent on average between 2004 and 2014), sparking a new cycle of urban pressure, this time geared towards satisfying the housing needs of the growing middle
Figure 5.1  Location of popular markets and supermarkets according to the number of establishments. Many popular markets sell products from urban farms. (Source: FAO Proyecto NADHALI 2016–18)
class. The urban poverty rate in Lima fell from 44.6 per cent in 2004 to 11.6 per cent in 2014 (INEI 2015), and with the increase in average incomes there was a corresponding increase in the demand for food among the capital’s burgeoning middle-class households (Pozo-Vergnes and Vorley 2015).

Another result of the increase in people’s incomes can be seen in the changes that occurred in food distribution, which began to be concentrated in supermarkets and large retailers’ outlets in place of traditional local farmers’ markets, albeit with higher prices. Despite this, in Metropolitan Lima there are still some 1200 markets that meet the dietary needs of the poorest communities located in Lima’s outskirts (see Figure 5.1) (Pozo-Vergnes and Vorley 2015).

Despite several attempts in recent years by the national government to improve food availability and access, a recent study revealed the strong impact that the increase in food prices had had on the caloric deficit of the poorest people, highlighting the fragility of food security policies (Zegarra 2010).

Recent studies, such as those provided by the NADHALI Project, warn about food vulnerability in the Lima metropolitan area, showing that only 2.2 per cent of the food consumed is produced within its territory. The NADHALI Project is promoted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) together with the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima and a broad group of actors from the public and private sectors, academia and civil society, organised in a multi-actor platform. Among its objectives, it seeks to support the authorities responsible for planning the food system as a key pillar of ‘making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’ and ‘ending hunger and achieving food security and nutrition’.

Metropolitan Lima is a city of contrasts. A mega-city facing mega-problems in a multicultural and institutional context plagued by paradoxes and contradictions.

5.2. The challenges of urban governance

Since 2000, Peru has experienced a democratic era with free national elections every five years and changes in regional and municipal authorities every four years. As a result of the 2014 elections, the country has nine new municipal and regional administrations, including a new metropolitan mayor of Lima.
In spite of the democratic resurgence that followed a turbulent era of internal violence and authoritarian governments, Peru has the lowest presidential approval ratings of any country in the region, a Congress with the lowest measures of credibility and a population that is deeply distrustful of public institutions. Nearly half of the population does not believe that democracy is benefiting them in their daily lives, and more than two-thirds do not feel that they are represented by the President and the Congress (Latinobarómetro 2015).

Since the 1990s, there has existed a strong perception that political parties are in the midst of a crisis of representation. The Peruvian political system looks much like a ‘party-free democracy’, with party structures that lack national representation, and local parties with strong regionalist programmes (Levitsky and Cameron 2003).

Various studies concur that citizen participation and civil society are somewhat in retreat, after significant activity in the 1990s. One of the most important consequences of this is the limited capacity that grassroots organisations have today to raise and sustain issues and processes on the national political agenda.

The other side of this phenomenon are what some analysts call ‘islands and archipelagos of technocratic efficiency’, which, though able to generate some consensus in key areas of administration, do not always guarantee coordination, innovation, a strategic approach or the continuity of government initiatives as part of state policy (Tanaka 2015). In this context, the changeover of a municipal administration can mean the abandonment not only of approaches, political priorities and the prioritisation of certain issues, but also of actions and even the implementation of specific policies that have approved legal frameworks and committed budget lines in the Budget by Results.

The environmental, urban planning and urban agriculture policies promoted in Metropolitan Lima between 2011 and 2014 appear to have been victims of this particular form of governance, which is so characteristic of the country, demonstrating that institutional structures and the availability of budget resources are necessary but not sufficient conditions to keep a public policy in place.

5.3. Agriculture in Metropolitan Lima

Agriculture has always been a part of Lima. Maps and engravings show the presence of agricultural areas in the colonial walled city. Historically, traditional peri-urban agriculture was practised on small farms...
in the peripheral districts to the north, south and east of the city and in the valleys of the Lurin and Chillon Rivers. Sixty per cent of the agricultural plots in Lima measure less than 1 hectare, and 43 per cent are less than 1000 m$^2$ (FAO 2014). This farming practice, typical of rural migrants who have made their way to Lima over time, sought commercial outlets through traditional channels (bodegas, municipal markets, stands and street vendors) and was seen not as urban agriculture but rather as part of ‘the agriculture of the city’, and therefore no specific policies were developed to support or regulate the type of production, the irrigation systems and the food supply and distribution mechanisms (Soto and Siura 2008). The use of untreated wastewater for irrigation constitutes a serious problem that severely impacts upon the health of consumers (Moscoso and Alfaro 2008; Moscoso 2011; CIP 2007). Various studies show that, despite the advances made in recent years, there remains a significant deficit in fruit and vegetable consumption, especially among the poorest communities (Instituto Nacional de Salud 2012; María Calderón et al. 2005). Moreover, urban pressures have threatened a large proportion of the agricultural areas, especially those located to the south of the city.

Beginning in 2000, various NGOs, universities, cooperation agencies and some district municipalities started to promote urban agriculture as an activity carried out both within the city limits as well as on the outskirts, offering more holistic solutions to some of the social, economic, nutritional and environmental problems of the poorest section of the population.

It is likely that the District Municipality of Villa María del Triunfo (VMT) was the first municipal government to institutionally promote urban agriculture. In 2001, with support from the Urban Management Program of UN-Habitat (UMP-LAC/UN-Habitat) and Promotion of Sustainable Development (IPES), urban agriculture was incorporated into the legal-regulatory framework and the municipal agenda as an anti-poverty strategy, with a small amount of funding to implement actions. In 2004, the Urban Agriculture Office was created within the Local Economic Development Department and, in 2006, Municipal Ordinance No. 021–2007-MVMT was passed, recognising urban agriculture as a legitimate and permanent activity in the district and as a strategy in the fight against poverty which contributes to local economic development.

Between 2004 and 2010, the RUAF Foundation and the IPES installed 145 family and community organic gardens, and organised 570 urban farmers in the district of Villa María del Triunfo (see Figure 5.2). With financing from the Peru Energy Network (REP), a programme was implemented to install community farms on the strip of utility easement
land under the power transmission grid that crosses the district, and the La Molina National Agrarian University (UNAML) trained and developed the capacities of the urban farmers (Soto and Siura 2008; CIP 2006).

Between 2011 and 2014, the Municipal Urban Agriculture Program known as ‘Chacrita Productiva’ was operational, housed in the Office for Business Promotion, Consumer Defense and Urban Agriculture, which sought to encourage urban agriculture as a strategy to advance social inclusion, gender equity, job creation, food security, community participation, environmental protection and the combating of poverty. The programme installed 39 organic allotment gardens (family, community and institutional) which benefited 1128 urban farmers. Unfortunately, this process has lost steam since the latest change in the municipal authorities in early 2015, although many of the urban farmers continue to grow crops on their own, independent of the municipality.

In 2003, the District Municipality of Lurigancho Chosica began to implement urban agriculture activities in the town of Santa Maria de Huachipa, with support from the Urban Harvest programme of the CIP (CIP/UA). These efforts helped to institutionalise urban agriculture as a strategy to combat poverty, generate income and increase the food

Figure 5.2  Urban garden, Machu Picchu, in Villa María del Triunfo district, Lima. (Source: Alain Santandreu)
security of urban farming families. It encouraged the participation of women and older adults and helped to improve the environment and preserve agricultural areas threatened by urban population pressure. In 2005, the Urban Agriculture Office was created. An Urban Farming School strengthened the technical capacities of 800 farmers (70 per cent of whom were women) in the areas of ecological production, production systems in human settlements (for farmers without land), business administration and commercial management. The trained farmers in turn educated their neighbours. The programme worked with 21 community kitchens and supported the creation of three associations of producers. Regular farmers’ markets were held and a roundtable was established with other municipal agencies which facilitated the coordination of support strategies and the formulation of new legal frameworks to facilitate urban agriculture. Together with the Nutritional Research Institute (IIN), pilot efforts were developed in 12 community kitchens to improve the nutritional status of children aged six months to three years through appropriate child nutrition practices and participatory classes on preparing nutritional recipes using farm products which could be prepared in homes and in the community kitchens. Nevertheless, and despite the progress made, municipal support in this area has waned in recent years with each successive turnover of the municipal authorities (CIP 2006; Soto and Siura 2008).

Other districts such as Villa El Salvador also have pioneering experiences in urban agriculture involving the production of forage, pigs and small animals (guinea pigs). Most recently, the District Municipality of Rimac has received support from the FAO to implement family farms.

5.4. The incorporation of urban agriculture into the municipal policies of Metropolitan Lima: one step forward!

In Peru, there is no overwhelming evidence that demonstrates that urban agriculture is a solution for supplying large quantities of food to cities, as is the case in Cuba, which has a national urban agriculture policy, Rosario (Argentina), Quito (Ecuador) and Teresinha and Curitiba (Brazil) (Ponce and Terrile 2011; Bracalenti et al. 2011; Santandreu et al. 2009; Rodriguez 2010; Ribelino and Paludo 2011; González et al. 2008; Santandreu and Merzthal 2010). Nevertheless, and despite the knowledge gaps that still exist, the documented results of urban
agriculture reveal how it makes significant contributions to a more sustainable urban environment, more equitable land use and more diverse and nutritional diet, as well as to social inclusion and increased self-esteem on the part of those who practise it (Soto and Siura 2008; FAO 2014; CIP 2006).

Acknowledging the complexity of the urban problems Lima faces and the multiple experiences developed in the city, Mayor Susana Villaran (2011–14), from the beginning of her term, incorporated urban agriculture as part of a strategic vision that attempted to establish the foundations of a new model of urban development in the capital (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012b). Initially, the municipality linked urban agriculture to food security, environmental protection and income generation. Over time, its vision became broader as it recognised the activity as a permanent type of land use in urban plans. In her speech launching the Mi Huerta Program, Mayor Villaran emphasised the importance of producing food in the city: ‘Cities grow and we have to practice urban agriculture as part of a project to ensure food security and nutrition for our city’ (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012a), highlighting its contributions especially to the diet of the poorest citizens.

In this context, and with a broad strategic vision, in September 2012 the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima approved Municipal Ordinance No. 1629, which defines urban agriculture and agricultural practice for the production of food and non-food plants and the raising of small livestock (in areas where this activity is permitted by zoning regulations and in compliance with animal health laws) with the intention of providing food products, animal feed and primary processing that are safe for the population of Lima. This concept includes the production of inputs (such as soil enhancers and bio-fertilisers to fertilise crops and control pests), the creation of local seed banks featuring the seeds of traditional plants, and germplasm banks operated in accordance with relevant regulations and the guidelines and standards issued by national authorities, and activities that add value to said products, including processing and commercialisation (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012c).

According to the ordinance, urban farming can be carried out in a variety of intra-urban areas, including rooftops, terraces and backyards, home gardens, community and school farms, plots sponsored by public and private institutions, urban community gardens, agro-parks or farm parks and other vacant suburban areas that are ceded for use
through formal agreements with property owners to be used for urban agriculture activities, as well as non-buildable areas that need to be preserved. Also included are the traditionally agricultural peri-urban areas of the Chillon, Rimac and Lurin Valleys (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012c).

Another important aspect is the recognition given to urban farmers, who are considered to be people engaged in urban agriculture, in order to improve their food security, generate personal, household or community incomes, improve their local environment and/or use their time in a creative and productive way (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012c).

In order to make the policy operational, the Metropolitan Urban Agriculture Program was created, as a set of activities carried out by the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima within its territorial jurisdiction, in accordance with related national policies, to promote urban agriculture in the province of Lima. The programme included implementing and supporting productive areas (in school grounds, on communal property, in urban gardens, plots and private family gardens) using sustainable technologies; providing training and technical assistance for the urban farmers; connecting farmers to each other; direct marketing to consumers; formulating or supporting the formulation of planning and management tools for urban agriculture and district legal frameworks (ordinances and council resolutions, among others); raising awareness about and publicising the benefits of urban agriculture and the importance of local food production and consumption; and research and knowledge management. Especially excluded were activities relating to the use, handling, transportation or storage of pesticides or any chemical substance that could be toxic or hazardous to human health, animal health or the environment, in order to reduce public health risks and pesticide pollution.

Named ‘Mi Huerta’ (My Garden), from 2012 to 2014 the Urban Agriculture Program of the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima implemented two projects using resources from socioproductive public investment programmes, in the districts of Ate Vitarte, Comas, Cercado de Lima, Independencia, Santa Anita and San Martin de Porres, which created 77 000 m² of community, school and family plots, directly and indirectly benefiting more than 20 000 urban farmers and their families. In less than three years, the programme built the capacities of 5000 urban farmers, while forming six district networks and one metropolitan network as spaces where these farmers could associate and collaborate with each other. The participating families, community organisations
and schools received inputs, tools, training and technical assistance in growing their crops. Mi Huerta strengthened the capacities of the urban farmers through 50 *yachachiqs* (Quechua for ‘trainers’), urban farmers with plots in various districts in Lima who supported the programme’s technical team (see Figure 5.3).

As part of the overall vision that inspired the whole process, the municipality incorporated urban agriculture into three documents approved by the municipal administration of Mayor Susana Villaran which sought to link the activity with new public policies. The Metropolitan Environmental Policy, approved via Municipal Ordinance No. 1629 on 18 September 2012, incorporated urban agriculture into guidelines relating to watersheds, valleys and land use, acknowledging the importance of promoting ecologically friendly urban and peri-urban agriculture as a means of guaranteeing that traditional farming valleys are protected and valued. As part of its policy guidelines for green areas, it established a system of incentives to create green rooftops, walls, schools and homes and to create productive green areas through urban agriculture on available private and municipal property, in addition to other initiatives relating to the treatment and reuse of solid and liquid waste for urban farming.

Figure 5.3 Urban farm promoted by Mi Huerta (My Garden) programme in Lima. *(Source: Cecilia Delgado)*
The Metropolitan Environmental Agenda approved through Municipal Ordinance No. 1640 on 4 December 2012 also included urban agriculture among its specific objectives relating to protecting the urban valleys that provide environmental services to the city, and encouraged the conservation and increase of productive green areas through practising urban farming on sustainable urban plots (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012d).

The Plan for Concerted Development (2012–15) approved on 19 February 2013 also incorporated urban agriculture in urban planning instruments, promoting a polycentric, connected and sustainable city that is redefining the use of its territories in harmony with the surrounding ecosystems and provides adequate services, while setting strategic goals including increasing the amount of green areas per capita, protecting 100 per cent of productive green areas and protecting and maintaining the agricultural valleys of the south. The Plan also promoted the incorporation of urban agriculture into green areas and urban public spaces as a strategy to improve the quality of life of the population of Lima province (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2012e).

Finally, the vision of sustainable urban development promoted by the municipality incorporated urban agriculture into the Metropolitan Urban Development Plan for Lima and Callao 2035 (PLAM), which was submitted for public comment in a process that was cut short by the current municipal administration, whose leaders appear to have another vision and other priorities for the city.

Although it is true that the vision of city and environmental and urban plans did incorporate urban agriculture into municipal policies, its place in the municipal organisational chart was never clear. In the new municipal organisational and functional regulations approved in 2013, urban agriculture falls under the Office for Natural Resources and Climate Change, which places it far from the objectives of food security, assigned to the Social Development Department, or from promoting value chains, which is the responsibility of the Business Development Department and its Office for Productive Development (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2013). In practice, the Mi Huerta programme was run by the Regional Government Program of Metropolitan Lima (created as an autonomous entity in 2003 to facilitate the process of decentralisation led by the national government), which did not facilitate its visibility and its connection with other municipal departments and policies (Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima 2016).

Neither was there a clear linkage between urban agriculture and the food security and supply work being carried out by the municipal
government, despite the fact that Ordinance No. 1629 established, as part of its urban agriculture promotion mechanisms (Article 5), the need to coordinate efforts relating to commercialising products from urban agriculture with the Business Development Department, the Productive Development Office and the Regional Agrarian Office – ‘promoting the competitive development of sustainable economic activities through production and commercial chains, organizing fairs’ – and to coordinate with the Social Development Department in the areas of food and nutritional education aimed at urban farmers as well as promoting urban agriculture among the beneficiaries of municipal food and nutrition programmes. Only in 2014, when the Villaran administration was coming to an end, was an Organic Open market (Ecoferia) organised which allowed the Mi Huerta programme to sell its products; one example of the difficulties that intra-urban farmers must overcome in order to produce food on an ongoing basis.

In addition, the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima had to negotiate the implementation of Mi Huerta with 42 district mayors, since land use is a district responsibility. The administrative and political complexity of this challenge (most of the district mayors were not from the same political party as the Metropolitan Mayor) showed how difficult it is to construct urban governance in a city like Lima.

As a result, urban agriculture managed to get positioned on urban plans as a permanent activity and a novel land use, but was not able to move forward in coordination with other areas of municipal administration, despite the constant efforts of members of the Mi Huerta programme and the support provided by some deputy managers. This limited its impact as an innovative strategy for the production, sale and consumption of agricultural products linked to other strategies such as food security or urban food distribution.

5.5. The current situation of urban agriculture in the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima: two steps back ...

The new municipal administration that took office on 1 January of 2015 radically changed the city’s policy priorities. At the start of the second year of its term, there were no indications of any municipal interest in implementing urban agriculture as provided for in the Participatory Development Plan and the Municipal Environmental Plan. The removal from the municipal website of the link to the documentation on PLAM, which is in the process of public consultation, confirms
a new vision of development in which there appears to be no room for urban agriculture.

At the operational level, although the new budget maintained a budget line for urban agriculture activities during the first year of the administration, priorities then changed and the resources were shifted to finance irrigation activities in peri-urban areas, thus returning to the normal practice of supporting traditional crop production in peri-urban areas of the city. It is not possible to consult online or to receive any clear answers regarding the activities of the Mi Huerta programme. There appears to be no institutional memory from the previous administration. Neither is there evidence of complaints or public demonstrations on the part of urban farmers or the civil society organisations that were part of the urban agriculture networks created under the previous mayor.

This situation has led me to reflect on some of the lessons learned both from the process of implementing the urban agriculture policy and actions and from the impact of the change in administration on the continuity of municipal public policies.

5.5.1. The political recognition of urban agriculture as a social and economic activity and a permanent use of urban land: an advance in the strategic vision of the city

Without a doubt, for urban agriculture one of the main advances during the administration of Mayor Susana Villaran was the institutional recognition of the activity as a practice rooted in the history of the city and its incorporation into public discourse and municipal planning. The public support from municipal authorities and the new legal-regulatory frameworks approved during her term showed a clear political will to include urban agriculture as one important way to contribute to the city’s sustainable development. For that administration, the Lima of the future included urban agriculture as an activity to be promoted and as a permanent use of urban land.

5.5.2. The incorporation of urban agriculture into the programmes, plans and policies of the city: a necessary but not sufficient step

Framework Ordinance No. 1629 recognised, for the first time in the history of the city, urban agriculture as a living activity. Its integration into the Metropolitan Environmental Policy, the Metropolitan Environmental Agenda and the Regional Participatory Development Plan (2012–15), which were approved between 2011 and 2014, and its later inclusion in
PLAM are evidence of significant progress in the understanding of the public managers, municipal technicians and urban planners who incorporated urban agriculture into their vision for the city’s development. The implementation of Mi Huerta and the allocation of a budget line demonstrate the political and institutional interest that the municipality had in the activity. Nevertheless, the change of administration showed that advances in legal frameworks (and even a dedicated budget) do not guarantee the continuity of public policies. In a context of weak institutions and structures, the progress made does not appear to have been sufficient to motivate the new administration to continue with the activity.

5.5.3. The emphasis on intra-urban agriculture: farming in small spaces for many people

Despite the fact that the new legal framework and the planning instruments approved during the administration of Mayor Susana Villaran included intra-urban and peri-urban farming, in practice efforts were focused only on intra-urban production, involving a large number of people but occupying little space. As a result, production was geared more towards self-consumption rather than for sale, and the scale of production became a limitation in terms of supplying urban markets, including the Organic Open market.

5.5.4. The need to expand the vision of urban agriculture: towards a trans-sectoral vision of public policies

The advances made in mainstreaming urban agriculture within metropolitan environmental policies and into the city’s vision for sustainable development were not reflected in the activity’s positioning in the municipal organisational chart, or its coordination with other municipal departments. The strategic vision of those who championed the activity was not shared by all. As a result, the multiple contributions of urban agriculture were not made visible in a comprehensive manner; nor was sufficient progress made in creating new evidence that demonstrated its multiple contributions to the environment, health, food security, participation and social empowerment, among other areas. In practice, a sector-specific viewpoint dominated which did not help to broaden the urban agriculture political base among the middle managers and technical staff of the municipal government. The political conviction among the authorities did not necessarily translate into a technical-level conviction that would drive more integrated efforts among the various departments.
5.5.5. The challenge of connecting institutional advances with the expectations of urban farmers: planting gardens is not the same as promoting urban agriculture

The institutional recognition of the rich history of urban agriculture in Lima does not appear to have inspired an institutional and social process sufficiently powerful to guarantee its continuity under the new municipal administration. The push given by Mayor Susana Villaran to restoring the activity and to highlighting the role of farmers in Lima’s agricultural valleys does not appear to have been sufficient to jump-start a process of organisation among intra-urban farmers. The promotion of organisational processes by institutions (whether municipalities, universities, NGOs or cooperation agencies) has some drawbacks when it comes to sustaining activities once the institutional energy dissipates. Although it is true that a lot of progress was made in a very short time (the entire process took place between 2012 and 2014), the networking model promoted by the municipality failed to energise a grassroots and political movement in which to anchor the urban agriculture efforts implemented by the municipality over those three years. As a result, the urban farmers of Lima, though more connected than before and with an enhanced sense of identity, did not manage to form themselves into a social movement that would express the transformational potential that urban agriculture had for their lives, the lives of their communities and the city as a whole.

5.5.6. The urgency of improving institutional governance in Metropolitan Lima: not everything that was done before is bad

The Metropolitan Municipality of Lima does not have a culture of governance that guarantees institutional continuity. Although some deeply rooted practices in Peruvian public administration have been overcome (for example, 10 or 15 years ago it was common to leave the new administration with zero institutional memory of the prior administration), the city remains far from attaining governance that guarantees the continuity of municipal policies. Other cities in Latin America, such as Quito and Rosario, show that it is possible to sustain policies and continue urban agriculture programmes despite political changes among municipal government leadership. But in Lima the change of mayor meant a wholesale abandonment of nearly all the most emblematic achievements of the previous administration (including urban agriculture). From any perspective, it seems necessary to construct a new form of understanding (and practising) municipal institutional governance in Lima.
5.5.7. The importance of seeing the city with ‘urban agriculture lenses’: the inclusion of multiple viewpoints in municipal planning processes

The experience from 2012 to 2014 teaches us that it is possible to see the city through the eyes of urban agriculture. Despite the uncertainty in the institutional future of urban agriculture, the urban farmers organised around their farms will continue to grow crops, motivated by the same desires as always: to improve their diet, income and the urban socio-environmental surroundings in which they live. Their daily labours, nearly invisible to the eyes of the current authorities, continue there, where they have always been, anchored in history and in a dispersed social web throughout the city. Empowering the social interactions of urban farmers, encouraging their social organisation around communities of practice united by common interest, is a task to be carried on by those of us who believe that Lima can be a more just, caring and sustainable city. Urban agriculture has much to contribute, both to people and to the social and environmental systems of the city. The advances (and even the setbacks) identified during these years show us that another city is possible. A new social movement, which sees the city with eyes of solidarity and sustainability, is lying dormant just under the surface, and it is our job to awaken it.

Note

1. Developing Sustainable Food Systems for Urban Areas: Piloting a Holistic Approach in Nairobi (Kenya), Dhaka (Bangladesh) and Lima (Peru).

References
