SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY GARDENING IN CITES

HORTIS

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Lifelong
Learning
Programme

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Urban gardening activities can encourage lifelong learning among adults by fostering the acquisition of key competences that are fundamental for each individual in a knowledge-based society.

The following educational materials were designed within the context of the European project Hortis – Horticulture in towns for inclusion and socialization (526476-LLP-1-2012-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP), bringing together the urban gardening experiences from the partner cities, namely Bologna (Italy), Berlin (Germany), Budapest (Hungary) and Cartagena (Spain).

Each partner contributed with its own knowledge on a specific topic in form of an e-book, which successively evolved through an empirical approach of knowledge transfer and participatory review, toward a common and transversal vision of urban agriculture.

The outcome of this participatory process are five knowledgeable e-books covering different topics such as Sustainable Community Gardening in Cities (e-book 1), Sustainable Urban Garden Management (e-book 2), Urban Garden Cultivation Systems (e-book 3), Simplified Soilless Systems for Urban Vegetable Production (e-book 4) and Zero km Agriculture: An urban consumer's manual (e-book 5).

We hope these material will bring a new dimension to your work and inspire you in turning your life and city greener.

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1. FOREWORDS

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/ Urban gardening is a multifunctional phenomenon with positive social, economic and ecological effects (Müller, 2011). Historically, urban gardening and agriculture has always been connected to actual problems, especially in times of crisis. European allotment gardens in England and Germany served as essential subsistence supply for citizens during and after World War I & II, (e.g. Crouch & Ward 1988). To understand the phenomenon "community gardening" and the increased attention in these days, it will be useful to look at it from a practical perspective. Inner city green spaces can be looked at as an innovative socio-ecological response on diverse urban problems like poverty, pollution or climate change.

In this book we focus on community gardens from a social point of view, addressing manifold benefits. Potential benefits of urban community gardening are:

• creating social cohesion and engagement within the community and beyond (Rosol, 2006);

• raising consciousness for social problems in multi-ethnical societies and creating the opportunity for intercultural dialogues (Müller, 2002);

• providing space for practical socio-ecological education processes (Bendt et al., 2012; Madlener, 2009);

• forming a platform for ecological engagement and eco-activism (Halder et al., 2011);

• providing attention restoration and health promotion (Martens, 2012).

However, focusing on positive effects of urban community gardens, we need to critically consider potential risks as well, which might arouse with gardening projects. These get visible in urban develop-

ment strategies. Community gardens, especially when designed in a mobile and temporary character, can provide a strong driver of gentrification processes of a city neighbourhood. This is due to the implicit revaluation of the area by an urban community garden. While this is not a risk itself, the revaluation attracts investors, interested in building new profitable property and increasing rents in the area, threatening old habitants to be replaced by financially stronger new habitants, a process being rather common in Berlin since the 1990s (Holm et al., 2011).

In the following pages we will try to pass our experiences related to initiating and following community gardens over the last decade. We are aware of the fact that it is almost impossible to pass experiences by text. However, by combining reading with acting it might give some ideas. In the following chapters, we will explain the different components, which are necessary to initiate a community garden.

2. DIVERSITY OF URBAN COMMUNITY GARDENING

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2.1 / OVERVIEW OF DIFFERENT PROJECTS

In Berlin, there is a large variety of different community gardening projects. A collection of data carried out in 2011/2012 lead to a number of 99 community gardens (see www.stadtacker.net), excluding the additional presence of allotment gardens, which often are organized rather individually. The number increases every year, showing the large interest in activate new community gardens in the urban area. According to Rosol, community gardens can be put in a taxonomy representing thematic gardens, neighbourhood gardens and thematic neighbourhood gardens (Rosol, 2006).

a) **_Thematic gardens_** deal with a very specific topic. The most popular example represent intercultural gardens, serving the aim to enable intercultural contact and exchange at a very low threshold.

b) **_Neighbourhood gardens_** address the activation of the neighbour-hood in a walkable distance of the garden, aiming to activate different people and involve them into political, social and economical processes through gardening activities.

c) **_Thematic neighbourhood_** gardens integrate both aspects as listed above, thus providing a specific thematic aspect addressing the nearby neighbourhood.

2.2 / DIVERSIFICATION OF GARDENS

However, some years later, the community gardening scene has grown a lot, and an extended taxonomy could be useful and applicable for the diversified field. Thematic gardens could address different target audience such as women, comprehensive for all generations,

elderly, children, handicapped people, school children, tenants or even employees. Thematic gardens (Fig. 1) address different aims, such as therapy, education, sensation, religious debates, health and alimentation.

Another differentiation needed is an understanding of profit or non-profit concepts of urban community gardens. While there were non-profit gardens only in 2003 (Rosol, 2006; Madlener, 2009), nowadays there are various gardens aiming at profitable systems (Bendt et al., 2012). This aim is present e.g. in self-harvest gardens and city farms: the crop is an individualized profitable good, used

Figure 1. Building up high beds at Allmende-Kontor garden in Berlin, spring 2011.

either to feed the individuals or to support the project and pay its employees.

In the next section we will explain some basic strategies used in different gardening projects in Berlin, which serve the reader to get an overview and ideas about different concepts and strategies. There is a big variety of different garden projects concerning organization, structure, background of the gardeners and aims. To give an overview, we cite some community gardening projects as "good practice examples", closely adapted to the self-descriptions of

the gardens. International examples from Budapest, Hungary, Murcia and Cartagena, Spain and Bologna, Italy, will be represented in some informative boxes.

3. ACCESS TO SPACE

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3.1 / OWNERSHIP

Unfortunately there is no golden rule about the accessibility to claim grounds for gardens in the city, but there is a lot of helpful information and experiences, which can help finding the right partners. In general, spaces are held by e.g.:
- municipalities,
- church communities,
- private owners,
- property companies,
- train companies,
- public companies.

According to the ownership, different strategies should be considered when initiating a community garden. A useful way to find spaces and their legal characteristics is to talk to people in the neighbourhood, find out what they know about. A list of known spaces and visiting tours to all of them to get an idea of potential spaces, structures the search. Once visited and being deemed it a useful space to the needs of the garden group and garden ground, you should try to get in contact with the space owners themselves. Inform yourself as much as possible about the area before contacting the owners. Collect ideas about different interests by different groups around who possibly keen to get the space as well. Sometimes it is possible to cooperate and find a common concept, sometimes you are in competition with economically oriented stronger companies.

It can be helpful to already be able to offer a legal association immediately as contract partner to the owners. Examples of possible contracts are very helpful. A wide network to existing gardens is a

possibility to get examples. In Berlin, with more than 100 community gardens, there is a large variety of contracts and agreements which help for further projects. If you are well-prepared, organized and informed about different possibilities, the owners are more likely to agree to a negotiation phase. This is due to their own situation, being unsecure about providing the space to some initiatives, possibly unreliable and difficult to communicate (and probably get rid of in the last instance). Thus, confidence and information are important key factors to successfully talk to the owners and calm down their reservations. Be aware that temporary gardening projects are a risk for them as well, they are looking for a partner being able to deal with possible problems.

3.2 / CONTRACTING AND ACCESSIBILITY

There are various possibilities of creating an urban community garden, and according to the people, the neighbourhood, the surrounding conditions and resources, different possibilities should be addressed. First of all, the feasibility of space is various. Practically, you can, just to name some of the various possibilities,
• squat a space for gardening,
• set up a temporary contract,
• find some sponsor or initiative to purchase space,
• include your garden in a public park concept,
• lease or rent space in cooperation with the owner, e.g. a church.
Due to this decision, the garden will implicitly have a different character, influencing the accessibility of the garden. For instance, the opening hours relate to this basic contracts: there are gardens on public land, which are accessible 24 hours a day. Gardens in semi-public areas are accessible for some defined hours, and sometimes limited to specific people such as the gardeners and guests. A third category is private space, which again can range between limited or 24 hours a day accessibility.

Safety issues are an important topic to think about in this reason:

depending on this legal structure, insurance issues and responsibilities vary widely. Again, it will be helpful to share experiences and talk about advantages and disadvantages of already given contracts and models of existing gardening projects. Depending on your gardening aims, you need to be aware of providing safe space for children, protected areas for therapy scopes or visible space for guests.

3.3 / VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES AND CHANCES FOR SUSTAINABLE MULTIFUNCTIONAL CITY DEVELOPMENT

There are various combinations of possibilities, differing in details and according to the given conditions in the specific area the garden is located. There are e.g. intercultural gardens situated on semi-public ground of a school ground, thus interactions with scholars and gardeners are possible (e.g. Bunte Beete e.V.), inventing new forms of interactions between people with migration background or not, and young and older people. Another example is the Bürgergarten Laskerwiese e.V., again focussing on intercultural items. However, it is situated in a neighbourhood, addressing neighbours, thus providing an intercultural neighbourhood-garden, situated on public green space owned by the local municipality. Or the Wriezener Freiraumlabor, situated in a neighbourhood as a typical neighbourhood-garden is based on public green space owned by the local municipality. Activities range much further than just gardening, it was set up within a model-process of the federal constructing ministry. The ministry offered some money to active citizens being involved in this process. Thus, at this public space, there is a school garden, different community gardens, an outdoor school-room and the running-line for the sport-lessons and a BMX-line, a very good example for multi-functional cooperation between different projects, which can serve as a base for sustainable city development.As an overview about different conditions concerning feasibility, legal features and safety issues, you find some aspects of different garden projects (Table 1). Please note that although we consider it exhausting, it should serve as examples only.

/ Table 1. EXAMPLE GARDENS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS IN BERLIN (all numbers are approximations).

GARDEN	Size of land (m^2)	Number of garden units	Number of people involved	Agreement / conditions
TON STEINE GÄRTEN	1500	60	200	5-year temporary contract with option for renewal with City of Berlin-Kreuzberg Public park No fee for use of land
SPREEGARTEN	500	12	20	Unlimited contract with private owner (based on good-will) Private property No fee for use of land
GLOGAUER G13	1500	20	30	Temporary contract with City of Berlin-Kreuzberg No fee for use of land
ALLMENDE-KONTOR	5000	285	800	1-year temporary contract with option for renewal with Senate of Berlin Public park Fee for use 1 euro per m^2 per year
PRINZESSINNENGARTEN	6000	1500	37 (5 paid)	Temporary contract with City of Berlin, long-term contract aimed Fee for use monthly
BAUERNGARTEN	6240	240	700	Contract for commercial agricultural lease

4. LEARNING FROM PRESENT COMMUNITY GARDENS

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4.1 / EXPERIENCES IN BERLIN

4.1.1 / COMMUNITY GARDEN WITH INTERCULTURAL FOCUS: WUHLEGARTEN

The first intercultural garden in Berlin is located in the district Trep-tow-Köpenick, outside the city centre. Within a year this area of 4000 square meters turned into a site in which people from Kazakhstan and Vietnam, from Russia, Egypt and Hungary, from India and Af-ghanistan, the Ukraine, Bosnia and Germany are jointly active and engaged. On the 21st of June, 2003, in presence of a large platform of international guests and participants, the garden opened officially. A children's section provides gardening plots for young gardeners in order to give them autonomy and empower them to create own ideas (Fig. 2). The "public" showed a lot of interest and awareness.
Approval by the administration and policy lead to the impulse for

Figure 2. Childrens' garden plots at Wuhlegarten, Berlin, summer 2013.

more gardens, which have been arising in the district and beyond as intercultural gardens since then.

4.1.2 / COMMUNITY GARDEN WITH SQUATTING HISTORY: ROSA ROSE

Rosa Rose is a community garden for everyone (Fig. 3), located in Berlin-Friedrichshain. On a public green area at Jessnerstraße the gardeners grow vegetables, fruits and ornamental plants; yet there is enough space to hang around on the meadow or to have a barbecue. The free use of the garden is assured by a contract with the borough office. The history of the garden is manifold, because it had to move from different areas. The garden tries to facilitate urban gardening

Figure 3. Rosa Rose Garden, Berlin in between old residential buildings, summer 2013.

independently from financial background or ownership structures. Everyone who wants to take part is warmly invited. During the gardening season gardeners often meet in the evenings for common gardening.

After the foundation on a private derelict area on Kinzigstraße in 2004, the expulsion by investors in 2008/ 2009, and a wintry intermezzo on a public space in 2009/ 2010, a new chapter of Rosa Rose began on the

green space on Jessnerstraße in April 2010. Through these places, parts of the group and the plants have also been renewed. What remains is the idea of a communal garden, a garden for everybody. The goals had then to be clarified with private investors, with the public owner of Berlin, and with the local government, although there was a different degree of success in these negotiations.

Through these stages, Rosa Rose's own history has repeated a trend, which is entirely typical for the international town garden movement. Many gardens begin as guerrilla gardens in local neighbourhoods, and many of them are destroyed sooner or later by force. In spite of this unfortunate history, a strong neighbourhood cohesion has built up over time for Rosa Rose. It became a frequent object of academic studies, as well as the subject of press reporting. This has paved the way for the recognition of civic engagement, and it is now partly responsible for the negotiation of a institutionalized solution, even though with the borough administration only.

4.1.3 / COMMUNITY GARDEN ENROOTED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD: TONSTEINEGÄRTEN

TonSteineGärten is a Neighbourhood Garden in Berlin-Kreuzberg that started its first season in summer 2009. The plot´s size is approximately 1500 square meters, and it is part of the public park "Bethanien" (Fig. 4).

Historically, a group of people came together regularly in the cultural community centre named "Bethanien" in Kreuzberg for more than one year to plan a Community Garden. They wanted it to be part of the public park. The building behind the park is a former hospital, nowadays hosting a communal contemporary Art Museum, space for workshops and a café. The south wing used to be squatted and is home for the legalized squat NewYork, a refuge for the oldest Berlin squat that had been erupted by police forces one year beforehand. This hosts initiatives such as a famous street art festival and space for dance and theatre.

The initial garden group, later to become TonSteineGärten, was a

bunch of people living around the Bethanien and the neighbourhood. They had heard that public work was planned for the park, and some of the group were convicted that they should be claiming a piece of the public ground for the people! Later, an official participative program was initiated: landscape architects had to hold some public events to discuss about the plans. The initiative group of neighbours used this possibility to be heard.

Figure 4. Ton Steine Gärten in Berlin-Kreuzberg in front of the former hospital "Bethanien", summer 2013.

At first, a woman of the regional public administration claimed that there would not be such a thing like a kitchen garden. It needed courageous people who squatted the piece of land for a couple of days, illegally and menaced by police forces. Then, the mayor of Berlin-Kreuzberg came to a public hearing, and after some discussion, a piece of land of 2000 square meters were promised for a neighbourhood garden.

A plenum once a week serves as a basic organisational structure of the garden. Additionally, meetings once a month and during the season more frequently, are being organised. There are approximately 60 plots, each plot involves a different micro-community or single persons. TonSteineGärten does not have a legal structure or organisational

form, it is rather an initiative. This signifies some cooperation with NGOs or charities once it comes to funding purposes.

4.1.4 / COMMUNITY GARDEN AS PART OF A COOPERATIVE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS: SPREEGARTEN

Spreegarten is a small community garden right next to the Spree-riverside in Berlin-Mitte at the border to Kreuzberg, created in 2012 (Fig. 5). For many years used by a beach-bar, this building-site is now owned by a housing-cooperative, who wishes to leave the beach and some other areas for public use after building an apartment house. The cooperative made a call for proposals for a temporary use of the common areas with an outlook into a sustainable use after the apartments have been built. One proposal was Spreegarten, initiated by Gartenstudio. The follow-up-initiative of this, called Spreacker, is now trying to convert all the green spaces of the project into a permaculture garden. Garden meetings are held every month, and more frequently during the gardening season. The creation of an own legal structure is planned for the near future, and the construction process and the dwellers of the houses being built are addressed to participate in the project.

Figure 5. Starting a garden near the river: Spreegarten, Berlin.

4.1.5 / JUST STARTED: COMMUNITY GARDEN GLOGAUER G13

G13 is an Intercultural Community Garden in Berlin-Kreuzberg (Fig. 6), on the site of a former soccer field that had been closed down for noise reasons. This garden just started in 2013. Thanks to a garden-activist living in the area, the site has been spotted as a potential intercultural neighbourhood garden. In the beginning, the owner, the City of Kreuzberg, did not want to leave the ground to the initiative for gardening purposes. Thanks to a price awarded by Deutsche Umwelthilfe for the concept of the G13-initiative, the situation changed, the City was more positive towards the externally rewarded concept, an eventual break-through with the officials for the garden project. A temporary contract has been set up since some

Figure 6. Just started gardening project on a former soccer field in Berlin: the G13 project, summer 2013.

city department would like to build a Kindergarten on the site.
A kickoff-event has been inviting the whole neighbourhood in different languages, such as Arabic, Turkish, English and German. The very recently created association Common Grounds serves as a legal structure for the initiative. Weekly meetings during the gardening season serve for organization purposes of the group and

opportunities for new people to join the project.

4.1.6 / COMMUNITY GARDEN WITH COMMUNITY HARVEST: STADTGARTEN (WWW.STADTGARTEN.ORG)

Stadtgarten.org is an internet-based platform helping groups of people to grow their own fruit and vegetables. They cultivate a whole garden together without separating it into individual beds or allotments for people. All gardeners look after the entire garden, taking care of the product as well as of the place, creating a nice place to be.

From the needed tasks, every gardener chooses those that correspond best to his or her interests, skills and knowledge. Another possibility to get involved is to search and find something in his or her own initiative, e.g. things urgently need to be done. In return, every gardener can harvest a fair share of fruit and vegetables.

The shared running of a productive fruit and vegetable garden accords to "crowd sourcing" principles, based on self-organization, voluntary contributions and cooperation. In order to prevent the group from ending up in complete chaos, a mobile version of stadtgarten.org will be launched. Thus, all tasks, people, knowledge, resources needed and harvest of fruit and vegetables will eventually get 'self-organized'. An online garden terminal is created to be used in the garden. With this instrument gardeners get an overview about needed resources and contributions to run the garden. Garden work and harvest are proportionate in exchange. To explore how (and if) this model of web-supported, joint gardening works out, the group and an additional 30 co-gardeners run a pilot garden in Berlin-Lichtenberg.

4.1.7 / EXPERIENCING THE COMMONS: ALLMENDE-KONTOR (WWW.ALLMENDE-KONTOR.DE)

The Allmende-Kontor (Fig. 7) is a networking initiative for urban gardening projects in Berlin. Instead of creating an office, Allmende-Kontor initiated a community garden 2011 as a pioneer use on Tempelhofer Feld. "Allmende", the German expression for

commons used to be the meadows and fields, which were used and maintained commonly by all farmers in a village. These commons are referred to as "specific forms of social agreements to collectively, sustainably and equitably use of common resources", such as land, air, water or internet (Helfrich & Böll-Stiftung, 2012). Commons are successfully managed by elaborating common rules. Thus, the community gardeners and all participants of the project of Allmende-Kontor developed and share the following ideas, values and guidelines for a social and ecological cooperation:

• Allmende-Kontor offers opportunities to participate in a social, intercultural and ecological responsible city development;

• by re-introducing the concept of the commons, Allmende- Kontor initiated an active debate on ownership structures and a re-invention of the commons;

• Allmende-Kontor creates and claims room for alternatives to consumption, growth and throwaway society;

• Allmende-Kontor experiences alternatives towards conventional agricultural policies;

• participants do not tolerate discrimination due to national or social background, gender, skin colour, language, religion, conviction, sexual orientation, age, physical constitution or education;

• preservation and support of biological and social diversity;

• awareness for agriculture and food sovereignty by practically applying self-supply.

These aims are addressed by different actions. In the second garden season, the gardeners were asked to form plot communities. These plot communities served the aim to build, plant and water commonly and take over responsibility in a small and committed group of people. The gardeners were warmly invited to organize and inform all gardeners about their self-organized activities and contacts, about derelict plots and the distribution to new gardeners.

Some very basic and easy to follow rules were developed with the gardeners and were communicated in a easy format, illustrated with pictures to be readable for everybody independent from language or

reading skills:

• be aware of density and height when building raised beds;

• do not limit others, or their view;

• concerning donations: consider your resource consumption and your financial situation;

• try to garden as ecological as possible. Please do not use agro-chemicals such as fertilizer or pesticides. Please be aware to use as few hybrid species as possible;

• all participants of Allmende-Kontor aim at a respectful and intercultural cooperation;

• be aware of saving resources (such as water, soil and wood);

• raised beds can be built by recycled material, but please use "natural" material whenever possible (no styro-foam, avoid plastic).

Figure 7. Public event at Allmende-Kontor garden in 2011.

4.1.8 / COMMUNITY GARDEN WITH COMMERCIAL ORIENTATION: PRINZESSINNENGARTEN (WWW.PRINZESSINNENGARTEN.NET)

Starting in summer of 2009, the non-profit company ‚Nomadisch Grün" has been renting a site in Berlin-Kreuzberg in order to create a mobile urban farm: Prinzessinnengarten. Fresh, organic, locally produced herbs and vegetables are grown in raised compost beds

without using any pesticides or artificial fertilisers. The company stands for mobile gardening, they temporarily transform unused spaces such as building sites, car parks and roofs into urban farmland and green meeting places. Prinzessinnengarten is a place of discovery for children, neighbours, experts and those curious about sustainable living. The people come together to explore alternative visions for the city of Berlin. The garden is a place of pleasure and rejuvenation. People are invited to relax and enjoy watching the vegetables being harvested and freshly prepared in the small garden restaurant (Fig. 8). An aim is to actively create available space in big cities with greenery, a green space that local residents create themselves and use to produce fresh and healthy food. The result would be an increased biological diversity, less CO_2 and a better microclimate. The spaces would promote a sense of community and the exchange of a wide variety of competencies and forms of knowledge, and would help people lead more sustainable lives. They would be a kind of miniature utopia, a

Figure 8. Prinzessinengarten including area to consume food and drinks from the restaurant.

place where a new style of urban living can emerge, where people can work together, relax, communicate and enjoy locally produced vegetables.

Prinzessinnengarten is a new urban place of learning about organic food production, biodiversity and climate protection. The space will help people adapting to climate change and learn about healthy eating, sustainable living and a future-oriented urban lifestyle. With this project Nomadisch Grün intends to increase biological, social and cultural diversity in the neighbourhood and pioneer a new way of living together in the city. (text by NomadicGreen).

4.1.9 / SELF-HARVESTING GARDEN: BAUERNGARTEN (HTTP://WWW.BAUERNGARTEN.NET)

Bauerngarten (Fig. 9) is a small company run by the trained farmer Max von Grafenstein in 2010, dedicated to urban farming. It plays an active role in training people for sustainable development. The

Figure 9. Bauerngarten workshop, spring 2012.

company pursues an innovative direct commercialization policy in urban and peri-urban organic farming.

Its main scene, to which the company owes its name, is the farming garden ("Bauerngarten"). This garden is arranged in a large circle divided in individual plots for rent. The tenants can grow their

own vegetables using tillage, seeds, tools, equipment, and irrigation provided by the company, and community workshops are offered by the trained farmer and his team. Over fifty different sorts of vegetables are grown in each of the plots for rent. Thanks to various maintenance services provided such as an optimized irrigation system the tenant only needs to dedicate an estimated weekly amount of time of two hours to their plot. Currently the company operates three sites for growing vegetables located in Berlin and the surrounding area. More than 1000 tenants obtain their daily supply of organic vegetables through the summertime.

4.2 // OTHER COMMUNITY GARDEN EXPERIENCES IN EUROPE

Peri-urban community gardens (Budapest)

Prevalently found in the city periphery, where the unutilized green areas or former parks can be used for community gardening. The plots are owned and lent to the gardeners by the local government. The costs of building the fence, the water supply system and soil change (if necessary) is covered by the local government as well.

Examples: First Community Garden of Kispest (Első Kispesti Közösségi Kert)
Golden Ladybug Garden (Aranykatica Kert), Budapest
Békási Garden (Békási Kert), Budapest

Target audience:	intergenerational, enrooted in the neighborhood
Aims of activity:	(organic) gardening, community building, teaching
Commercial understanding:	voluntary work, 100% non-commercial
Characteristics:	approx. 1000 m² area owned by local government (former unused green areas or parks) not in the city centre,

but still surrounded by big blocks of flats normal + high beds for seniors and disabled

Owner of space:	local government
Duration:	opened in 2012-2013
Legal structure:	association
Accessibility:	24 hours, gardeners (and their guests) executively

Additional information:
• individual beds (used by families, school classes, individuals), shared beds (common cultivation and harvest), shared product (mainly vegetables, strawberry, herbs and spices);
• total number of beds: around 26 (of which many are raised beds);
• size of beds: 4.5-7 m^2
• participation on garden-themed events.

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Urban community gardens (Budapest)
Situated in the middle of the city centre, which is densely populated and there are only a few open plots available for gardening purposes. The area are mostly covered by concrete or construction waste. The plots either belong to the local government or privately owned.

Examples: Leonardo Garden (Leonardo Kert)
          Grund (Grund)

Target audience:	intergenerational, enrooted in the neighborhood

Aims of activity:	(organic) gardening, community building, teaching
Commercial understanding:	voluntary work, 100% non-commercial
Characteristics:	1400 m² area owned by local government (formerly empty plot between houses) in the densely populated heart of the city with limited accessibility to open and / or green land normal beds + isolated cultivation (containers)
Owner of space:	local government
Duration:	opened in 2012
Legal structure:	association (Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre) or private land
Accessibility:	from dusk until dawn, gardeners (and their guests) executively

Additional information:

• individual beds (used by families, individuals), shared beds (common cultivation and harvest), shared product (mainly ornamental plants, herbs and spices);

• total number of beds: 81 (+containers);

• size of beds: 7.3 m².

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Church gardens (Budapest)

The land of the garden belongs to the church and is used by members of the congregation. The garden is situated in a suburban area of the city with mainly family houses around it.

Example: Garden of God (Isten Kertje)

Target audience:	intergenerational, members of the congregation
Aims of activity:	gardening, community building, teaching
Commercial understanding:	voluntary work, 100% non-commercial
Characteristics:	Formerly private, donated to church by a member of the congregation in a suburban district if the city normal beds
Owner of space:	church
Duration:	opened in 2012
Accessibility:	24 hours, gardeners (and their guests) executively

Additional information:

• individual beds (used by families, individuals) + shared beds (common cultivation and harvest – shared product (mainly vegetables);

• total number of beds: approx. 30.

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Rooftop gardens (Via Gandusio, Bologna)

Target audience:	intercultural and intergenerational (inhabitants of house)
Aims of activity:	Community building, recycling, intercultural integration, alternative use of a common space
Commercial understanding:	voluntary work, 100% non-commercial
Characteristics:	Rooftops (each rooftop around 250 m^2); simplified soilless systems (wooden containers, floating system, NFT system)

Owner of space:	Private (public enterprise that manages the public housing buildings)
Duration:	March 2012, permanent use (no contract)
Legal structure of project:	Non-formalized association of inhabitants
Accessibility:	6 am to 1 pm and 4 pm to 10 pm
Number of people involved:	two groups of 5-10

Additional information:

Community garden project started by City Council initiative aiming to encourage alternative use of previously unused common rooftop terrace of two public housing buildings. The garden growth was limited by low initial participation (scarce involvement in decision making of the inhabitants). However, two soilless rooftop gardens were built and are still growing, thanks to the collaboration between BiodiverCity and a group of committed inhabitants. Vegetables grow in wooden boxes made with recycled pallets, in a PVC pipe adapted for growing leafy vegetables and in recycled pots. Every growing unit on the rooftop is managed in a shared and common way by gardeners, and products of the garden are available for all inhabitants, distributed door to door in the building. The City Council support ended after one year. Now gardeners are self-organized, trying to continue the garden project with their own resources. The results are interesting and challenging. Obviously it is a slow process, but despite of some initial problems it is turning out to be a real good opportunity for the people living there having an occasion to meet and work jointly for a common project and purpose. In the summer season in the evening the rooftop is really enjoyable, small parties to involve the neighborhood and the city were organized and the participation was always high and active. In these occasions, all inhabitants were participating with some food – when possible

cooked with the garden products – and the common initiative was always strong and promising.

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Schoolgardens (Bologna)
Example: Giardini in Rete

Target audience:	Didactics and recreational
Aims of activity:	Recycling of materials, water cycle, plants, soilless systems
Commercial understanding:	voluntary work, 100% non-commercial
Characteristics:	School courtyard (1000 m²; partly designated to activities)
Owner of space:	school
Duration:	start of project 2011/2012 (for 2-3 years)
Accessibility:	during opening hours of school

Additional information:
Gardini in Rete (GiR) is a project based on thematic and didactic gardens realized in the Primary School "Guido Reni" of Bologna (Italy).

Across two years, two classes have realized an hydroponic vertical garden with recycled material (PET bottles) and two greenhouses (obtained from pallets). Furthermore, students followed some lectures concerning Geography, Sciences and Technologies.

A biodiversity and herbs garden was created and soilless wooden boxes and Osmia nests were built. The aim of the activities was to promote the biodiversity, the water cycle, the urban green, the recovery and the reuse of materials. In Spring 2014, some laboratories focusing on the renewable energy theme were

proposed.

Described aims of school garden: 1) part of a cooperative and educational construction process; 2) as place of integration and playground for students; 3) as a place to express creativity; 4) as a tool for lectures.

Further criteria of distinction: 1) Direct interaction; 2) Information blog.

All activities are promoted by no-profit associations (BiodiverCity, Ortalon and Visualmedia) and the primary school (IC16), and funded by Fondazione del Monte.

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Intercultural gardens (Murcia)
Example: Garden of God (Isten Kertje)

Target audience:	intercultural, intergenerational, unemployed people, children
Aims of activity:	Supporting rural culture, organic gardening, educational purposes
Commercial understanding:	voluntary work, coordinator is paid; 100% non-commercial
Characteristics:	Agricultural land in periurban area; agricultural soil
Owner of space:	Private (church)
Duration:	2012, temporary use depending on municipality decisions
Legal structure of project:	Initiative of the municipality and management of the association "La Almajara de Alhama"

Accessibility: 24 hours per day
Number of people involved: two groups of 5-10
Additional information:

Cultivation plots are all together, but they are cultivated individually. The association organizes several workshops related to traditional cooking and manufacture of handicraft products annually. Healthy diet, local trade and 0 Km agriculture are promoted by the association.

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Gardens of the elders (Murcia)
Example: Huertos de ocio

Target audience: Elderly people; in the last years unemployed people and associations are welcome
Aims of activity: Neighbourhood, socialization, organic gardening and "huerta", landscape preservation, local horticultural varieties preservation
Commercial understanding: voluntary work with advise by a paid municipal technician; 100% non-commercial
Characteristics: Urban and periurban parks; soil as traditional agriculture
Owner of space: Municipality
Duration: 2008, permanent use
Legal structure of project: Municipality Environmental Department
Accessibility: 24 hours per day

Number of people involved: two groups of 5-10
Additional information:
Plots are from 40 to 100 m² size. Participation through application in a call. The user receives one individual plot, usually without paying any fee, and holding time ranges from a minimum of two years to a maximum of 4 years.

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Gardens with commercial purposes (Murcia)
Example: Huertoyou, Torre Pacheco village

Target audience:	Any person interested in organic gardening and children (school gardens)
Aims of activity:	Organic gardening, preserving garden culture
Commercial understanding:	paid; 100% non-commercial of products grown in the allotments, but the garden has commercial purposes
Characteristics:	agricultural grounds in outskirts of the village; agricultural soil
Owner of space:	Private (farmers)
Duration:	2012, permanent use
Legal structure of project:	Organic farmers initiative (private initiative)
Accessibility:	24 hours per day
Number of people involved:	two groups of 5-10

Additional information:
They offer a very high diversity of cultural activities. Plots are from 25 to 100 m2. They offer different levels of support. They have an option of "turnkey" garden in which the user only has to go to harvest their vegetables.

5. PARTICIPANTS: NETWORKING AND COOPERATION

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5.1 / VISITING AND SHARING EXPERIENCES

Urban Gardening in Berlin and all-over Germany seems to be a new movement (Müller, 2011), activating different people to participate in urban development. Thus, there is a very close interconnection in the community gardening scene in order to share experiences and support each other. When initiating a community garden, you need to be aware of various forms of exchange. Depending on the communication media, e.g. personal contact, digital information, meetings, guidelines, video tutorials, you will reach different groups. This needs to be carefully considered before starting. We address three forms of interactions, based on different levels with increasing threshold to participate, namely direct interaction, common events and networking structures.

a) ***Direct interaction*** between people seems to be the most important value. Gardeners share experiences and knowledge concerning the initiation process of a community garden.
This contact is always direct, with no indirect medium such as virtual platforms or flyers. In a garden open for all this tool is very basic and important, it cannot be subsidized by virtual platforms. Especially if you want to address a very diverse, intercultural community, this medium is the most important one. It can be complemented by a bill-board for information in the garden. This information should be at least in parts be non-verbal, since some audience might not be able to read the given language fluently. Allmende-Kontor experienced comic-strips and sketches as a non-verbal expression, added by some wording in different languages, to work well for all.

b) **_Common events._** A more abstract level is represented by slightly more formalized interactions. These are represented by various gardening activities such as common workshops, networking meetings and social events. These events ideally should be initiated by different garden projects. A culture of learning how to organize an event should be developed, and gardeners are asked to support and empower each other.

The combination of small garden events with Berlin-wide meetings and national forums creates a base for continuous exchange. Just to give an impression about different possibilities, there is a list of some events organized in the last years in Berlin:

• book Reading, e.g. Christa Müller presented her book "Urban Gardening" in Markthalle IX;

• film presentations, e.g. "Good save the Green" in Prinzessinnengarten or "Strategie der krummen Gurke" in Nachbarschaftsgarten Prachttomate;

• workshops, e.g. ecologic pest control, ecologic plant growing, seed production, all at Allmende-Kontor garden;

• birthdays and anniversaries and summer celebration in gardens, inviting other gardens;

• concerts, such as a Klezmer Band at Allmende-Kontor community space;

• political events such as "Long day of the urban nature", inviting interested people in different gardens;

• seedling-exchange days, e.g. in April at "Ton, Steine, Gärten";

• national urban gardening summer-camp at "Interkultureller Garten Lichtenberg, Berlin.

c) **_Networking structures_** are being developed for the public, accessible for everybody who wants to initiate or participate in an urban community garden or who is just interested. A first valuable tool was urbanacker.net, an internet-platform informing people about current developments and updated events, such as gardening activities or

political events. In autumn 2012 (10.10.12) this page merged into stadtacker.net, a more detailed internet-platform developed in a cooperation with different urban gardening initiatives and research institutes, e.g. workstation Ideenwerkstatt e.V. and Leibniz-Zentrum für Agrarlandschaftsforschung ZALF. This platform is an interactive networking tool to enable gardeners to put their profile into the page and inform people about the size, theme, audience and location of their garden. Additionally, theoretical and historical information is given on that site, just as links to research groups and supporting organizations. For further information: http://stadtacker.net. This platform was used for the development of another networking tool: a garden map ("Gartenkarte"), representing all community gardens in Berlin with names and location. This tool is a nonverbal instrument to inform and connect different gardeners: www.gartenkarte.de.

Allmende-Kontor hosts a couple of mailing lists in order to carry out self-information by the gardeners themselves with no hierarchical structure on top. These lists can have a general character, a local or even a garden-specific character. Organized lists are e.g. list agkleinst-landwirtschaft infos_urbanelandwirtschaft.

Additionally to these networking tools, we consider it very important to establish regular networking meetings within the community as well as with the local authorities. This is important to create awareness for the gardening community and their potential and needs as well as to integrate the concept of urban gardening into political planning processes. These can have a local, regional or even federal or international focus. Some examples represent the workshop-talks with the Berlin Senate and garden-activists, the biennial Berlin-wide garden-activists-meeting and many others.

As follows you find some considerations to be made in advance, which help to develop the social process in and around a community garden.

5.2 / DETECT SPECIFIC NEEDS AND DEMANDS: WHO SHALL BE ADDRESSED?

The target group needs to be specified carefully depending on the aims of the garden (e.g. therapy, education, intercultural exchange). The gardens in Berlin are constituted for very different people, representing different levels of heterogeneity. An intercultural focus can be reached by offering a translation service at gardening meetings, which is the case at Ton Steine Gärten, helping e.g. the Turkish community to communicate their needs and ideas. Another good example to address a multicultural community is the translation of invitations for gardening events as it has been done in Glogauer G13 for the kickoff-event, inviting all neighbours in 6 languages. A facilitator in communication is language. Turkish-speaking initiators such as in Glogauer G13 enable to reach Turkish speaking neighbours at a very low threshold.

Allmende-Kontor and Prinzessinnengarten address people by non-verbal communications such as signs, pictures and illustrations in order to reach people with low German skills or illiterate people.

Often there are micro-communities, e.g. typical for Kreuzberg between the reunification and the gentrification in 2011: native German Berliners, Turkish Berliners and Berliners who moved here. Thus, the Ton Steine Gärten represent a typical mix for Kreuzberg: all generations, from students to young families or single parents with kids, to adults of all kind and cultural background and age. Other gardens address a specific group of people, e.g. Prinzessinnengarten attracts people similar to its founders, young professionals with a certain sense for lifestyle. Partly due to the publicity of Prinzessinnengarten, Urban Farming became a nationwide known phenomenon.

Students, older people and unemployed people often have more time to spend it in the garden and provide important key persons to ensure a continuity and spread information between the gardeners.

5.3 / ACTIVATE COOPERATION POSSIBILITIES INCLUDING GIVEN INFRASTRUCTURES

When initiating an urban community garden given infrastructures such as local initiatives, schools, social centres and neighbourhood networks should be integrated in the development process, because they are experienced to be very supportive in addressing the target audience.

Additionally it helps to create a sustainable structure. It needs time. You need to consider that in order to address a diverse neighbourhood and sustainably activating the garden project, you need time and patience. TonSteineGärten reports that only after four gardening seasons, they can say that they are well established in the neighbourhood.

Use given initiatives. In the area of Glogauer G13, there is a high density of community organisations: a youth club, a church, a migrant´s organisation, a high school, sports clubs, a transition town group and a CSA-group are active structures, which should be addressed to support a community gardening project, use the open space and acquire interested people. Especially if you want to initiate a thematic garden, it helps to check out the infrastructure of this theme in the city and cooperate with associations, initiatives and clubs.

An easy way to get protected in general for community gardens is to develop a stable relationship to the neighbourhood and associations around as well as maintaining cooperation with other gardens in the city and in other cities. Local people are taking care about what is next to them so if there is a space the neighbours like they'll take care about it automatically. This helps to reduce vandalism, since the neighbours look after the space once in a while, they start identifying with the project and through their presence they protect the garden from vandalism. Another important driver in these forms of cooperation is the public acceptance, which protects against being driven away or being evicted. Additionally, it makes daily things much easier to be

connected to local groups, shops or enterprises around the garden: you can get support in transport, for garden festivals and events or needed tools and much more. In return, these cooperation partners could be offered to use the garden for specific events in recompense and could have a grateful remembrance of the garden. Mostly, this support is much appreciated by all actors, it enlivens the whole neighbourhood for good.

Organizing public events is a good opportunity to get involved into local actions. For instance, for the past three years, TonSteineGärten has been organising the local ViaCampesina-Day on April 14th. This event, with a big number of alternative and self-organised initiatives cooperating in it, has turned into an important political get-together for garden-activists, with a berlin-wide glance. Furthermore, TonSteineGärten play an important role as one of the pioneer-projects for civil initiatives using a public ground, thus turning it into a different type of common ground.

6. ANALYZE AND DEVELOP RESOURCES

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One important aim of a community garden is to detect resources in and around the gardeners . This can be done by initiating a self-organization process, analysing, appreciating and using the given resources, e.g. material resources (space, soil, constructing material, plants, tools, transport, seeds), personal resources (languages, creativity, integration, solidarity, informal learning), community resources (community areas, community actions, youth centre, social support).
An example of what a self-organization process can look like is described in an article, cited and translated as follows (Mallien, 2013; see www.oya-online.de).

On the area designated by the City of Berlin to the Allmende-Kontor, 700 gardeners are active in 300 raised bed-boxes. In the beginning, back in 2011, there was just an invitation: "Everyone feel free to design and build 'your own' raised bed on a piece of common land." No entrance fee that kept people from joining the club, not even a form to fill in. Berliners of all age and from every district of the city came running. The invitation was pronounced by a group of people that had initiated the project. This advisory board counted 13 members, all of which are still active in the project and some of them are helping getting this book in its current shape (like Frauke, Gerda, Niels and Severin). For them, the experiment called: How to practice self-organisation with several hundred people?, is at the same level of importance as the gardening experiences. Many of the other gardeners, though, are happy to be in their little green oasis and only partly share this perspective. All of them are equally affected by the legal frame, and that seems to bring on a sudden change. Frauke Hehl

starts the plenary discussion: "I have signed a contract, that runs out by the end of the year…and I did that as a member of the board of the association workstattion ideenwerkstatt". This NGO functions as a legal representative for the Allmende-Kontor and has signed the contracts with the other party, the 'Grün Berlin GmbH'. "Now I am wondering what we should do? Battle, so that the contract will be prolonged? Or should I tell everyone to pack their stuff until the end of the year?" The organisational team has asked the community of the gardeners, and got feedback from approximately 100 boxes (the raised beds, equalling the smallest units in the garden, managed by 3-4 persons). The result is clear: A large majority, 87 per cent, wants to stay as long as possible. The other 13 per cent would not oppose a moving to another area, if it went along with better conditions. "How do we decide now? I have communicated the result of the survey to the Grün Berlin, and am expecting their reaction." "How to go on? That is the most discussed question on our garden-reunions", says Severin. "This question leads us to talk more intensively to each other. For many it is difficult to see that a single representant like Frauke signs a contract for the whole project. A clear collective strategy has not developed yet, but it is what we need now. My question is: How can we approach this big issue with an equal importance and commitment as we care for the water-tanks to be filled up every day? How can we introduce such strategic decision into the gardeners community?"

"For me, the organisational team is the midwife of the Allmende-Kontor", states Dorothee. "I am not part of it, here I am just a simple gardener. But I am aware that the roll of the midwife must end at some point, and that the whole project needs to stand on its own feet. I remember a last important decision that we worked out on one of the garden reunions: to form neighbourhoods. We realised, that in small communities where everyone knows each other communication is better, and it is easier to come to a common decision and eventually do something. This model found a great majority. But when it came to take the decision, there was also a doubt: Can those that happen to be here take the responsibility?" The garden reunions

are held every second week, and decisions are taken by consensus of the people attending. The organisational team is not authorised to take decisions, it sees itself rather as a supporting and executing structure in the background. Those who are tout here in the garden decide about rules and what should happen. The magic of the garden is its accessibility for everyone, that is one point that we all agree on tonight. Anyone could build his box, no one had to promise he would show up every two weeks to the garden reunion. These meetings are establishing more with the time passing, and of the 700 gardeners involved, hardly 50 show up regularly. A notice on the info board of the 'market square' in the garden says when the next reunion is going to be – in addition to an invitation by email.

7. CREATE A SUSTAINABLE STRUCTURE

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7.1 / DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNITY (E.g. multilingual, intergenerational)

There is a wide range of possibilities to develop and maintain a garden community. Before giving some practical advice we want to make sure that you're always aware of the different needs people have. This is a key consideration helping you to create a good cooperation within the group. A community resulting out of a self-organized collective process with everybody equally respected and involved from the first idea to the last decision is the outcome of a high level of participation. If such an outcome is reached, it is very likely to become a sustainable cooperation.

It is good to always try to be non-hierarchical, thus these are the contexts where you can try to reach the highest participation level, self-organization, emancipation and autonomy. Common events such as dinners, picnics, garden festivals, film screenings, seed-ex-change-meetings, sport activities or playing music together in or next to the garden unite a lot side-effect next to having fun together and getting to know each other. Spontaneous meetings in the garden or spontaneously meeting another gardener in the street additionally have a high impact on the community-building effect. These spontaneous activities can be supported by providing areas to meet, to sit, to chat and to eat in and near the garden.

Working together as co-working in different tasks or in working groups is as helpful as having plenary discussions now and then, at least whenever there is a need to decide about something. Regular meetings during the winter-season are important to keep the gardeners

involved during the cold months. These can address garden-related topics as well as environmental education or just fun and gathering together meetings. Again, provide space for the gardeners to organize such meetings independently.

In case you want to start a new project, meetings beforehand are very important tools. You should meet as much as possible before starting directly on the site in order to involve everybody and detect specific demands and resources. Older people are addressed by incidental talks on-site, thus the presence in the garden is an important factor for success. Younger ones are often reached by internet presence, social media are forms to reach some of them. Youngsters can be addressed by organizing soccer games or sports events as well as music. All of them need possibilities to find their own interests in the garden, provide room to explore individual ideas and experiment in a trial-and-error culture.

Communication is a sensitive topic as well. Some people are not reachable via e-mail. Thus, personal communication or written/illustrated information in the garden is an important way to reach some gardeners. However, even for those who do have access to e-mail, the personal communication facilitates the cooperation with each other, even e-mails get more personal, less suspect and give less possibilities for misunderstandings.

In order to give everybody the chance to participate, it is helpful to define meetings, events or actions for the next season early and via different forms of media, such as e-mail, black board, personal and telephone.

7.2 / DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES OVERVIEW OF METHODS AND MODELS

Decision making is a quite complicated and complex process. Thus, you need to be aware that different people at different stages of a

process have various needs concerning participation in a decision making process. The authoritarian way without participation and integration of different needs is much easier than moderating a participation process. However, if you want to enable people in a sustainable way, you should do the effort and include everybody into the decision making process. Thus, you need to find ways to integrate many different options to come to a consensus or consensus-close result. Therefore it is important to respect that:

• bringing together different perspectives is not easy. Calculate plenty of time and energy;

• participation includes the possibility of failing and learning from this.

• do not be pushy, some people do not want to get involved in the decision making process (sometimes for years). Be patient and offer them participation opportunities according to their personal needs;

• try to include everybody. Some people need information only, some people need strong discussions. Offer different degrees of participation;

• be honest! Do not do anything that seems participatory and in the end it is your personal decision, because people will get angry and distrust you. It would be better to ask everybody's opinion and find a solution in that direction afterwards. Be aware that participation is always open-ended in results;

• working creatively with dissent is a powerful tool;

• having fun and being patient unites the group. At least helps a lot to establish needed confidence within each other.

As you see, there is a lot to do and to remember about decision-making within a group. Thus, it is important to write down decisions to give everybody the possibility to read this whenever there is a lack of knowledge about something. Transparency helps in the process a lot. Anyhow, it is important to update the decisions from time to time in order to make sure that rules and agreements still are correct and common sense.

8. OUTLOOK

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Summarizing our experiences and considerations, it is always possible to set up a community garden nearly everywhere. It is important to respect existing conditions such as legal structures, the kind of present gardeners and garden community or climatic conditions (e.g. at Allmende-Kontor-Garden the climate is quite extreme as there is no typical urban situation on a former airport).

A careful analysis of present conditions and the aspired aims by the gardeners is helpful and important to start with. An exchange with experienced community gardens or local network-platforms such as the Allmende-Kontor is useful.

What is absolutely needed, is a political decision to make grounds safe and available for community gardening in cities. By now, at least in Berlin most of the garden spaces are provided by people who are willing to look beyond one's own nose. However, a policy or law is needed for a more general arrangement, especially since the public benefits are obvious.

We'd like to emphasise the enormous and multiple benefits of community gardens in urban areas. They provide a wide range of positive outputs to the cities and its inhabitants regarding lots of different topics such as nutrition sovereignty, healthy diets, climate justice, environmental justice, cooperation by the people of the garden within the direct environment, seed sovereignty, building commons, reclaim the cities-aspects, access to public ground, intercultural relationships, just to name some.

Certainly, you will find all kinds of conflicts and divergence of opinions in gardens, just like anywhere else, but as being outside in a beautiful and healthy surrounding, people somehow are more open to find constructive solutions to get along with each other. They get empowered to find their own solutions. The willingness to take care about the vicinity is enormous, and this is an important contribution for the existence of large cities. Community gardens provide the space for all these valuable actions and spread its constructive character to the vicinity.

Gardens should not be privatised or privileged only for the needs of a few, but be evaluated as such rich spaces for learning, leisure and empowerment for everybody! Thus, it seems really important to guarantee open access spaces to everybody who respects the rules of a community garden.

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