Kenya Overview

This section contains the results of research undertaken in three cities in Kenya – Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu – from 2002 to 2005 as part of Urban Harvest’s program. There is a strong focus on integrated crop–livestock systems and how these relate to the cycling of nutrients and understanding urban ecosystem functioning. Markets are seen as a part of this and are studied in this context.

The market and nutrient flows of organic wastes that form part of urban agriculture as manure and compost are mapped for Nairobi in Chapter 10, based on a study led by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Nairobi performs quite inefficiently in this respect, recycling only a tiny proportion of available organic wastes compared to what was revealed for Yaoundé earlier in the book. One of the main suggested reasons for this is lack of market information and the failure of policy to connect with informal sector activities including farming, waste management and composting.

Nakuru, as described in a study presented in Chapter 11, does better than Nairobi but not as well as Yaoundé in terms of the recycling of nutrients through its urban farming systems. This gendered study is closely related to the following one in Chapter 12, where the health aspects of urban dairy production are explored in greater detail. Men’s and women’s management of livestock and understanding of health risks related to livestock-keeping are examined. The study is also complementary to the one in Chapter 9 from Kampala. It reveals the importance of getting clear messages to urban livestock keepers to increase the safety of this emergent household- based enterprise sector, critical to urban health, nutrition, employment and wealth generation.

Kisumu’s agroforestry food and non-food products are mapped by the study, emerging from the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), in Chapter 13. The market chains for these products are examined in relation to how the urban setting works as an ecological as well as social and political system.