



PLACE-BASED FOOD SYSTEMS CONFERENCE:

Making the Case, Making it Happen

August 9-10th, 2018

Vancouver, Canada

What makes food policies happen?

Insights from Portuguese initiatives

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Canada

36 Millions

9.98 million Km²

Portugal

10 Millions

92,212 km²



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Overview - Data comparing between Portugal and Canada

Topic	Portugal	Canadá
Obesity %	20% but huge youth obesity	28%
Source:	REPORT: OBESITY RATES BY COUNTRY – 2017 https://renewbariatrics.com/obesity-rank-by-countries/ :	REPORT: OBESITY RATES BY COUNTRY – 2017 https://renewbariatrics.com/obesity-rank-by-countries/ :
Fruits and vegetables consumed that are national grown %	50 % of the fruits 66 % of the vegetables	20% of the vegetables and fruits
Source:	https://www.cmjornal.pt/sociedade/detalhe/frutas-e-hortalicas-vem-do-estrangeiro	https://capitalnews.ca/better-food/2016/04/08/mapping-meal-local-vs-imported-produce-ottawa/
School meals	Yes. Mandatory, plus students can have a fruit and milk snack for free	No

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Why Portugal needs a food policy?

Topic	Portugal	Canadá
Food banks (% population helped by food banks)	3,8% only “extremely poor” people are allowed on Food Banks Families need to choose if they want to receive food from the bank or meals in social canteens - can` t be both	2.3% universal in addition meals can also be given for free (some) seven days a week
Source (various)	https://www.bancoalimentar.pt/quem-somos/pagina-noticias/noticias-federacao/campanha-junho-2018/	https://www.foodbankscanada.ca/Hunger-in-Canada.aspx
Food Waste	Per person / Year 135	Per person / Year 123
Source (same)	https://www.care2.com/greenliving/which-countries-waste-the-most-food.html	https://www.care2.com/greenliving/which-countries-waste-the-most-food.html
GINI (level of inequality)	0,338	0,313
Source (same)	http://www.oecd.org/social/income-distribution-database.htm	http://www.oecd.org/social/income-distribution-database.htm

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and, because food is a lever to other urban challenges!

Overview of Portuguese UA

- ✓ Run by public sector and local municipal governments (case 1 and 2), civil society organisations or non-profit organizations (case 3 and 4);
- ✓ UA as a sector is relatively young, as none are more than 15 years old and all flourished during the worldwide economic crisis that struck the country in 2008 (all cases);
- ✓ the provision of land for farming remains at the core of UA and is its dominant feature, with municipalities (public land) playing a pro-active role (case 1 and 2);
- ✓ UA is much more about production i.e. growing of plants for self-consumption than their distribution (case 1, 2 and 3);

Overview of Portuguese UA (continues)

- ✓ UA is largely found in large metropolitan areas (Lisbon and Porto), with some outreach to the key secondary cities (all cases);
- ✓ UA initiatives are expanding through a replication model based on production without a food system approach that considers new resource exploitation (case 1, 2 and 3);
- ✓ Initiatives on food waste and hunger mitigation do exist but are rarely recognized as part of the food system approach (case 4).

Research Questions and Argument

1 - Why do UA and food process projects take so long to become a reality in Portugal?

and,

2 - Why do existing successful UA and food initiatives fail to become public policy initiatives?

We argue that existing initiatives are viewed as single events and therefore garner quite limited long-term political commitment and funding.

Theoretical background:
How cities are making food strategies happen

IPES-FOOD. 2017. What makes urban food policy happen? Insights from five case studies.

RUAF-ICLEI, 2013. Cityfood: Linking cities on urban agriculture and urban food systems

Topic	IPES FOOD – Drivers	RUAF ICLEI – Drivers
A - Data, monitoring and learning	X	X
B - Vertical Multi-level governance	X	X
C - Horizontal city level governance	X	X
D - Participatory policy process	X	X
E - Funding	X	X
F - Political commitment	X	X
G – Implementation setting		X
H Communication and awareness facilitation		X

Methodology and cases selection

First - Empirical observation, primary data collection, grey literature review, and previous action – research. **Face-to-face key-informant interviews**

Selection of four cases. Why those cases?

1. Project's willingness to share information with us.
2. Being either mature programs as well as ones starting out.
3. Two of our cases have more than 15 years' experience and belong to the initial group of Portuguese UA formal initiatives. The other two started right on the peak of the worldwide economic crisis event.
4. The cases represent diverse leaderships from top initiatives spearheads by the municipalities to bottom-up initiatives from civil society and non-profit organizations.
5. Cases come from various geographical localizations with emphasis on the Lisbon Metropolitan Region.
6. Selected projects represent diverse activity patterns from production to self-consumption

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Case 1 - Seixal Municipality: 13 years to open its first allotment garden



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Case 2 – Funchal Municipality: in 3 years the process flowers



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Case 3 – AVAAL: 8 years of continuous resilience



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Case 4 - National Food Bank – 1 year to harvest fresh vegetables inside a jail



Lack of political commitment and funding
vs. strong demand from communities

Topic – according to table 1	Topics mentioned (or not) during interviews			
	Seixal	Funchal	AVAAL	NFB
A - Data, monitoring and learning	No	No	No	No
B - Vertical Multi-level governance	No	No	No	No
C - Horizontal city level governance	No	No	No	No
D - Participatory policy process	No	No	No	No
E - Funding (and resources)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
F - Political commitment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
G - Implementation setting	No	Yes	Yes	No
H - Communication and awareness	Yes	No	Yes	No

Discussion – Portugal constraints and drivers

Most seen as a constraint:

Lack of Political commitment - Why? Weak political awareness and commitment can be the result of these programs being perceived only as short-term solution for low-income communities.

Lack of Funding - Why? A possible answer to this difficulty comes again from the lack of political awareness on the topic that interfere with decision makers competence to connect UA with other urban initiatives, such as climate adaptation or economic development and job creation strategies which could be easier to subsidize.

Most seen as a driver:

Communication and Dissemination

Facilitator Implementation Setting

Conclusions - Constraints are a complex combination

Lack of “**political commitment**” and “**funding**” can strongly explain the slow materialization of UA and food related initiatives in Portugal.

- ✓ **Constraints are a complex combination of factors of different nature that call for a systemic approach and need a set of combined measures within a modernized governance model with proactive stakeholders participation.**
- ✓ Therefore, changes can only happen under a national supportive policy and a facilitating legal system based on vertical and horizontal multi-level governance and strong political commitment along with participation at all levels of the process.

Challenge - what can be done immediately?

Two approaches can be done:

- 1) Strengthening UA and food related bottom–up initiatives, so that communities become aware of the benefits, and are willing to lobby for longer-term political commitments
- 2) Generate and assess, at national scale, data on UA and food related issues to provide evidence of UA not only social, but also environmental and economic impacts, on communities' long term local development.

Thanks!

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