



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Monitoring Framework

July 2018 version

Indicator 22: Number of community-based food assets in the city

MUFPP framework of actions' category: Social and economic equity

This indicator measures the number of community-based food assets in the city, such as community kitchens, community gardens, community shops, cafes, food hubs.

Overview table

MUFPP Work stream	Social and economic equity
MUFPP action	Promote networks and support grassroots activities that create social inclusion and provide food to marginalised individuals.
What the indicator measures	The number of community-based food assets in the city. These could be by category, e.g. community kitchens, community gardens, community shops, cafés, food hubs.
Which variables need to be measured / what data are needed	Geographical location; categories and sub-categories of assets; assets that specifically target particular user groups (e.g. free or low-cost catering or retail)
Unit of measurement (i.e. Percentages, averages, number, etc.)	Number by category of community-based food asset
Unit(s) of Analysis (i.e. people under 5 years old, etc.)	Type of community-based food asset
Possible sources of information of such data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Existing asset maps or directories -Local food sector reports -Public food register (or lists kept by the environmental health team who register premises dealing with food) -NGO's, community sector, local food networks -Food Policy Council or equivalent body -Welfare & food insecurity workers; academics
Possible methods/tools for data-collection	Analysis of existing reports and registers; interviews with key stakeholders; online searches; surveys with key stakeholders.

	(NB: some of the data required for this indicator may already have been collected for other indicators, e.g. school feeding; social assistance programmes, food-related learning and skills development)
Expertise required	Research, data analysis, interview and survey skills
Resources required/ estimated costs	
Specific observations	The most useful way to present the collated data is on food asset maps or in directories. A decision will need to be made about whether to include school-based assets or keep this a separate indicator. GIS mapping of these can be a useful planning and political tool as well as a community engagement vehicle.
Examples of application	Vancouver: http://www.vch.ca/public-health/nutrition/food-asset-map

Rationale/evidence

To enable a connection with the planning system: In 2007 the American Planning Association (APA) produced its Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning, a belated attempt to make amends for the fact that the planning community, academics and professionals alike, had signally failed to engage with the food system (Morgan, 2009).¹

To empower community action: Since 2000, the concept and practice of Food Systems Assessments has developed significantly, driven by i) interest in local food system and ii) the importance of including the food system in urban planning. A review of food system assessment approaches identified eight types of assessments (Freedgood, Meter and Pierce-Quiñonez, 2011). One of these was community food asset mapping, a participatory model that engages a wide range of stakeholders in charting the assets in their food system in the form of a map. 'Avoiding the negative implications of a "needs" assessment (which can spiral community members into inactivity), an "asset map" can bring people together more positively to discuss what their community already has, rather than what it lacks.'²

Sharing information: Understanding the presence, location, and impact of community-based food assets is an important early step in urban food system planning. Sharing this information in the form of a map or directory enables wider engagement, networking and provides a basis for new collaborations to further strengthen the food system. Importantly it can also inform policy and strategic decision making by the municipality.

Baseline data: In Vancouver (as in a number of other cities), one of the ways to create a baseline of Vancouver's food system is to document food assets. 'Food assets are defined as resources, facilities, services or spaces that are available to Vancouver residents, and which are used to support the local food system'³.

Glossary/concepts/definitions used

Categories of food assets: Each city will need to work out the most appropriate categories to use. For example, Vancouver use the following criteria: 'places where people can grow, prepare, share, buy, receive or learn about food' and have identified eight categories.

- Schools
- Community organisations
- Retail stores or markets,
- Growing food spaces
- Kitchen or food programmes,
- Neighbourhood food networks,
- Free or low cost grocery items,
- Free or low cost meals.

Within these categories, some have further sub-categories. For example, kitchens are further broken down into three sub-categories: kitchen access, food skills workshops, community kitchen

¹ Feeding the city: the challenge of urban food planning, Kevin Morgan, Cardiff University (editorial); International planning studies, volume 14, 2009

² Emerging assessment tools to inform food system planning, Julia Freedgood, Marisol Pierce-Quiñonez, Kenneth A. Meter; Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development, 2011 <https://foodsystemsjournal.org/index.php/fsj/article/viewFile/84/83>

³ What feeds us: Vancouver food strategy, January 2013 <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/vancouver-food-strategy-final.PDF>

programmes. Growing food divides into four: community gardens, community orchards, urban farms, garden programmes and education.

Community organizations and schools are included 'because they are places where community members can get support with learning and health or connect with others in their community'.⁴ However, the schools are only noted for their presence rather than any specific food assets they offer.

Vancouver has collected information on food assets and created an interactive online map as a resource. The North Shore Community asset map (north of Vancouver city) is very similar with a few slightly different sub-categories to suit their situation, e.g. growing food categories. (See website link in footnotes for further details).

Preparations

The team responsible for monitoring this indicator should agree on:

1. Whether or not to include schools; clear rationale for decision
2. Main asset categories and sub-categories; clear rationale for decisions
3. Any other types of data disaggregation that will be used (see further below)
4. Data collection and recording method (it may be most efficient to create a map)
5. If surveys are to be used, survey questions and instrument have to be designed. Training of survey enumerators may be needed.
6. How the information gathered for this indicator could be shared (e.g. maps/directories).

Sampling

In case data are collected by means of a survey with food-related community based organisations, the aim is to fill as many gaps and gather specific details so a sample is not relevant. It might be pragmatic to focus on particular neighbourhoods if resources are very limited, with the view to building up more information as soon as that becomes possible.

Data collection and data disaggregation

Note: Some of the data required for this indicator could usefully inform some of the other social and equity indicators, e.g. school feeding; social assistance programmes, food-related learning and skills development. This should be identified from the start. Otherwise, data generated for them would also be useful for this indicator.

Data disaggregation can be done by:

1. Geographical location e.g. neighbourhoods
2. Categories of assets e.g. community kitchens, community gardens, community shops, cafes, food hubs.
3. Sub-categories of assets – see notes above. These may only become clear once analysis of data is underway. Each city will need to decide what sub-categories are most useful and locally relevant.
3. Type of user group - it may be important to identify assets that specifically target particular user groups.

Data collection can be from existing records, registers and reports; from interviews with key stakeholders to identify further sources of information; from a survey with community-based food

⁴ Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Food Asset Map <http://www.vch.ca/public-health/nutrition/food-asset-map>

organisations to identify food assets, specific details of focus of activity and types of users – to help fill gaps in data and clarify sub categories.

Data analysis/calculation of the indicator

The indicator is computed by calculating the total number of community-based food assets. On its own, a number is not very revealing so it needs to be understood alongside a more useful detailed breakdown of assets by geography, category and subcategory, ideally presented visually.

References and links to reports/tools

Ideas on how to gather and present the data on community food assets:

Vancouver, Canada: food asset mapping

Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Food Asset Map <http://www.vch.ca/public-health/nutrition/food-asset-map>

London, UK: using a community-led asset approach

Gipsy Hill Food Village Hub: a community-led asset based approach to positively influencing the local food system; Cunningham and Oki, Public Health Lambeth Borough Council
https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Gipsy_Hill_Final_0.pdf

Washington, US: example of a localised neighbourhood asset map

Camp Washington food and community asset map
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5633fcede4b0b0c3596ed436/t/5788f6e103596e546ca53ace/1468593896214/Camp+Washington+Food+and+Community+Asset+Map+-+Pages.pdf>

Food coops toolkit, Sustain, UK: includes guidance on food mapping and community audits

A community audit is a type of mapping, but goes into more detail than food mapping because as well as finding out about food outlets, a community audit also includes other local facilities and services. <https://www.sustainweb.org/foodcoopstoolkit/communityaudit/>