
Advocacy case studies

URBAN AGRICULTURE IN BRAZIL

COUNTRY:	Brazil
THEME:	Environment and climate change; food security; land and property; livelihoods
ADVOCACY APPROACHES:	Building relationships; community mobilisation; demonstrating good practice; government officials: educating; using the media

Tearfund Inspired Individual Claudio Oliver leads a community called Casa da Videira (Vine House) who are pioneering urban agricultural practices in the Brazilian city of Curitiba. They grow produce, keep livestock, and recycle, all with the aim of sustaining rather than damaging the natural economy.

After some years, the city administration threatened the community with closure because of 'illegal practice of urban agriculture and livestock'. The community continued their practices nonetheless, and engaged with the media, producing documentaries about their work. As months passed, government officials who had been criticising the community started visiting them, talking to them, and eventually asking them about their ideas.

Through these conversations with officers, counsellors and public authorities, a new law was passed that not only permits the practice of urban agriculture, but offers tax discounts to those who participate. Property tax credits are now available for those who, with the support of the city hall, grow vegetables, medicinal plants, fruit trees and flowers; keep small animals (including fish in fish farms); or produce artisan foods and beverages for human consumption within the city. The local authorities have announced that they hope this legislation will combat hunger by encouraging job creation and generating income for small-scale homesteaders. They have also praised the benefits brought about in relation to social inclusion and agro-ecotourism.