

Daily Graphic

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2005

Moves to integrate urban agric into dev planning of Accra

Story: Emmanuel Adu-Gyamerah

THE International Water Management Institute (IWMI) has launched the Cities Farming for Future (CFF) programme to support the integration of urban agriculture into the development planning of Accra.

This is part of the global network of Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RAUF).

The CFF programme is being implemented in more than 40 cities globally, including nine in Anglophone West Africa, with Accra as the co-ordinating centre.

Urban Agriculture refers to the production, processing and marketing of food including fruits, vegetables, eggs, milk products, meat, fish and other agricultural products within the city and in peri-urban areas.

The West African Regional Co-ordinator of the RAUF-CFF Programme, Dr (Mrs) Olufunke Cofie, told the *Graphic* that the overall goal of the four-year project was to contribute to urban food security and urban poverty alleviation and improve urban environmental management through capacity development of stakeholders of urban agriculture.

She said the CFF programme would facilitate local data gathering on urban agriculture, including data on refuse of waste water, and make databases accessible to stakeholders.

Dr Cofie added that the pro-

gramme would also promote networking, co-operation and exchange of research results among researchers, policy makers and urban farmers and produce and disseminate information through case studies.

She stated that the IWMI-RAUF activities in West Africa was being implemented in three pilot cities from Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone.

"The CFF programme is important to a large number of urban dwellers as it enhances the institutional capacities of urban agriculture", she said, adding that it would increase the income of urban farmers, improve nutrition and food security of the poor, enhance reuse of urban wastes and waste water and reduce the health risk associated with urban agriculture.

Dr Cofie said it had been estimated that 800 million urban and peri-urban farmers and gardeners were engaged in urban agriculture worldwide and produce between 15-20 per cent of the world's food needs.

Dr Cofie stated "Increasing urban population creates an enormous demand for services and puts pressure on natural resources," adding that this increased urban poverty, growing urban food insecurity, inadequate waste recycling and degradation of urban environment.

She said the ways to provide food, shelter and basic services for city residents and create sustainable cities had become challenges that faced city authorities.