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SUSTAINABLE HYDERABAD PROJECT

PILOT PROJECT 3:

Sustainable Street Food Plan

MEGACITY PROJECT COORDINATED BY HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

FUNDED BY GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH





## **Sustainable Street Food Plan – Evidence-based Guidelines to Unleash Potential of Hyderabad’s Street Food Sector for Sustainable Development**

### **1. Framing the Problem and Objectives**

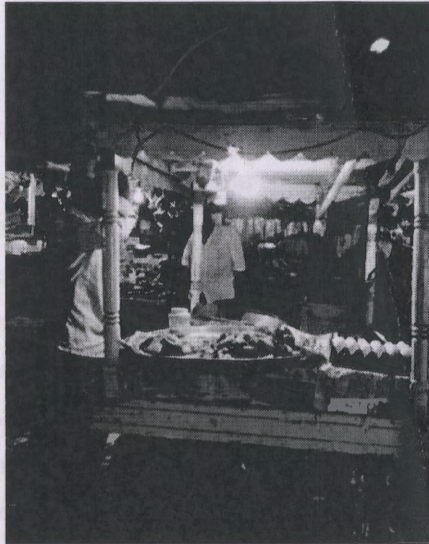
Climate Change is indeed a significant and emerging threat to Hyderabad’s food security. A decentralized urban food supply system will contribute to mitigate climate change impacts and to lower green-house gas (GHG) emissions. Empirical findings reveal that strengthening existing structures of urban micro-retail may be an important strategy towards a more resource-efficient and sustainable city development (see Bhowmik 2005; Dittrich 2008; Johnsdorf and Dittrich 2009; Hanisch, Meyer-Ueding, Sagebiel 2009; Rani and Dittrich 2010).

**The street food sector of Hyderabad promises high potential to foster sustainable development.**

This highly decentralized food distribution system provides affordable, nutritious and culturally accepted food items tailored to the needs particularly of poorer and lower middle class dwellers. It operates on basis of resource efficiency, low waste output and very low GHG-emissions. Street food also provides a flexible yet profitable source of income, especially for those who do not fit into the formal economy (Rani and Dittrich 2010).

**But, the street food sector also faces many problems and challenges.** It has been seen as backward, out of date, associated with health hazards and traffic obstructions and is regarded as not fit to meet the ends of modern urban

development. Due to legal constraints, street vendors usually have to work without license and are



Typical street food vendors in Hyderabad (Photos: Dahmen)

### Major Objective

The major objective of this booklet is to provide stakeholders and actors with information, ideas and strategies how to unleash the potential of Hyderabad's street food sector.

It builds on research findings on institutions, governance practices and governmental regulations concerning food, nutrition and food-

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threatened by corruption demands, displacement and confiscation of their belongings.



related health aspects (Chada 2009; Hoffmann and Dittrich 2009, 2010, Nischalke, Surepally and Dittrich 2009; Osswald and Dittrich 2009, 2010; Padma and Varalakshmi 2010; Nischalke 2011; Bergmann and Dittrich 2012) and derives from lessons learnt from the pilot project **Sustainable Street Food Plan.**



## 2. What is the "Sustainable Street Food Plan"?

The pilot project "Sustainable Street Food Plan" (SSFP) conceptually integrates key elements of a decentralized, low-emission urban food provision system with issues of food security, sustainable food access/food utilization and norma-

tive concepts of climate change mitigation. It translates an abstract concept into a coordinated system of demand-driven strategies of action and furthermore contributes a comprehensive Perspective Action Plan.

The overall objectives of the SSFP are:

- (1) to improve street food safety standards,
- (2) to improve income levels and livelihoods of petty trade vendors,
- (3) to contribute to urban food security,
- (4) to create stable, adjusted institutions, governance structures and governmental regulations concerning food and nutrition in an inclusive socio-political environment.

**The Sustainable Street Food Plan is a conceptual note and focuses on options how challenges can be met to facilitate the strengthening of the street food sector of Hyderabad by institutional change to unleash its potential for sustainability.**

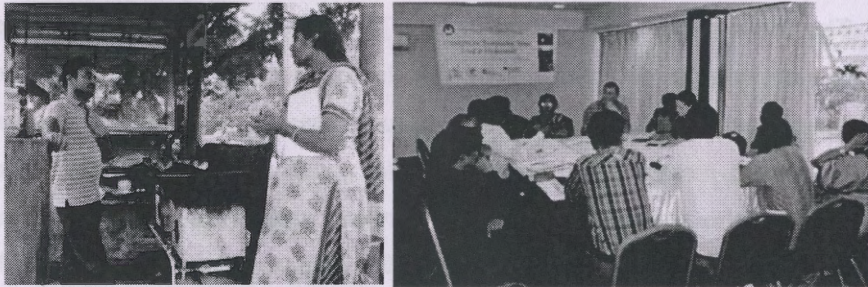
The main idea behind the SSFP is to transfer the knowledge of the potentials of the street food sector for sustainable development to the relevant stakeholders. This compilation of knowledge includes research findings as well as practical sugges-

tions how persistent challenges can be met.

The pilot project is based on four pillars identified and selected during field campaigns and networking workshops by social scientists, activists, vendor representatives and other relevant stakeholders. The intervention-areas identified are (see also figure 1).

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- (1) **Legal certainty**, being the most crucial objective in the process of restructuring and modernizing the urban street food provision system;
- (2) **Food-safety**, an important issue related to hygiene and safe-to-eat food
- (3) **Food-culture**, with a special focus on the regional cultural heritage linked to traditional food items and recipes; and
- (4) **Empowerment**, which emphasizes particularly on livelihood security and advocacy of female vendors.



Discussion with vendor during fieldwork and stakeholder meeting (Photos: Dahmen, Kluge)

Objectives: Strengthen food and livelihood security; Improve food safety standards; contribute to socially inclusive and climate friendly urban development

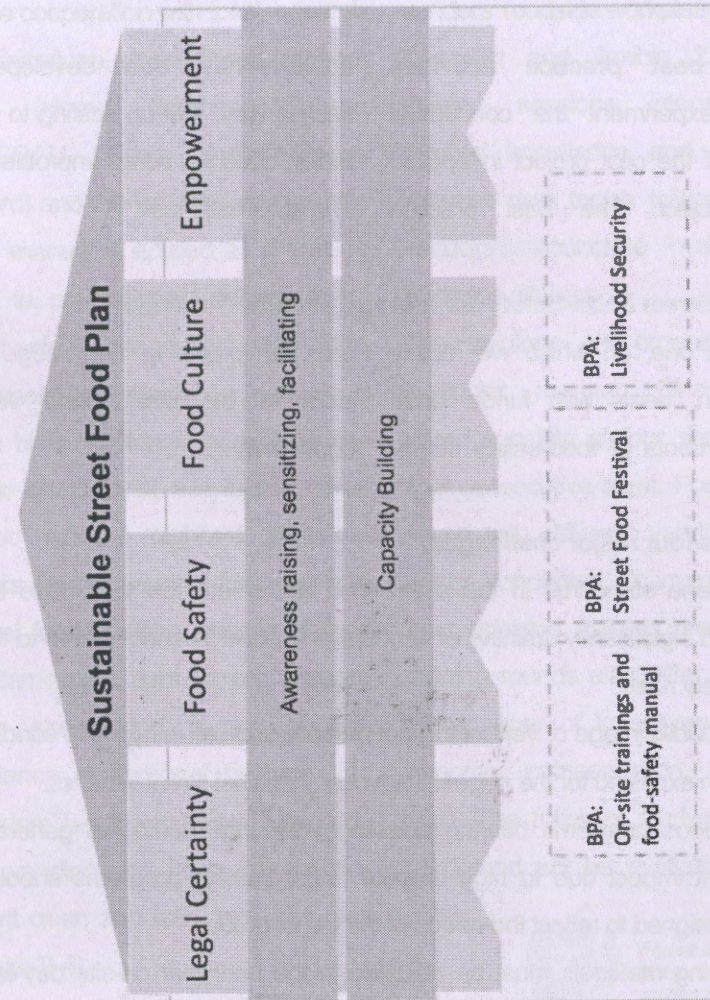


Figure 1: Conceptual frame of the pilot project "Sustainable Street Food Plan" (own draft)  
BPA = Best Practice Activity

### 3. Best Practice Activities to Experiment the Conceptual Frame of the Sustainable Street Food Plan

Three best practice activities (BPA) experiment the conceptual frame of the pilot project in applied micro-project. The best practice activities have been developed in such a way, that up scaling to other Indian cities will be an unproblematic and quite easy task.

#### BPA 1: Street Food-Safety Manual and On-Site Trainings

The first one, on which we mainly focus on, deals with fundamental improvements of food-safety standards by providing knowledge and skills to the street food vendor community.

#### It targets four major challenges:

- (1) Hygiene standards in the street food sector are low and have to be improved significantly; training of vendors is needed to enable them to follow food safety rules.
- (2) The public image of vendors to not prepare and sell in hygienic conditions has been exploited for the negative advocacy against street vendors.
- (3) Previous programs offering classroom trainings could not generate a significant impact due to high dropout rates; training programs should be better designed to reflect the needs of the target group.
- (4) Training materials must be adjusted to the particular on-site day-to-day conditions of the target group.

A **Street Food Safety Manual** (In English and Telugu) was compiled in close cooperation with local research organizations, food-related authorities (Home Science College ANGRAU, Food and Nutrition Board) and the vendors' community. The manual is applied as a training tool to promote the adherence of food-safety standards and the necessity of affordable, safe food with high nutritional value. The five main chapters of this lavishly illustrated manual highlight important topics like the need for food safety in street food vending, causes of food contamination, right ways to prepare safe street food items, the importance of personal hygiene and vendors' health, and how to upgrade the vending unit, keep the environment clean and take care of it (see Figure 2-4).

Training courses for vendors are conducted as on-site trainings (an

innovative and convenient format) within walking distance of the vendors' roadside workplace.

Compact and flexible 2,5 hours training sessions intensify any existing knowledge and introduce different new topics tailored to the vendors' concrete day-to-day business situation.

The trainings are organized in a particular manner. One training round consists of four sessions on four consecutive days. Four training round with different vendor groups will be conducted. To investigate the best adapted training program the training rounds also differ slightly in the manner of incentives provided (income compensation, certificate etc.). The trainings start in October 2012 and will be evaluated extensively.

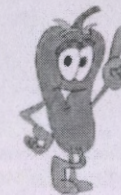


Figure 2: The Mascot Mirchi. It guides the reader through the manual. (Drawing: Sharath)

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The evaluation of trainings will also contribute to answer the following questions:

- Can scientific knowledge on food safety challenges successfully be transferred to the urban street food sector by implementing appropriate hand-outs, didactics of vocational training, instructions and tools?
- Can suitable training formats and socially accepted incentives be developed that encourage street vendors to participate regularly in food safety trainings and to use their new capacities during daily routine?

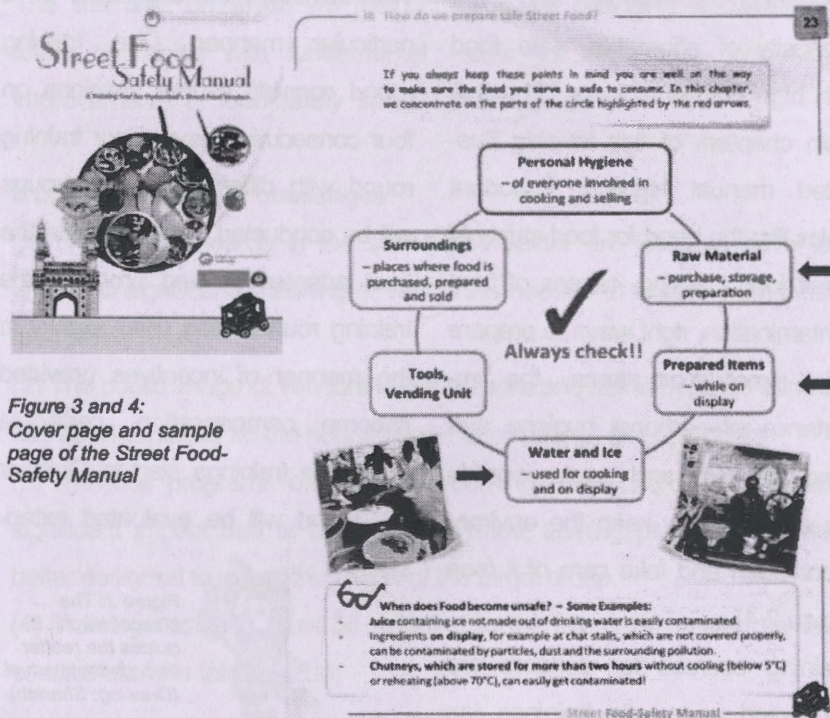


Figure 3 and 4:  
Cover page and sample  
page of the Street Food-  
Safety Manual

## BPA 2: Street Food Festival

The second best practice activity highlights **street food as part of Hyderabad's cultural heritage**. The first ever Street Food Festival, celebrated in February 2010 at Municipal Ground, Ameerpet, with as many as 60 vendors serving to the public a large variety of street foods from all over India has shown the strong roots of the street food sector in the city's rich food culture (see also figure 5). About 6.000 visitors could be welcomed during the event, jointly organized by Sannihita, National Alliance of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and CultGeo, University of Freiburg/now Goettingen. Through the street food festival, which was highly covered by local media, the importance of the street food sector in provid-

ing employment, affordable and nutritious food to all sections of society was communicated and the need to integrate the vendors' community in urban planning processes highlighted. The attempt to place the street food festival on the city's festival calendar failed so far due to lack of support of local authorities. Surveys suggest that stakeholders' and vendors' motivation to regularly conduct such an event does exist, but due to political unrest and frequent transfers of officers particularly fund raising has been very difficult.



Vendors of the National Association of Street Vendors, Street Food Festival 2010 (Photo: Dittrich)

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**Street Food Festival**

**Hyderabad Street Food Festival**  
Khayenge, peyenge, mouj mainyeng

**Sannihita Center for Women and Girl Children**

**VENUE : MUNICIPAL GROUND,  
NEAR MUNICIPAL SWIMMING POOL  
, AMERPET, HYDERABAD**

**DATE : FEBRUARY 18TH TO 23RD, 2010**  
**TIMINGS : EVENING 3PM TO 9PM**

**For more information please contact**  
Mrs. V. Usha Rani  
Sannihita Center for Women and Girl Children  
Email : sannihitamdia@yahoo.com  
ushajayaprada@gmail.com  
Mobile : 9346901441, 9393960821, 9397888359  
www.sustainable-hyderabad.in

**NOTE**  
Any funds raised at the festival will be used for supporting the children in the Sannihita girl child homes. By giving part of their time, the food vendors support the cause of poor and marginalized girl children and street children who have been abused and have no access to shelter, food, clothing, education and dignified lives.

**Organized by**  
Sannihita Center for Women & Girl Children  
In collaboration with Institute of Cultural Geography,  
University of Freiburg, Germany  
In cooperation with  
Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC)  
and National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad

**Festival Programme**  
Diverse cultural programme  
Night days for children, families and seniors  
Training and discussions on street vendor policy and licensing by Greater Hyderabad Metropolitan Council (GHMC)  
On-site trainings for vendors on health, nutrition, food safety and hygiene conducted by National Institute of Nutrition (NIN).  
Visitors will get the chance to be trained on preparing popular street items such as bhajis, vada or mirchi baatis themselves  
And of course: FOOD, FOOD, FOOD, drinks and lots of fun!

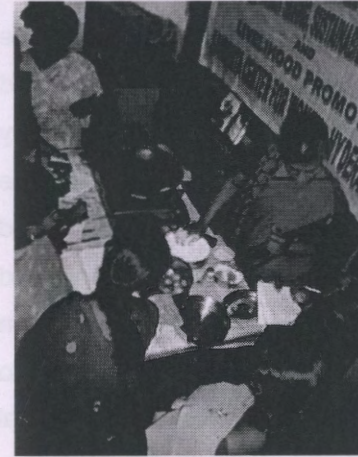
Figure 5: Leaflet/Invitation of the Street Food Festival 2010

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### BPA 3: Livelihood Security for Women through Street Food Vending

The third best practice activity focuses on the issue of empowering marginalized women. The BPA “Javeena Path – Livelihood Security for Women through Street Food Vending” is conducted by the local NGO Sannihita, in cooperation with the Food and Nutrition Board in Hyderabad and other stakeholders.

Sannihita conducted two background studies on this subject (Rani 2009; Rani and Dittrich 2010) highlighting the urgent need to focus the issue.



The activity aims to provide knowledge, assets and skills to sustain the livelihoods of participants and their families as street food vendors and food safety trainers.

The women participating in the program (more than 20 women so far) are marginalized in the sense, that they do only have few skills to do other work which could sustain the livelihood of their families, because they are the only income generating member in their household. Street food vending as such represents a flexible and promising means to earn their living.



Participants during trainings and awareness raising campaigns (Photos: Dahmen)



#### 4. Preliminary Results and Impacts

The street food sector of Hyderabad faces serious obstacles and challenges. Street food vending is disregarded as backward, out of date and associated with health hazards and traffic obstructions. Petty-trade vendors are heavily at risk due to legal constraints, demand for bribe, displacement and confiscation of their property. One major constraint is their uncertain legal status (see box 1). Having no license petty-trade vendors are prone to crisis and constantly threatened by harassment, displacement and confiscation of their belongings (cash, cooking utensils, push carts etc.), leading to income loss and reduced capacity to invest in their petty business (e. g. food safety measures). Field surveys also reveal that pavement vendors play only a marginal role in causing traffic congestion. The existing zoning law

for street vendors with its negative impact on petty-trade business might therefore not be able to solve the traffic congestion at street crossings. Other major constraints are related to the overall unsafe hygienic condition and the waste problem in the street food sector discouraging particularly health-conscious middle-class consumers as potential customers. Several major health risks related to, for example, food storage and handling practices could be identified.

The research studies also reveal the high potential of the street food sector to foster urban food security and improvement of livelihood of the vendor community. Street food vending provides income and livelihood to about 15,000 families in the city, considerably contribute to food security of weaker urban social

#### Sustainable Street Food Plan

February 2013. The preliminary results stated here, are only part of what we expect by the end of the project.

Some short term impact should be given: Participants of seminars and on-site trainings may improve their capacities (knowledge and skills) concerning safe, hygienic and nutritious food. The efficiency of raw material use and the waste management will also be improved. The compliance of food safety standards contributes to stabilize and/or increase the petty trade vendors' income in a sustainable manner. The "Javeena Path" activity (BPA 3) contributed to empower marginalized women and to raise the income levels of its participants.

segments by providing affordable, nutritious and culturally accepted food items, and also serves to the palate of many middle-class workers. Moreover, many street food items, if compared to processed and convenient foods, are featured by high nutritional value, resource efficiency, little waste-output and little greenhouse gas emissions. Short distance supply, another typical feature of the street food sector, reduces traffic volume and emission levels. And finally, locally produced street food is culturally embedded and fosters the cultural identity of the people of Hyderabad.

The pilot project "Sustainable Street Food Plan" is still in the process of implementation, which is the major reason, why it is too early to present solid and sustainable results. The pilot project has been launched in October 2011 and most of the activities will run until the end of





*Vendors stalls get demolished, tools and materials confiscated, during eviction by municipal authorities (Photos: Sageble)*

**Box 1: Major Concern: Legal Uncertainty**

The draft Street Vendors Bill is pending to be enacted in Andhra Pradesh to this day. The vendors' community is partly not aware of this upcoming law, is disaffected by the long delay or does have serious doubts, that this law can bring change to their situation to the better.

An exception is the Food Safety and Standards Act 2011. This national act, now also includes petty traders, which can be registered and controlled under the act. Hyderabad is on of the pilot Cities to carry out the registration process. The impact on the vendors is still to be evaluated in the next year.

Alternatives have been developed to some extent (e.g. by the National Vendors Association). The draft state bill, which builds on the National Policy on Urban Street Vendors, 2009, is a promising attempt to clearly state the rights and responsibilities of street vendors. If the guidelines and their implementation are worked out comprehensively and responsibilities/restrictions balance with the rights/responsibilities of the vendors, the bill will be a powerful tool to meet persistent challenges. The bill would also ease many of constraints vendors face during their day-to-day activities.

**5. Conclusion and Way Forward**

The street food sector of Hyderabad merits heightened attention. The operational political framework needs to be modified so that it is able to simultaneously tackle the identified major constraints and to unlock manifold potentials for sustainability in mega urban development.

The ambitious aim towards sustainable street food can only be achieved if government authorities, research institutions, NGOs and vendor representatives work closely together in a coordinated manner. The adoption of the Street Vendors Bill could be the first step along the right lines.

It is very crucial to perceive the relation between the persistent challenges vendors and authorities face and the illegal status of vendors. Following the analysis of vendors' statements, a secure and transparent status of rights can foster the

motivation to invest in their business and accept the requirements of new responsibilities.

The enactment of the bill hence could play a sensitive and promising role in approaching the described challenges.

Nevertheless, to use existing potentials for a pro-poor development along with a food provision system that provides affordable and healthy food produced in a environmentally sound manner will not only require a secure legal status, but even more a particular appreciation of the street food sector in general. Implementation of guidelines has to include enabling vendors (e.g. through awareness raising, trainings and other capacity building measures) to consciously act within the given rules.

### Building Platforms – the Way Forward

The transfer of knowledge, through evidence-based research and BPAs, is the most crucial part of the described pilot project.

At the end of 2012, a workshop will be held to discuss the format and content of the draft of the Sustainable Street Food Plan in detail.

Concerning the major objectives of the Sustainable Street Food Plan the up-scaling process will start to create a platform for further dialogues. There is a need to integrate those actors who have an broad inside-view on the persisting challenges and those who are able to transfer the findings and options for sustainable development to the decision making process. Hence, on the one hand vendors and their representatives, organizations working on their behalf and government stakeholders and other decision makers on the other hand have to be invited.

The gap between those two sides can be bridged, by research institutes and national development programs, which aim to analyze and understand the requirements of both sides in order to launch a realistic process. On this platform, stakeholders and the vendors' community will get the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon the findings derived from the SSFP. Within the scope of the pilot project SSFP, we (CultGeo, University of Freiburg/now Goettingen) initiated the process of building platforms of communication and started the dialogue with those stakeholders who are willing and able to promote the objectives of the pilot project in order to continue the work on solutions and promote the implementation of the positively evaluated options.

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#### 6. Actors/Stakeholders

The target groups of the pilot project are the street food vendors of Hyderabad. The stakeholders, who are directly and indirectly involved in the issue include among others, the National Association of Street Vendors in India (NASVI), the Mission for the Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA), the Institute of Preventive Medicine (IPM).

These stakeholders are continuously informed about new developments

and findings regarding the pilot project activities and will be incorporated in the discussion and the sharing of the findings of the final Sustainable Street Food Plan, especially during the up-scaling process.

In the course of the project for the implementation of the Sustainable Street Food Plan and the Best Practice Activities, we cooperated and or will cooperate in the future, with the following stakeholders:

Partner Organization	Contact	Address
<b>Sannihita – Centre for Women and Girl Children Society</b>	Mrs. Usha Rani <i>Director</i>	Tirumala Towers, Golconda X Roads, Hyderabad
<b>Home Science College, ANGRAU</b>	Dr. T. Neeraja,	6-1-52, Saifabad, Hyderabad – 500004
<b>National Institute for Nutrition</b>	Mrs. Radha Reddy	Jamai-Osmania PO Hyderabad – 500 007
<b>Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies</b>	Dr. Vasath Kumar, Mr. Ernest Leslie	Osmania University, Hyderabad – 500 007
<b>Food and Nutrition Board, Ministry of Women and Child Development</b>	Mr. Naidu, Mrs. Suman Sukdar (retired) <i>Demonstration Officer</i>	Kendrya Sadan Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad – 500 095
<b>Institute of Preventive Medicine, Commissioner of Food Safety A.P.</b>	Mr. A.Sudhakar Rao <i>Joint Food Controller</i>	Narayanaguda, Hyderabad – 500 029

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### Executive Summary

Street food vending promises high potentials to foster sustainable development. The street food sector generates regular income to thousands of families, is part of the local cultural heritage, and contributes to low greenhouse emissions and climate protection. Street food also contributes to urban food security.

Serious institutional obstacles and political constraints prevent the utilization of these potentials. The ambitious aim towards sustainable street food can only be achieved if government authorities, research institutions, NGOs and vendor representatives work closely together in a coordinated manner.