

## REVIEW

# Home gardening in sub-Saharan Africa: A scoping review on practices and nutrition outcomes in rural Burkina Faso and Kenya

Lea-Sophie Hansen<sup>1</sup>  | Raissa Sorgho<sup>1</sup> | Isabel Mank<sup>1,2</sup> | Patricia Nayna Schwerdtle<sup>1,3</sup> | Erick Agure<sup>1</sup> | Till Bärnighausen<sup>1,4</sup> | Ina Danquah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Heidelberg Institute of Global Health (HIGH), Faculty of Medicine and University Hospital, Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany

<sup>2</sup>German Institute for Development Evaluation (Deval), Bonn, Germany

<sup>3</sup>Monash Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria, Australia

<sup>4</sup>Africa Health Research Institute (AHRI), KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

## Correspondence

Lea-Sophie Hansen, Heidelberger Institute of Global Health (HIGH), Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg, Im Neuenheimer Feld 324, Heidelberg 69120, Germany.

Email: [lea-sophie.hansen@uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:lea-sophie.hansen@uni-heidelberg.de)

## Funding information

This work received funding from the German Research Foundation (DFG) (reference: DA 1881/3-1) (ID, RS), the Robert Bosch Foundation (RBS) (reference: 01000035-002) (ID, IM), the Fiat Panis Foundation (LSH), and the Heidelberg Graduate School of Global Health (LSH).

## Abstract

Home gardening is promoted as an adaptation strategy to ameliorate the increasing food insecurity from climate change impacts among subsistence farming families in rural sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, the geographic distribution of home gardens, their setup, management, and the effects on nutrition outcomes have not been fully described. This scoping review aimed to map and synthesize recent evidence on home gardening for two exemplar countries: Burkina Faso and Kenya. Between June and August 2020, we searched, screened, and extracted evidence about home garden projects in both countries, following the PRISMA guidelines for scoping reviews. Peer-reviewed scientific publications, and gray literature in English and French that reported about subsistence horticulture in rural settings of Burkina Faso or Kenya were included. The characteristics of the documents and the data pertaining to our research objectives were extracted into predefined spreadsheets. The data were synthesized in the form of a narrative review. Our search yielded 949 documents, of which 20 documents were included in the synthesis (Burkina Faso: 8, Kenya: 12). While the gardens varied in composition and size, the majority provided green leafy vegetables and indigenous horticultural crops. The challenges for successful home garden implementation comprised unfavorable climatic conditions, access to and affordability of inputs, water and land, and lack of know-how. We identified trends for improved food security, diet quality, and nutritional status among the target populations. This scoping review found that there is limited evidence on home garden practices in rural Burkina Faso and Kenya. To enhance the sustainability of home gardens, research and resources should be invested in codesigning context-specific home gardening projects. Pending rigorous impact evaluation, home gardens appear to be a promising tool for climate change adaptation while simultaneously improving food security and the nutritional situation among women and young children in these two exemplar countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

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