The MAC Project
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Project led by the City of Pozzuoli
The MAC project

The MAC project seeks to reduce urban poverty in the neighbourhood of Monterusciello, where poverty is understood in the social and economic sense and within the physical environment. Monterusciello is a new public housing district with 20,000 residents with low-income, a high level of unemployment, and characterised by large unused spaces.

The proposal is designed to trigger a process of economic, entrepreneurial, and social development, together with the improving of the urban environment. The project will create a new agro-urban landscape which will radically transform the character of the neighbourhood: a landscape made of urban areas and agriculture land connected by a productive thread; the agriculture giving work opportunities, training and production to the city; the city benefiting of the agriculture areas as gardens, thanks to the innovative techniques which will also increase the vegetation.

Thirty hectares of Municipal open areas will be transformed into farmland, developed the innovative techniques of permaculture in order to spearhead an economic process and urban growth as a means to combat poverty. The project will have three pillars: implementation of agriculture through innovative permaculture; improvement of the urban environment; and encouragement of entrepreneurship and employment.

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Partnership:

- Comune di Pozzuoli
- Università degli Studi di Salerno - University
- Coldiretti Napoli - National Association
- Confagricoltura Napoli - National Association
- Agrocoltura - Private Company
- L'iniziativa - Associazione di promozione sociale - NGO
- Fondazione FORMIT - Research Center
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1 Executive Summary

Monterusciello represents a case of urban poverty induced by a natural disaster: the bradyseism of 1983 which shocked and drastically changed the lives of citizens residing in the historic center of Pozzuoli. The political and technical response to the natural disaster emerged through the realization of a new town providing housing for displaced persons. Monterusciello was designed as a new town alternative to the construction models of the late 70s and early 80s: in here, there are no high-density buildings or a lack of public spaces. This new town had high ambitions in terms of planning the new housing settlement, inspired by a classical *forma urbis* and a human scale architecture. Despite the intellectual and political effort to find an effective solution to a collective drama, which affected most of Pozzuoli’s population, many things did not work. What was supposed to become a prosperous, high-quality and innovative new town, after thirty years was reduced to the state of an isolated settlement with serious economic, socio-cultural and environmental problems. The quality achieved in the realization of buildings and public spaces failed to reach the plan’s ambitions. Above all, urban services, facilities and amenities never properly developed within Monterusciello’s city fabric. Monterusciello is currently an unfinished project that lies in an extremely critical phase, both in terms of residential and constructive quality. The Municipality of Pozzuoli, together with local partners, some of them having national relevance too, is launching the idea of an urban regeneration based on Urban Agriculture (UA) inspired and realized through the method of permaculture. This initiative is not conflict less, and many challenging aspects have to be faced by the managing partnership led by the municipality. Among them, it is worth putting in evidence the following issues:

- recreating a trustworthy relationship between the city and the local administrators;
- the effort of actively involving the residents towards this innovative form of local economy and achieving the required capabilities at local level;
- the necessity of creating a cooperative environment for managing the envisaged development projects.

On the other side, all local actors, both public and private, are pro-actively working at the implementation of the initiative. The Municipality is providing the right setting in order to effectively and efficiently manage the project and, above all, a participatory planning process, involving additional local partners has been triggered. Finally, the project and its partners are activating a dialogue with other governance layers, especially with EU funds Managing Authorities, which can contribute to a sound development of the regenerative pathway set in place by the Municipality together with its partners. To create synergies within the line of the vertical subsidiarity is a necessary step to complement the current running actions aiming at creating a substantial critical mass of involved local actors providing:

- leading ideas for sustainable development,
- and setting up operational schemes for sustaining, revising, increasing and accomplishing the MAC projects objectives.
2 The policy context

2.1 Urban Regeneration through Urban Agriculture: An outlook on EU promoted instruments and funds

As evidenced by the new Europe 2020 strategy, the European Union is increasingly interested in pursuing principles of cohesion and social inclusion through urban policies. As part of this issue, Urban Agriculture (UA) represents a captivating path for integrating social inclusion and economic development requirements for effective contemporary urban policies. Indeed, we are used to linking the Urban regeneration approaches with categories such as brownfields redevelopment, post-industrial economies reorganisation, fighting unemployment, re-weaving socio-cultural and economic networks at local scale, temporary uses, but definitively urban agriculture as driver for the regeneration of a large scale urban settlement, as intended in the MAC Project, represents a new and captivating contest.

UA refers to agriculture and farming within and around cities. The most striking feature of urban agriculture, which distinguishes it from rural agriculture, is that it is integrated into the urban economic and ecological system: urban agriculture is “embedded in” and “interacting with” the urban ecosystem. The new town of Monterusciello (Pozzuoli), in the context of Naples’s Metropolitan Area, lends itself perfectly to this kind of regenerative urban action.

The European approach towards agriculture is mainly connected to the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy). The EU’s CAP is designed to support farming that ensures food safety (in a context of climate change) and promote sustainable and balanced development across all Europe’s rural areas, including those where production conditions are difficult. The CAP is concentrating on agriculture, but it mainly focuses on rural areas, it is not considering the aspect of agriculture in urban areas. The link with food production and safety gives space and opportunity to UA. Another strong link is the one with the social environmental policies in the urban realm. The CAP is not yet directly equipped, in the current programming period, to support proper UA initiatives, but practices like the MAC are paving the way to make possible the adaptation of this policy to UA practices in the upcoming programming period. The key-message set in the field by the MAC project is extremely important as it aims at fighting urban poverty through a sound and structured set of local projects grounded on UA and driven by the permaculture methodology. In this sense, this planning experience is a forerunner at EU scale, especially when taking into consideration the scale, both spatial and financial, of the entire process.

The support of the EU mainstream funds at local level has to be considered as a liason to activate and already start to prepare for the incoming programming period. The most important fund to consider is the one relates to the CAP. The CAP funds in the Regione Campania follow a strategy mainly oriented to rural areas. Nevertheless, it is to notice that all 6 key-points of the strategy could play a role even in a hybrid context like the one of Monterusciello. The sixth point is already

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1 Definition provided by RUAF Foundation, [http://www.ruaf.org/about-ruaf](http://www.ruaf.org/about-ruaf)
focussing on relation between agriculture and social inclusion, it could be the easiest way to open a dialogue between the MAC and the Region to already experiment pioneering actions in the spatial context of an urban area. MAC project’s activities could provide many key-elements for designing the future strategy in order to have a more UA oriented PSR (Programma di Sviluppo Rurale) in the next programming period.

A pertinent integration of the action proposed by the MAC could be thought with the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) ROP (Regional Operational Programme) 2014-2020. Specifically, the axis 8 (Social Inclusion) and the axis 10 (Sustainable Urban Development) could integrate and further develop the initiatives planned in the MAC proposal. A relevant help to further structure and complete the MAC Project could be found in the ESF (European Social Fund) ROP. The ESF ROP has 3 axis that fit to the MAC purposes, that is the 1st (Employment), the 2nd (Social Inclusion and Poverty Fighting), the 3rd (Education and Training). Both these ROPs are managed by the Regione Campania. The topics faced by the UIA MAC are transversal to different potential development pathways. The Agriculture links immediately to the production of food. It states a clear connection between the strengthening of the local community through the growing of local food. The contextualisation of UA policies, at the different level of the vertical governance, from the EU to the Municipality, is still in an experimental way, but UA can potentially address most issues of the EU political agenda. Currently, it is not yet commonly recognised as a development theme capable to solve social, economic and environmental problems and related consequences, that is unemployment, social exclusion, poverty, education, climate change mitigation, preservation of biodiversity, valorisation of cultural heritage, active citizenship, cooperation among informal and formal stakeholders. This is the main challenge up to the MAC Project, but if it cannot rely on a mature policy context for UA actions, it can for sure refer to a number of transversal EU programmes experiences, programmes and financed projects, that are already financing running or concluded projects that can be used as benchmarks. As far as UA and the EU Agenda concerns, an interesting testing has been initiated within the COST2 programme. In the last 4 years the Action has elaborated a European approach on the phenomenon of Urban Agriculture. The main findings and important policy recommendations are now published in the book "Urban Agriculture Europe".3

Another relevant EU initiatives for UA has to be find in the LEADER programme, here there is but an issue, after mainstreaming, it has become much more 'agricultural', bureaucratised and risk averse.4 Less risks and more bureaucracy mean reduced capability of impacting and being innovative. Among the EU led initiatives it is worth paying attention to following projects: AGRI URBAN (about Rethinking Agri-food Production in Small and Medium-sized Cities), SUSTAINABLE FOOD IN URBAN COMMUNITIES (developing low-carbon and resource-efficient urban food systems), URBACT MARKETS (to understand and explore the role of urban markets as key drivers of change in terms of local economic development, regeneration and sustainable living), these projects have been financed by the URBACT initiative. In addition, it

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2 COST is an EU-funded programme that enables researchers to set up their interdisciplinary research networks in Europe and beyond.
is to consider calls and projects promoted under the Horizon 2020 programme. Specifically, actions in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, bio-based industries are to be considered, the running work programme is an opportunity to experiment new practices and to support the ones already in implementation. Looking at practices not directly linkable to EU funds, it is worth to mention the practices put in evidence by “cities in transition” an interesting repository of good practices based on urban farming and food production. Finally, researchers make clear that there is perceived detachment of those who formulate EU policies at a ‘distance’ in Brussels, from those who are responsible for implementing and policing them at the local level. The MAC project is an occasion to work even under this aspect and provide concrete solutions for reducing this perceived gap.

2.2 Monterusciello, a new town in response to a catastrophic event

When the bradyseism events of 1983 caused the relocation of 20,000 inhabitants from the high-risk historic city centre of Pozzuoli to Monterusciello, this action caused the most extensive urban expansion action within the Comune, effectively building a „new town“ 5 kilometres to the north of the city. This action, which led to the very swift construction of a permanent new settlement called „Monterusciello 2“ (in completion to Monterusciello 1, a development originally started in the framework of Council Houses – Lawno. 167/62), allowed for a rapid build-up of around 5,000 flats to accommodate the relocated population. Monterusciello faces today many important challenges, evident from an analysis of the basic statistics of the district. The MAC Project focuses on the Monterusciello neighbourhood of Pozzuoli, an area of approx. 100 ha with a maximum elevation of about 120m. The intervention site is rather flat, and has been historically an agrarian landscape, until the events of the ’80s. This intervention was part of a larger project: considering the cyclicity of the bradyseismic phenomenon, the creation of the Monterusciello new town should set an

![Fig.1: Monterusciello, the central market. Source: MAC Project.](https://citiesintransition.eu/cityreport/farming-greens-in-the-city)

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answer the relation between the city and its geological singularity. The same architect Agostino Renna, the designer of Monterusciello, defines the neighbourhood as "a definite part of a city", showing in these words the intention of recognising the area as an autonomous identity. Renna was inspired in the design of this new town by the ancient Greek city of Priene. Hence, the design idea was far from the logic of creating a classic social housing settlement, but it has been thought as a new town that could become the reference point for the urbanised countryside of the western area of the province of Naples, currently the Metropolitan Area. Monterusciello is therefore conceived as a new-town, yet today it is experienced as the periphery. In the suburbs that we are used to reading today dominate the blocks, as in the nearest and well-known Scampia. In Monterusciello it was decided to pay more and more attention to the scale of urban-rural territory: the buildings are arranged following the natural slope of the ground so that everyone can be directed to the sea, each building lot has a courtyard or green space, many primary public facilities were provided for both neighbourhood and sub-municipal services; the planovolumetric project based on a series of longitudinal axes linking the most representative locations in the neighbourhood.

Although the planners’ objectives during the neighbourhoods’ design was to "welcome and reassure" the new inhabitants, the residents of Monterusciello never fully accepted this new condition. They have always been looking at the neighbourhood as a temporary passage and not as a definitive accommodation.

Fig. 2: The city of Priene. Source: https://heckeranddecker.files.wordpress.com/2008/03/priene-plan.jpg

Agostino Renna is one of the most relevant Italian architects of the 2nd half of last century: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agostino_Renna.
2.3 A challenging urban action: The Monterusciello’s snapshot in numbers

Monterusciello faces today a few important challenges, evident from an analysis of the basic statistics of the district. From the point of view of demographics, Monterusciello had in the 2011 census a total number of 22,778 inhabitants, 28.4% of the total population of Pozzuoli (80,357 inhabitants – ISTAT). The district has been growing in population between 1991-2001 (+5.94% increase), but has plateaued in recent years, with only a 0.43% increase in population between the censuses of 2001 and 2011. In fact, the demographic trend most apparent in the project site is very pronounced aging of the population, with the median age growing higher between censuses (Figure 3). Between 1991-2001, youth (aged 0-15) have decreased with 33%, and the population of 65 years and over has doubled, which raises concerns for the future capacity of the local inhabitants to both make a living and care for an increasing number of elderly people.

Fig. 4: Age distribution of the resident population in the 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses. Source: ISTAT.
In reference to the education level of the citizens in the MAC pilot area, the clear majority (96%) have high-school diplomas or lower learning cycle studies, while a percentage of 11% do not have studies. The proposal of Monterusciello Agro City and the opportunity to work in local agriculture could be highly beneficial to the target users, especially the ones which otherwise have limited opportunities as qualified workers in other domains.

The participation of the Monterusciello inhabitants to the workforce (rate of activity) is of 45%, of the total inhabitants aged 15 and over. With a total of 4,957 employed inhabitants, the rate of employment was, for 2011, just 26%, lower than the figures of the region. However, the unemployment rate (the „job seekers“ from the total workforce) is rather low as well, of 13% in total (ISTAT, 2011), which can indicate local disinterest to actively seek a job, an aspect often encountered in disenfranchised neighbourhoods. There is a strong disparity between employment of the male workforce (39%) and employment of female inhabitants (14%). Local opportunities are, indeed, limited – this is apparent both from the Expert Study Visit conducted on-site, and from the statistics. The Monterusciello resident population which is commuting daily into the commune was of 6,330 inhabitants, while the population commuting outside of the commune was of 2,432 inhabitants. In total, 45% of the population aged 15 and over commutes daily, a strong indication for the need to develop local opportunities for Monterusciellans, since the neighbourhood is deprived of the normal living-related activities and facilities which represent the core of communities.

In what concerns the built environment, in 2011 there were a total number of 959 buildings, of which 739 residential buildings and 8 abandoned/ not in use. It is to note that, between 2001 and 2011, the number of buildings with other uses than housing has surged, indicating a slow diversification of activities in the area, in part due to the vocational school for the hotel industry which is present on-site.
The existing housing units, due to being built very rapidly and under pressure, and being meant for a median use of 25 years (temporary use of lightweight prefabricated edifices) are currently in poor conditions due to the lack of maintenance, materials degrading, improper use of dwellings or alterations by inhabitants.

One of the major issues of the neighbourhood is that many dwellings are rented, by inhabitants which otherwise could not afford any investments in the building stock, and that the investment needed to transform the buildings into proper dwellings respecting today’s building codes and regulations exceeds the capacity of the Pozzuoli Municipality. However, investments are being done starting with a group of 5-6 building blocks in the area, and the MAC project could contribute to the visibility of the issue as well as the expanding of opportunities for a large-scale urban renovation project.

Currently, the MAC Project area of Monterusciello retains its original semi-temporary relocation characterising in what concerns the built environment, meaning that beyond the residential prefabricated units built in the ‘80s and the later additions, only a few fundamental services have been brought to the neighbourhood: a town hall (municipio), schools including a vocational school for the HORECA industry, a bank, a post office, a Carabinieri and a Fire Brigade station, and an indoor sports arena.

The many areas where public edifices should have been built or public spaces should have been landscaped have been left as „urban wastelands”, including some derelict structures which were built but never used (such as the Market). These open unused spaces make the object of the MAC Project; in total, their surface reaches 538,900 sqm, or approximately 54 hectares. To put the number into perspective, this huge area could mean for each of the 22,000 inhabitants, a „green living room” of 24 sqm of their own. The potential of this rather flat-suraced, good soil quality, agriculture-prone urban area for a community lacking in amenities, opportunities and jobs is key if Monterusciello is to have a go at successfully implementing the concept of sustainable development.
3 The proposed solutions

A planning process for urban poverty reduction is going to be triggered by available public land in Monterusciello. These currently, and partially, abandoned plots of land are going to become the places for the development of urban agriculture based projects. These projects should relaunch the local economy and start to decrease the current local unemployment levels through the involvement of the residents in their implementation. The proposed solutions aim at achieving the following aims:

- To set up an “AGRO-URBAN POINT” as a visible point of the public governing institutions in Monterusciello. This point is the place for coordinating and designing specific actions in the neighbourhood and for keeping an effective daily dialogue with residents, thus introducing a „mediation level” as a part of organizational innovation within the public administration.

- To start a transformation process of the vacant public land suitable for agricultural use through the application of permaculture methodology which, while not untried within Europe before, is innovative through the approach and context of the „new town” suburb;

- Conception of a local cooperativistic approach to the development of a new local and sustainable economy based on UA led by permaculture approach (training courses, open laboratories) – creating an innovative self-sustaining system able to endogenously develop in the medium and long-term;

- Promotion of ecological cultivation processes and constructions

- Support to creation and growth of start-ups based on km 0 and ecologic agro-business

- Re-designing and re-qualifying the urban spaces: architectural and urban interventions will provide areas for events, food market, and walkways, constructing the new landscape for an “agro-city” and creating a new forma urbis through social, technological and agricultural, economic and governance innovation.
3.1 Main elements of sustainability in the MAC approach

Monterusciello Agro City proposes a model of development which, although applied and tested in a very specific context, could represent a sound and highly transferrable methodology – provided it will validate the expected results of the project. Most regeneration projects which do not prove sustainable on the longer term fail to achieve their goals mainly because 1) they provide an out-of-context solution which cannot be integrated with the actual vocation of the urban landscape, 2) they leverage too much on external investment and exogenous development initiatives instead of capitalizing on the potentialities within the area itself, and 3) they fail to involve the stakeholders and gain local ownership, in which case the action is perceived as an outsider initiative and does not „take off” at local level.

The Monterusciello district, or „new town”, was built on originally agricultural land, an area which together with the neighbouring lands such as Licola started to emerge in the 70’s as a tourist attraction due to the landscape quality, before the bradyseism of the 1983 claimed the land for emergency constructions. The vocation of the landscape in and surrounding Monterusciello (the vast 50 empty hectares within the built-up area), can hence be fit for vineyards, orchards and intensive urban permaculture farming, due to the high fertility of the soil. In this sense, the MAC project, through its interventions, can finally integrate the city within the territory and help mend the bond between context/landscape and town, after more than 30 years.

Moreover, from a social, cultural and economic standpoint, the district has all the characteristics of a deprived and segregated neighbourhood: lack of local economic and social opportunities, high workforce unemployment, disenfranchisement of the inhabitants due to low ownership and poor upkeeping of the urban environment, virtually no territorial linkages other than the daily commuting of a large part of the active population. There is a clear need for a project which will change the local paradigm for Monterusciello, investing and creating a new, sustainable model of development by empowering the local community.

The MAC project proposes an approach which is articulating urban landscape building, social innovation, partnership and economic development in order to regenerate a historically deprived area; the action plan is synergic, meaning that the external investment provided as co-financing by the UIA for this project is used in an integrated manner, and all investment actions are transversal to the main three pillars of the project: networking / capacity building, landscape / regeneration and entrepreneurship / local economy.

Regarding the physical investments, i.e. the redevelopment of 30 hectares as permacultural productive urban landscape and developing the urban design and micro-architecture fittings which will allow the spaces to be used and enjoyed by the residents, the main sustainability aspects are related to how these spaces will function and will integrate with the existing urban tissue, in practice. The project gives a lot of importance to creating the necessary functional links between the seemingly disparate empty plots, and an important role here will be played by proper signage, a new specific identity of the sites and the pathways and bicycle lanes connecting the pilot areas. Free access to these very large areas which have been historically fenced off and out of the reach of residents will
create an impact at the local level and will prompt usage, which in turn can be beneficial for the residents from multiple points of view (green therapy, spaces for socializing and meeting, outdoor sports, etc).

Environmental sustainability is attained by using an experimental model, a mix of permaculture and bio-intensive techniques, linking the productive part to a marketing circuit which uses agricultural waste. The two laboratories developed through MAC (Permaculture and Ethical production / Rural Marketing) will organise a circular production system. The urban design and landscaping process will be conducted using eco-sustainable materials and recycled / recyclable products, contributing to a positive impact on the environment. Finally, in what concerns the local economy and entrepreneurial opportunities, Monterusciello Agro City focuses on both creating the supply and demand of bio agricultural products and by-products, as well as training the future entrepreneurs and researchers which will ensure that the initiative will develop locally. Sustainability and local rooting are ensured through proper selection and training of individuals in three key areas (related to permaculture, ethical production and marketing, innovation business and start-up), through development of entrepreneurial skills in workshops and incubators, and through development of competitiveness with the help of a bonification system (scholarships and awards). The economic model of development proposed, relying on PPPP (public-private-people-partnership) is sustainable, albeit in the longer-term alternatives to public ownership of the farmland and buildings for laboratories, the Agro-Urban Point and the Business Incubator will need to be sought.

One of the main barriers to overcome with respect to sustainability is the question of ownership; legal ownership, of the housing units and the land itself, but also psychological and social ownership of the new spaces created through the MAC Project. Monterusciello is a perfect example of the Broken Windows Theory – a city that is not maintained fails to step up and maintain itself.

Fig. 8: Monterusciello, the central market. Source: MAC Project.
For the MAC to be sustainable, it needs to break this cycle and involve the residents in the regeneration process. Because of historical miscommunication between the citizens and the authority, the process needs to start as early as possible, and include stakeholders as much in the design of the solutions as well as the implementation. Especially for the urban design, furniture and micro-architectural elements projects, to ensure their use, a proper process of co-design should be implemented. MAC is not a one-time investment, but a lengthy and complex process of re-generation, and as such will rely crucially on the initiative continuing and growing past the project’s lifetime. The most important results of the initiative can be reaped on the medium term, hence ensuring sustainability should be regarded as the most important aspect in implementation, apart from the innovative experimentation percourse itself.

As the residents’ involvement is a big part of making MAC “take root”, the next steps of the project should be strongly focused on gaining local buy-in and embedding the initiative in the local civic fabric.

### 3.2 Regenerating through urban agriculture: Risks and potentialities of the permaculture methodology

Permaculture differs from the traditional agricultural practices due to its systemic, integrative approach to sustainable food production systems embedded into the social and cultural lifestyles of the community. It is a practice of expanded focus, consisting of ‘consciously designed landscapes which mimic the patterns and relationships found in nature, while yielding an abundance of food, fibre and energy for the provision of local needs’, being as much a form of process innovation as well as organizational innovation. Traditional intensive agriculture, even in urban and periurban areas, has numerous drawbacks and ecological risks related to climate impact, soil, water, air, biodiversity and landscape effects. Permaculture is a more sustainable approach which factors in responsible farming as a circular system, reusing its by-products. When assessing new urban activities with extensive land-use – such as redeveloping 30 hectares of urban space – there are always trade-offs to consider; urban agriculture development comes against potential other uses of land, such as social housing, productive units and so on. In the Monterusciello case, due to the availability of other land options and reduced need for competing urban functions, the trade-off is a positive one. Monterusciello does not face the risks of urban permaculture which are a reality in most big cities, namely the soil contamination and lack of proper conditions (excessive shade, wind tunnels) – it is thus a logical approach to valorising extensive urban assets. The permaculture approach of Monterusciello Agro City has numerous potentialities. The most obvious of the physical and environmental ones are related to the improvement of the micro-climate, strengthening the urban-rural links, rooting the new town in its surroundings through proper zoning of the productive areas in the city, and strengthening the resilience of the city.

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On the other hand, perhaps the most important effects could be the socio-economic and psychological ones. Urban permaculture in the MAC area can create places of belonging and socialization, of “green therapy” for the citizens. While the land which will be used is public, sharing in the work at local level can create communal ownership of the plots and better integration of this marginalized neighbourhood through participation. The gardens, laboratories and Agro-Urban Point also have the potential to create edu-action at local level, through development of knowledge and know-how for community education. Finally, from an economic standpoint, MAC can reduce the local food insecurity and can create a local value brand for Monterusciello, an endogenous economic development opportunity which will create jobs at the local level, specifically for the local inhabitants: the proximity to their home and flexible nature of the permaculture work can potentially reach more inhabitants than the ones actively seeking work and can promote sustainable and gender-equal work opportunities.

### 4 MAC State of play

The MAC project is currently fully activating the primary project’s partners and creating a “second level” partnership, that is enlarging the implementation of activities to local stakeholders that have been partially involved in the design phase. At the same time, the Municipality of Pozzuoli (lead partner) is setting up a multi-disciplinary team to accompany and assist the responsible PM in the daily management and in the organization of the projects to launch.

There has been a postponement in the beginning of several activities due to the delicate phase of the electoral campaign and new elections that took place exactly with the project’s initial phase. It is to evidence that the promoters, both politicians and technicians, of the MAC have been confirmed in their position. The current political and managerial assets can guarantee maximum support to the accomplishment of foreseen activities.

Project partners are beginning to act quickly and recover lost time. During the first expert site visit, motivations and methods have been provided to partners to increase the collaboration between them and to integrate more closely their actions. The effort currently is set up on the following key activities:

- To set up a visible place in Monterusciello where to collocate the team responsible for the daily management.
- To prioritise the area where to start working with UA initiatives.
- To prepare training courses for the target groups to involve and to employ in the regenerative action.
- To look for the best form of cooperation in order to manage the goods produced and bring them to market.

Fig. 10: Monterusciello, visiting an intervention area. Source: MAC Project.

Fig. 11: Monterusciello, visiting an intervention area. Source: MAC Project.
4.1 Problems first

The Monterusciello Agro City (MAC) is not just a project promoting urban regeneration of a neighborhood using urban agriculture as a driver. It is a complex approach to the requalification and further development of a new town built in response to a catastrophic event, about 20,000 people were moved from the ancient city of Pozzuoli into the new town of Monterusciello. The displacement of an entire community, specialized in commercial and marine activities, in an internal area, predominantly agricultural, rapidly urbanized.

Working with key stakeholders and enlarging the decision makers arena is the first and the most important challenge that partners have to face in order to reduce conflicts and getting consensus around the planning process. It is essential to recreate a constructive dialogue between the institutions and the citizens: This is the fulcrum around which all other initiatives have to rotate. Over the years, dialogue between residents and institutions has severely tilted for several reasons.

The most difficult task of the MAC will be to rebuild that confidence in the local population that will allow the project’s partners to develop the proposed solutions. The various problems that are now being addressed through the MAC have been settling for a too long time. These are the problems that made the idea of a new town,
which proposed an urban model in support of a high standard of living, to become one of the many urban suburbs.

A suburb plagued by

- high levels of unemployment,
- serious housing problems, especially in flats,
- and poor services in the area,
- a number of abandoned public areas and spaces.

The families who had the opportunity, once the emergency ended, to return living in other areas of the city, immediately moved. Currently, the most disadvantaged part of the population continues to stay in Monterusciello. Problematic social conditions are combined with a difficult urban environment, for the character of emptiness, anonymity, and decay of the common spaces. A further level of “physical spatial poverty” is represented by the realized but still un-used buildings and spaces, which are slowly and inexorably going towards degradation. Monterusciello is now an “in between” settlements, it has the structure and the critical mass to be a development pole in the Naples’s Metropolitan Area, but at the same time it is still in the situation of being a dormitory neighbourhood.

Starting with the above in mind, it is clear that the implementation challenges of the UIA Monterusciello Agro City will be plenty, with the most important ones revolving around fostering the growth of the network and the set-up and running of a proper open governance framework for supporting the local innovations. Co-designing and co-implementation have been two pillars of the consortium’s strategy for implementation, yet they may prove difficult due to the long period of citizen-government alienation and subsequent lack of trust at local level.

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<td>1. Leadership for implementation</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>The Municipality of Pozzuoli is in a good position to provide a strong leadership for the MAC Project. The city of Pozzuoli recently reconfirmed the mayor that promoted the MAC initiative. The Mayor confirmed the planning commissioner that launched the idea of the MAC initiative. There is a frame of continuity in respect of technical and political decision making; who proposed the project has currently both consensus and instruments to implement it. There is an issue still ongoing to make visible in Monterusciello a place where residents and stakeholders can directly get in contact with the staff managing day by day the project.</td>
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<td>2. Public procurement</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>The technical offices of the Municipality are well equipped to manage correctly and consistently the design of conventional public procurement. In this initial phase, it is to test the administrative system against the specific innovative requirements linked to the UIA initiative. To overcome the challenge to design effective and innovation-driving public procurement, it is necessary to strengthen the dialogue between the leadership and the two levels of partnership (core and extended). The leading partnership should aim towards a process of co-designing/identifying the procurement key elements together with local stakeholders in order to better addressing the problems to face. Finally, another open question is whether the consortium will have readily at their disposal the budget for the procurements, as financial concerns can delay the issuing of the procurements.</td>
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3. Integrated cross-departmental working | MEDIUM | One of the roles of the AGRO-URBAN POINT (AUP), the specific coordination and management office of the MAC, is to harmonize and make synergy among the different sectoral competences working at the municipal scale. Moreover, this office, as a „shop-window“ of the MAC, has to design and coordinate even the governance schemes related to vertical subsidiarity issues. The realization of this proper “planning processor” of the MAC is still in the process of setting up. The AUP will make the actions of the local administration transparent within the neighborhood. Moreover, a Job-Desk, operated by the AUP, will have to inform and involve stakeholders about new job opportunities generated by the MAC, training activities, scholarships and awards. The AUP is currently under construction.

4. Adopting a participative approach | HIGH | The dialogue between the public administration and Monterusciello’s residents needs to be improved. A lot of work has to be put into the reconstruction of mutual trust. The strong and impacting psychological, socio-cultural and economic effects of the displacement have created a chasm between citizens and representatives of public authorities. The MAC has the opportunity and the means to set up a comprehensive and reliable participatory planning process. All elements for a successful and sustainable approach to development of project’s foreseen activities and projects are at the heart of the partnership that is managing the MAC. The partnership should develop concrete tools and initiative to set up an effective and efficient participatory planning process.

5. Monitoring and evaluation | HIGH | A proper process of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is not yet running. The partnership is currently managing and implementing all necessary actions to comprehensively start the implementation of the activities. It is not yet clear how, in view of the above participatory pathway, the activities are going to be monitored: the approach and the M&E should be strictly related. It is quite logic to use for the purpose a participatory-based methodology in order to consider local people’s perspectives and priorities, with the intent of operating sustainable and open choices; to identify problems and troubleshooting problems already during the implementation phases; To provide and co-create knowledge and skills to empower people against urban poverty sources. To assess, on an ongoing basis and together with target groups and local stakeholders, the evolution of the project, in order to be able to make necessary course-corrections.

6. Financial Sustainability | HIGH | In the current phase, the main idea beyond for a “MAC business model” is to create a cooperativistic system where the quality agricultural production is able to support a short supply chain that meets the local food market, and aiming at producing, at the same time, materials for ecological design construction. A proper Cooperative should constitute even an ongoing training school in direct connection with the production processes. Principally, the financial sustainability of the envisaged projects, especially in the post UIA financing phase is still to be properly set up. It is to be built the relations with potential public financer (Region, Central level, Metropolitan Area) and potential private investors. Discussion on PPP (Public Private Partnership) and PPPP (Public Private People Partnership) are at initial stage.

7. Communicating with target beneficiaries | MEDIUM | As the AUP is not yet properly functioning, the communication with target groups (unemployed residents looking for a job, young people in search of opportunities and capacities, local business owners/retailers, local farmers, professionals and researchers, entrepreneurs, local associations and schools) is not yet efficiently coordinated. On the other side, there is a clear statement to create a second level partnership that it is going to actively include even the target groups in an enlarged and participatory approach to the design of the foreseen activities and projects. This is going to be difficult to set up properly during the lifetime of the project if the process of open...
communication and the creation of the „two-way bridge” between the project and the target groups will be delayed.

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<th>8. Upscaling</th>
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<td>The topic faced by the MAC has a relevant potential of being replicated or expanded. As stated above, the communication activities and the projects are moving their first steps as the links and discussions with overlaid governance tiers. Regeneration activities based on UA (Urban Agriculture) are increasingly getting attention on an urban scale. It is too early to identify the set of characteristics of this challenge in the present phase of the MAC. A lot will be depending on capability to develop an inclusive planning process at local scale based on an effective and easy to manage methodology.</td>
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### 4.2 Next key steps to be completed

Beyond of crucial activities that have been launched soon after the stabilization of the political situation, there are other key issues to be considered to define a proper integrated, sustainable and strategic approach in the MAC. Specifically, the “governance scheme” of the entire operation needs to be improved and made more coherent and cohesive. One of the main topics discussed on the occasion of the “Expert Site Visit meeting” has been the one related to the definition of roles connected to the vertical subsidiarity, especially to start to understand the dialogue between Monterusciello, the Municipality of Pozzuoli, the “new institutional layer “of the Metropolitan Area and the Region. It is essential to start to find already in this phase how to guarantee continuity to the regenerative planning process of Monterusciello even after the project closure. Moreover, the governance scheme has to be defined even at horizontal level. As stated, there is the strong need to enlarge at local level the number of involved actors, to recreate a constructive dialogue based on trust between residents and institutions, specifically with the project leader that is the Municipality of Pozzuoli. However, there is the need to further structure the action of the MAC partnership as coordinator of the local participatory planning process and take sound action to re-create identities out of a community in exodus.10

Another key point is related to the “business model”, the approach based on permaculture is strictly connected to development of a cooperative system organizing the entire local enterprise. A cooperativistic approach in response to economic, cultural and social marginalization and as a tool to connect the local products to close and distant markets.

Finally, training for managing innovative solutions and to prepare local target groups to run up this new regenerative system is going to be a critical set of activities in order to create capabilities necessary to keep together the development idea, the specific structuring projects in response to identified needs and the work force to be employed to manage this large-scale action of Urban Agriculture.

9. A specific presentation has been held by Dr. Paola Amato, expert in EU cohesion policies and instrument, during the ex-cathedra session: http://macpozzuoli.eu/news/18-prima-visitadegl-esperti-uae-nelle-aree-di-monterusciello.

10 A specific presentation has been held by PhDc Sabina Leopa, expert in strategic and participatory planning processes: https://urbasofia.eu/uia-pozzuoli-1st-expert-visit-in-monterusciello/.
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SOCIAL-MAC

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Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) is an Initiative of the European Union that provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges. Based on article 8 of ERDF, the Initiative has a total ERDF budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020.

UIA projects will produce a wealth of knowledge stemming from the implementation of the innovative solutions for sustainable urban development that are of interest for city practitioners and stakeholders across the EU. This journal is a paper written by a UIA Expert that captures and disseminates the lessons learnt from the project implementation and the good practices identified. The journals will be structured around the main challenges of implementation identified and faced at local level by UIA projects. They will be published on a regular basis on the UIA website.