

City	
Country	Italy
Population	46,542
Title of policy or practice	Inter-municipal Food Policies in "Piana del Cibo"
Subtitle (optional)	From citizens participation to food sustainable strategy
URL video	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/1991055450964639/videos/1871242573003148/">https://www.facebook.com/1991055450964639/videos/1871242573003148/</a>
Category	Governance
SDGs	SDGs: 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,15,16,17.
Brief description	<p>La Piana di Lucca, which includes, among others, five municipalities (Altopascio, Capannori, Lucca, Porcari and Villa Basilica), inspired by the Milan Food Policy, started a project of local participation, called Circularifood, which involved the whole territory of la Piana, in order to create a food strategy for the area. During a series of participative workshops and focus groups, citizens and groups of interest, selected through mapping, discussed and deepened principles and actions for the food policies guidelines. This participatory process culminated with the creation of a food strategy and a food council. With the requirement for the five Municipalities to share functions and decision-making paths considered relevant in food-related policies, an inter-municipal food strategy was created. The aim was to build an integrated policy that would deal with agriculture, social health services, education, the environment, territorial and economic planning and more, placing the creation of a sustainable local food system at the center of the public action. Indeed, the strategy is based on six fundamental principles and six actions that the municipalities will promote throughout the years. To implement the strategy, the five municipalities are now working to establish an inter-municipal food council. This body, called <i>Agorà del Cibo</i>, is totally unique in its genre because of its structure: Living labs (composed by citizens and food sectors stakeholders), <i>Agorà</i> (composed by the Circularifood actors) and Food council (composed by the coordinators of the living labs). The <i>agorà</i> and the council will both have presidents that will directly refer to the political part and coordinate with the help of academic bodies. Apart from the two times a year gathering of the <i>Agorà</i>, the strategy will be implemented thanks to the work of a dedicated office in Capannori that will facilitate the communication among the municipalities and the implementation of the strategy on a daily basis.</p>
Date of start and state (ongoing/completed)	06/2018 Ongoing
Actors and stakeholders involvement	From the political part, the 5 municipalities, Toscana Region, Province of Lucca and " <i>Autorità Regionale per la garanzia e la promozione della partecipazione</i> " (APP – Regional Authority for the Guarantee and Promotion of Participation); from NGO sector, sociolab, Slow Food and <i>Laboratori di Studi Rurali Sismondi</i> ; from academia, University of Pisa and Firenze. Also, Circularifood gathered citizens from all background that helped writing the strategy.
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May-June 2018= Mapping people, organizations and projects of the local food system;</li> <li>• September 28= Inspirational day for the participants in the project to stimulate the co-planning process;</li> <li>• October 2019= community work through focus groups based on the Milan Food Policy strategy;</li> <li>• November 2019= workshops to build the inter-municipal food strategy;</li> <li>• January 2019= presentation of the food strategy to the community;</li> <li>• February- ongoing 2019= food strategy approval and creation of the inter-municipal council.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Innovation</b></p>	<p>This food strategy and future food council are unique in their kind because of their inter-municipal nature. In fact, they are the only example of governance actions which gather Italian municipalities under the topic of food policies. It is a very innovative project, since it is the very first Italian city-to-city cooperation on food policies and the first inter-municipal food council.</p> <p>The project shows that sustainability and the right to food need to be addressed by sharing practices and knowledge not only between actors of the same food systems but also between different administrations and cities. After the MUFPP, this is the very first step towards the realization of it, especially in Italy. In fact, what the Circularifood experience taught is that each municipality has expertise and best practices that can be replicated and adapted to the other municipalities. The strength of the food policies projects in La Piana di Lucca is that all five municipalities share a similar context which makes the sharing of knowledge even more valuable than in other contexts. It gathers all the important actors of the food system of the area in a structure that looks at the long and short term, guaranteeing diversification, participation, sharing and coordination.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<p>The territory of the Piana di Lucca has a population of over 150,000 inhabitants for 430kmq.</p> <p>From the second post-war period, some transformation processes changed the territory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Industrialization;</li> <li>● Urban sprawl;</li> <li>● Abandonment of traditional crops in agriculture.</li> </ul> <p>Despite an evident interdependence between the territories, the Local Administrations have not activated over the years significant systems of coordination in order to develop a common food policies.</p> <p>Moreover, in each municipality there are no decision-making mechanisms or action plans relating to food policies.</p> <p>In fact, within the local administrations, food policies still remain divided between various departments and, moreover, there isn't a clear cognitive framework.</p> <p>The positive impact of Circularifood can be defined in terms of the political and administrative changes generated, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acquisition of a cognitive framework;</li> <li>● Definition of a shared system of principles that focuses on the right to food and sustainability;</li> <li>● Definition of a multi-stakeholder food plan;</li> <li>● Definition of a single and common food government for the Piana di Lucca;</li> <li>● Definition of an action plan;</li> <li>● Definition of an associated management system of food policies;</li> <li>● Definition of an inclusive system that takes into account the needs of vulnerable social targets in the definition of food policies.</li> </ul> <p>Since the food strategy has just been introduced in the area, there is no data yet to show its impact.</p>
<p><b>Inclusion</b></p>	<p>The nature of the inter-municipal food policy is inclusive. In fact, the strategy and the council address all three kind of possible inclusion: 1) thematic inclusion because it is a governance action made to help implement and coordinate all actions in all MUFPP categories; 2) territorial inclusion because it involves more than one municipality, the region and the province government; moreover, this project is strongly focused on the linkages between rural and urban areas, with the aim of obviously enhancing the natural interrelation among those areas in the name of cooperation and inclusion; 3) social inclusion because it has been from the beginning of Circularifood a participatory process that included all kind of actors influencing food in La Piana.</p>

## Adversity coefficient

The challenges faced during the project are mainly of three types:

1. Citizens engagement: The number and type of citizens involved in civic participation processes are often not representative of the society and of the social issues to be addressed. Moreover, there is a limit to reaching a significant number of citizens, representing the food supply chain from production to consumption. Furthermore, the participation of citizens is not intended as a mere presence at the project meetings, but in the sense of an active contribution to the co-planning activity of the food plan. We decided therefore to address the problem through a participatory process management methodology based on three stages: Inspiration, Definition of principles, Co-planning of the plan. The results were extremely positive: over 200 subjects representing the food chain involved.

2. Political: The theme of food is not a priority in local political agendas. There is no political leadership with the responsibility of food policies and capable of dialoguing with citizens and local stakeholders. So, the political challenge was to bring out the issue of food as an opportunity for growth for the territory, and as a priority for local political agendas. We faced these problems through three steps that raised awareness regarding food issue in the Piana di Lucca:

- Signing of Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (taking responsibility);
- Creating a political cabinet made up of councilors from the municipalities of the plain supervising the process (increasing skills and creating leadership);
- Stimulating a vision of local development based on food (intellectual leadership: see Food strategy document);
- Creating a democratic leadership: Circularifood ended with an event of restitution in which the politicians of the Piana di Lucca committed themselves in front of citizens for the implementation of food policies.

3. Administrative: five local authorities with separate offices, services, contracts, projects and often without any contact or information exchange. The absence of a common model of governance is one of the causes for the lack of optimized administrative processes. The main administrative challenge was to define a model of governance for food policies in the Piana di Lucca. The answer was the creation of an associated management model of food policies with a political subject (Food Council) and a technical-administrative one (a common FP office).