

Title

KOKOZA – building community gardens and composts

Short description

A Prague based social initiative KOKOZA builds community gardens and composts, shares experiences and knowledge and encourages others to build their own community gardens and composts. It aims to integrate urban gardening, local produce and composting in a food loop. The name KOKOZA is a wordplay (koza means goat in English) and abbreviation of KOMunitní KOMpost a ZAhrada (Community Compost and Garden). KOKOZA strives to engage socially disadvantaged people in their activities, primarily as a work-training programme and in a sheltered workshop that produces mobile gardens, “seed-bombs” and composters. As a complementary activity KOKOZA maps existing community gardens, composts and composters.

Topic

Living – Green spaces

Characteristics (type, level)

Neighborhood, Local/Regional Intervention

Country/Countries of implementation

Czech Republic

Aims and Objectives

The aim of KOKOZA is to increase quality of life in cities promote urban gardening, composting and food loop. KOKOZA aims to provide an opportunity to city residents to care for their local environment and promote reduction in biodegradable municipal waste.

Target Group

City residents, companies and other organizations

Status

Ongoing

Start and Completion dates

2012 – to date

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

The practice aims to show that community gardening and composting in cities can be simple, fun and for the benefit of the local community. By engaging people in composting waste and growing vegetables and herbs in urban gardens the practice promotes the “food loop” concept with a goal to change their consumption behavior.

Effects on:

Health and Wellbeing	Urban community gardening and urban composting is a practice that encourages citizens to engage in caring about their local environment and green infrastructure that improves residential quality of life.
Vulnerable populations	KOKOZA practices aim to involve socially disadvantaged and elderly people, helping them integrate in the community, develop work habits and improve socialization of marginalized individuals.
Environment	The practice directly contributes to reduction of waste by composting. Availability of locally produced vegetables, fruits, herbs etc. decreases the demand for import of such products, and in consequence less transport is needed and less emissions produced.

Initiated and/or implemented by

The practice was initiated by two friends eager to start social business activities. Their plan to combine urban composting and gardening with engagement of handicapped people won Social Business Idea 2010. In 2012 they founded KOKOZA as a non-for-profit organization.

Stakeholders and sectors involved

- KOKOZA, a Prague based non-for-profit organization,
- other civil society organizations collaborating in KOKOZA projects,
- individuals and companies participating at workshops, or shopping for seedbombs, equipment for urban gardening, mobile flowerbed or vermicomposters

Financial support

The main source of financial support are grants from public funds and foundations supporting civil society.

Evidence-base

No specific evidence-base, the founders conceived their original idea during their study visits to UK and Germany and successfully developed over last couple of years.

Main activities

Promotion and operation of community gardens and integration workshop (helping socially disadvantaged and elderly people to integrate in the community), designing and production of urban composters, mapping and networking of communities running urban gardens and composts.

Evaluation

Several projects supported by grants from public funds were evaluated in terms of fulfillment of their objectives. As a part of one project a guidelines for work-training of people with handicap were elaborated.

Main results

The concept proved viable and the initiative grows steadily - in January 2017 the total number of participants (gardeners, volunteers, workshop participants etc.) surpassed 5,000. KOKOZA initiated a work leading to a stylish indoor vermicomposter winning reddot award 2017.

Key success factors and barriers

The key success factor was a positive vision and enthusiasm, cooperative local public authority, and last but not least good promotion and networking. Barriers are mainly of financial nature (costs of everyday running of integration workshop etc.).

INHERIT Perspective

This initiative has been chosen because it links all three INHERIT topics – sustainability, health and equity. It influences community and individual EXPOSURE/EXPERIENCE and improves STATE. Its support of 'food loop' a closed cycle of food in cities is an attractive stimuli to change BEHAVIOUR.

More information

- website: <http://www.KOKOZA.cz/en/>
- Annual reports (in Czech only) - <http://www.KOKOZA.cz/vyrocní-zpravy/>
- Guidelines for work-training of people with handicap (in Czech only) - <http://old.KOKOZA.cz/files/oppa/KOKOZA-metodika-online-final.pdf>

Contact

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