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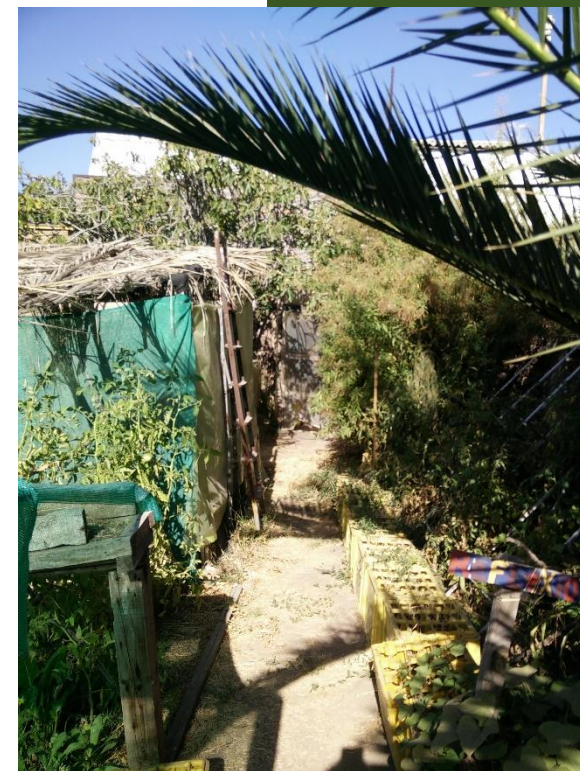
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URBAN AGRICULTURE /CHILE



Urban agriculture
under the
constraints of
neoliberalism:
networks,
discourses and
story-lines in
Santiago, Chile



About



The relevance of urban agriculture (UA) goes beyond planting vegetables in the ground and obtaining food. The relevance falls in all the associations, connections and discourses resulting from their work in the space.

In Chile, urban agriculture projects (UAP) form a silent and unknown network that is changing the relationships between social actors and the general understanding of cities.

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Resistance

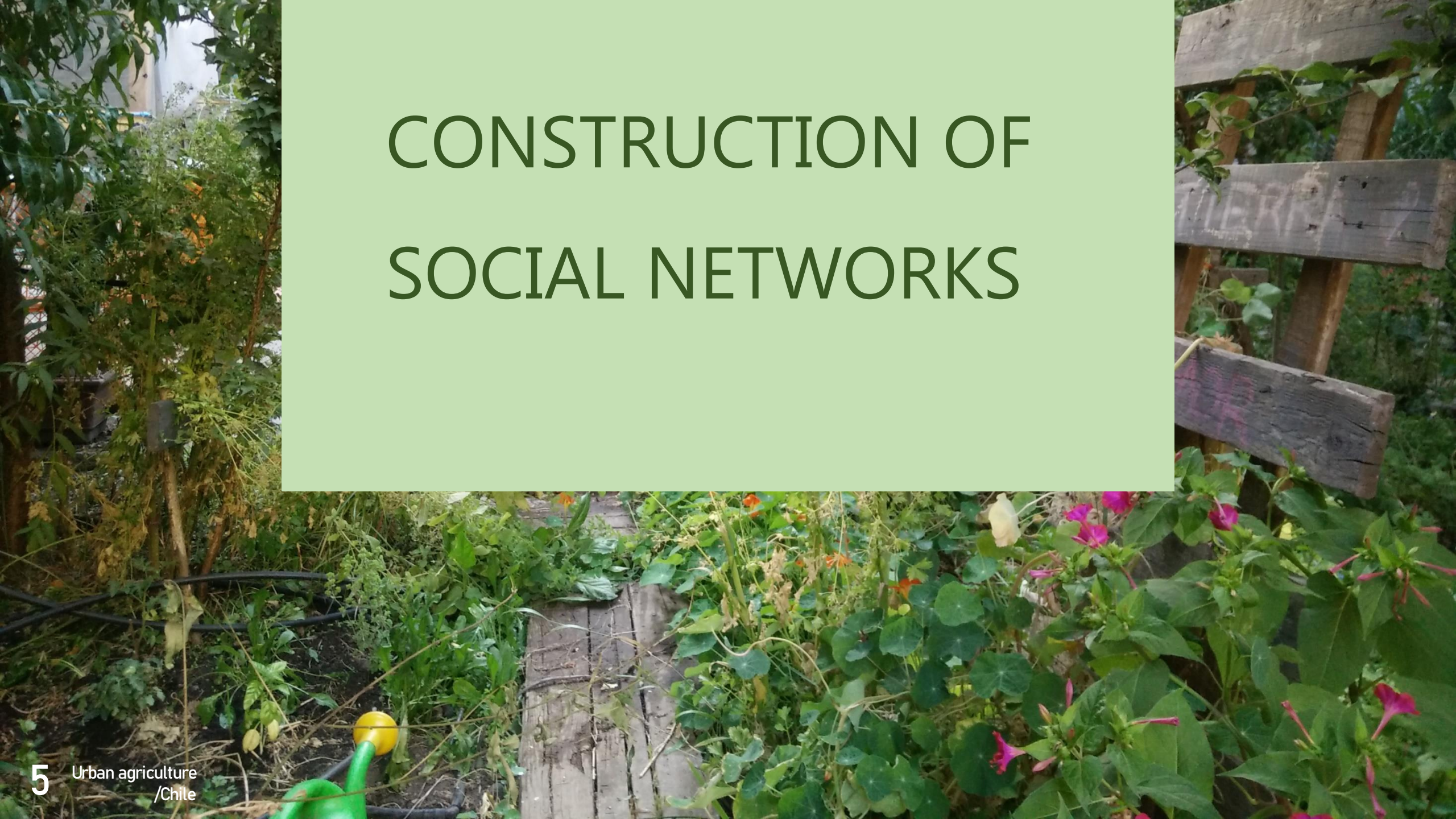
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Workshops



Space

CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL NETWORKS



In Santiago, UAP work in a horizontal organizational structure, including a variety of social actors. The groups are formed by an average of eight active members that volunteer their work and time to the maintenance of the gardens.

Despite the interest of the groups on working locally and produce an impact in the nearest neighbours, UAP exceed the limits of the neighbourhoods and reach the Metropolitan Area, with people travelling long distances to participate in their activities.

Although most UAP connect with gardens from other areas of the region, they prefer those located in their municipalities.

While some groups prefer little to non-contact with other actors, other groups are actively seeking actors to connect and create a sustainable relationship. However, they are less interested in establishing connections with municipalities and big companies due to ethic reasons.

A difference of other cases in Latin America, UA in Chile is used for the formation of social connections and not for food production.

UAP recognised that UA opened the spaces for people to reconnect with their neighbours, generating conversations, community and networks. For the groups, gardens are the first step for changes and a platform to communicate discourses. They also see UA as a form of resistance against the capitalist system and neoliberalism that control consumption and promotes individualism.

NETWORKS

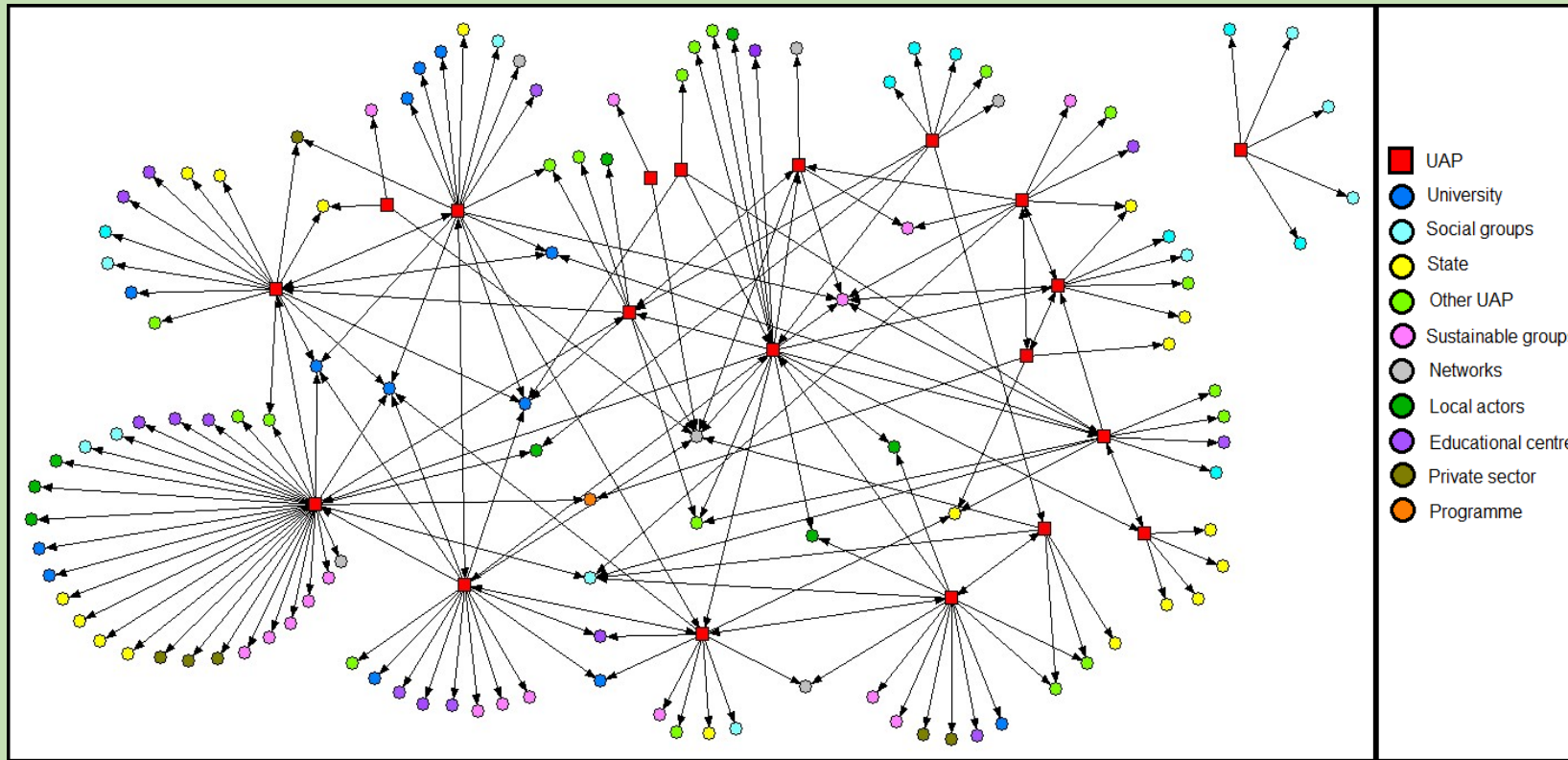


Figure 1. Networks between UAP and different social actors in Santiago.

Some groups tend to work with a specific type of actors who share similar ideas and interests, producing an exchange of knowledge and expertise between the actors. The preference for a certain type of actors reveals the orientation of the impact they want to create in the society.



Circulation
 Community
 Rural
 Empowerment
 Meaning
 Environment
 Awareness
 Indigenous
 Local
 Security
 Resistance

Urban Agriculture



Temporality
 Recovering
 Workshop
 Power
 Health
 Territory
 Connections

Expertise
 Space
 Experience
 Discourses
 Horizontal
 Education
 Neighbours



CIRCULATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Indigenous & Rural Knowledge



UAP involve mainly self-taught members and they are rarely connected to professionals or universities. Because of this, groups value more knowledge than formal education.

UAP value the expertise of indigenous communities due to their deeper connection with nature, their understanding of the agricultural cycles and their knowledge of natural medicine. Groups adopt their practices and ceremonies in their gardens.

UAP believe that people who lived in the countryside and worked the land have more knowledge about plants and nature than people that were born in cities. They also contribute more with knowledge about nature and gardens and help to maintain alive their expertise

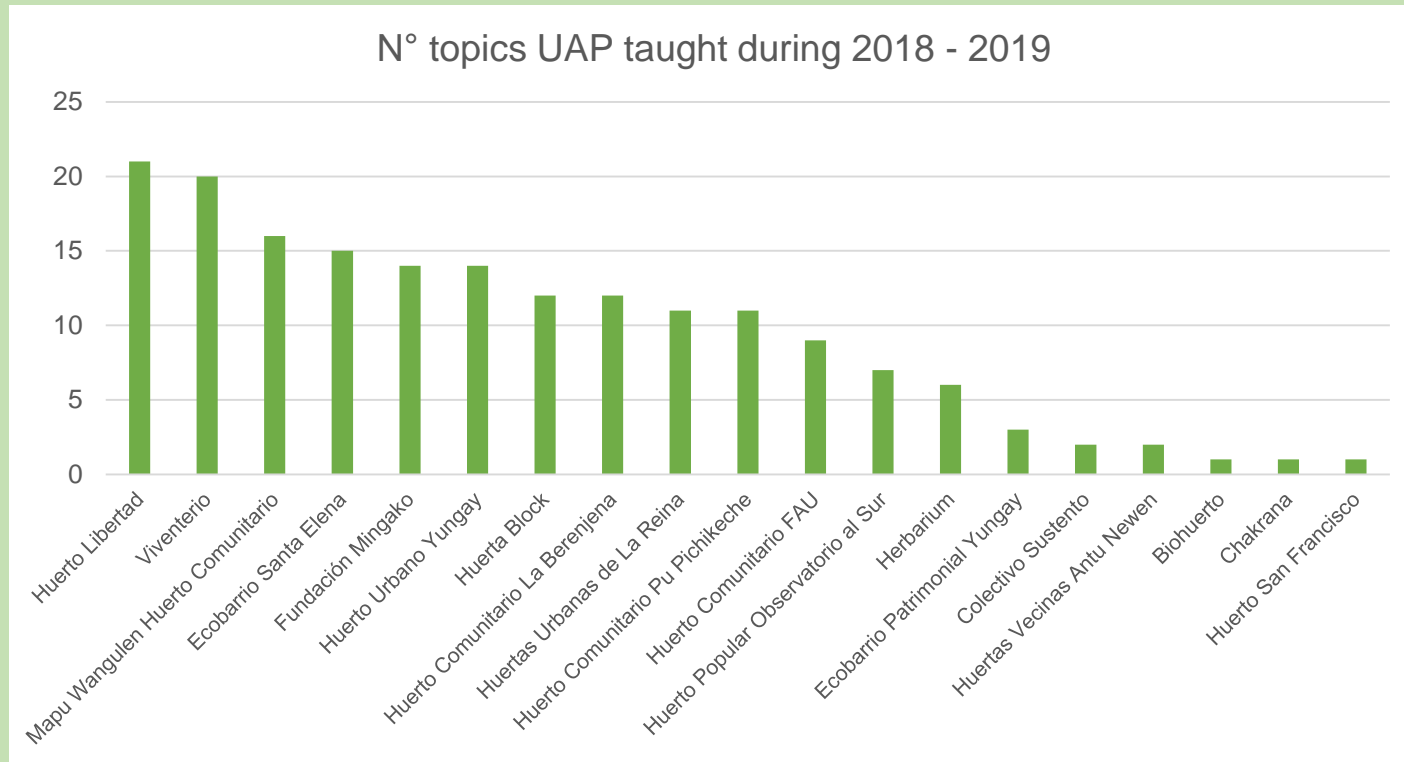
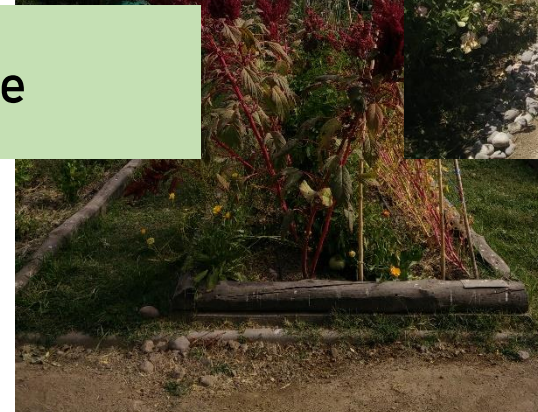
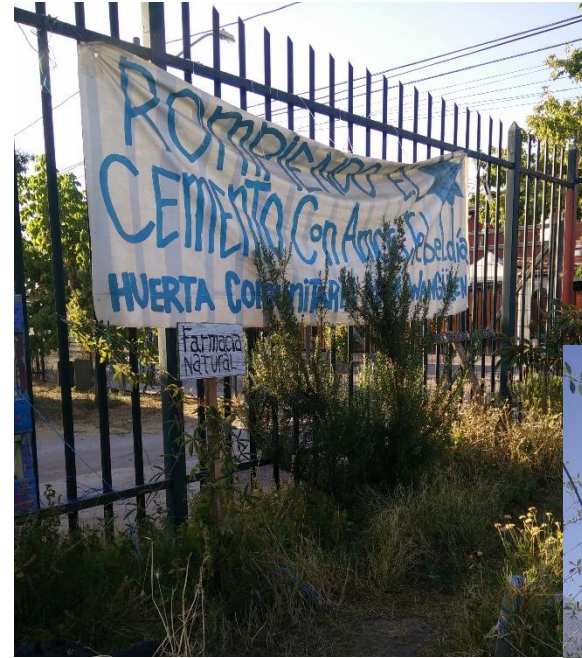


Figure 2. Number topics UAP covered on their workshops during 2018 – 2019.

All UAP interviewed provided workshops. Most of them were free and open to the community. They addressed topics beyond gardening and included areas such as health, food, waste management, craft, social and sustainable theories, garden techniques, silviculture practices and garden elements.

GOVERNING THE TERRITORY



Space

Planning



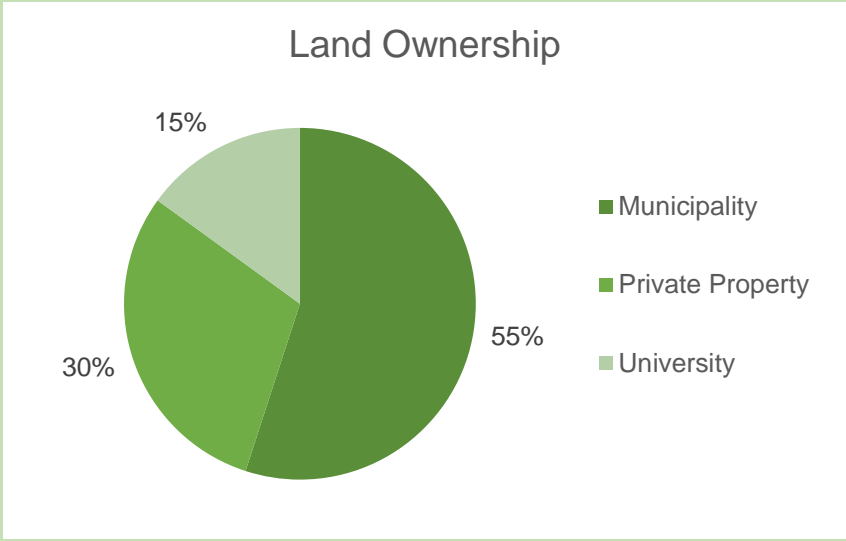
In Chile, the development model is private-public and it is not up to the citizens to participate.

The economic model affects the levels of urban planning, where land is considered as a good that will be regulated by supply and demand



The lack of green areas or urban agriculture legislation impede the recognition and legitimacy of the projects and jeopardise their permanence in the space.

The state prefer the use of Public Space instead of Green Areas. The problem is that a public space could be a space that does not necessarily have vegetation, it could be a street or a hard park. So the simple idea of vegetation and what it involves is in conflict here.



Most UAP make use of the public spaces for their gardens. As a result, groups face a constant problem with the use of the space due to the restrictive and limited policies of the municipalities regarding green areas and urban agriculture.

Figure 3. Ownership of the land used by the UAP.

UAP under loan for use refer to the unclear condition, the lack of physical contracts and their fear of relocation they experience.

UAP in appropriated land have conflicts with the municipality or universities that have caused their relocation or intent of relocation in the past.

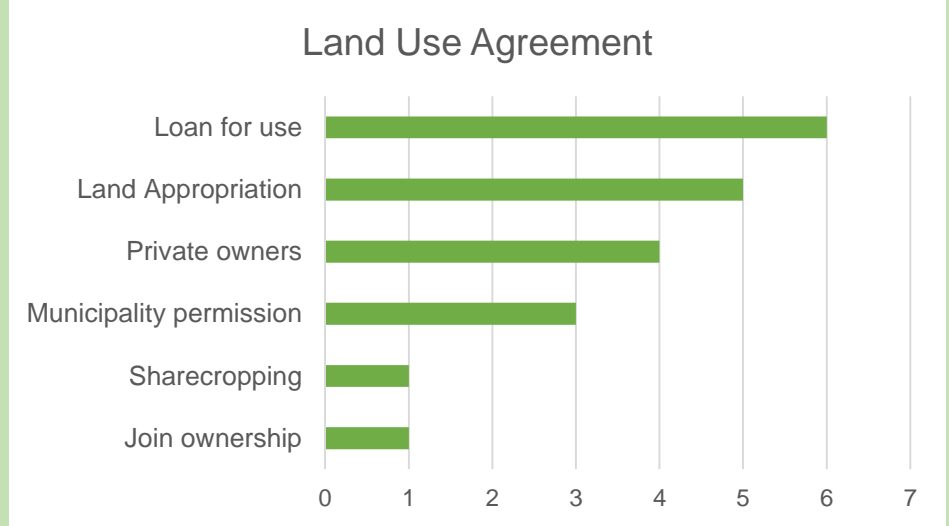


Figure 4. Ownership situation of the land used by the UAP



Several UAPs have recovered abandoned spaces and have changed external perceptions of problem areas by being present in the territory.

MEANING OF THE SPACE

UAP use the space to resist neoliberalism; address socioeconomic issues to the population; promote community-related activities; and unravel segregation and disparity problems.

Such a small act can
make such a big impact

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