



## Why Rooftop or Shallow Bed Gardens?

- They cost little or nothing to construct, making them highly accessible to the poorest slice of the population, those that have to most to benefit from nutritious food
- They can be built almost anywhere there is an area that can support their minimal weight or has a concrete surface
- They provide either food or a source of income to a family... or both!
- Assuming water is available, they are not subject to sporadic and unpredictable rainfall like normal gardens
- They give people a real sense of ownership over a part of their diet, and potentially their earnings as well

## Little Soil, Lots of Plants

- Usually no more than three to six inches deep
- Usually 1.2m (4ft) wide so that the middle can be reached from both sides, with the length depending on the strength of the roof or surface of concrete. If very long, there can be a break every 3.5 m (roughly 12ft) for ease of access, but this is optional depending on preference
- Behaves almost exactly like a normal garden just needs to be watered more frequently. Watering is contingent on depth, meaning a garden that is three inches deep would need to be watered twice as much as a garden that is six inches deep. Watering should always take place either in early morning or evening. Only in extreme hot weather conditions should the garden be watered during the middle or the day due to the rapid evaporation rate at midday.



### **Materials:**

- A mix of organic materials, compost, and soil the volume of the bed. This needs to be mixed before placing in the frame. An alternative planting medium is large brown vegetative material in the first layer – about 6 inches deep. The second layer is finely chopped green organic matter. The top layer is soil either broadcast soil/sand/seed or trenches made of soil for seeds to be planted into.
- A sheet of plastic to go underneath the garden to protect the roof, create a root barrier, and retain moisture. An alternative way to retain moisture is to cover the area with multiple layers of heavy fabric.
- Edging material to go around the garden to retain the growing medium.
- If you choose wood as your edging material, a few nails to hold it together.