



AFRICAN FORUM
ON URBAN FORESTS

2nd African Forum On Urban Forests

Green Horizons: Shaping the Future Resilience of African Cities through Urban Forests

18 March 2025 - 21 March 2025



in partnership with:



Engaging and empowering communities through tree planting, education & awareness to ensure a sustainable green canopy in the City of Johannesburg as part of the 10 million tree planting project – South Africa.

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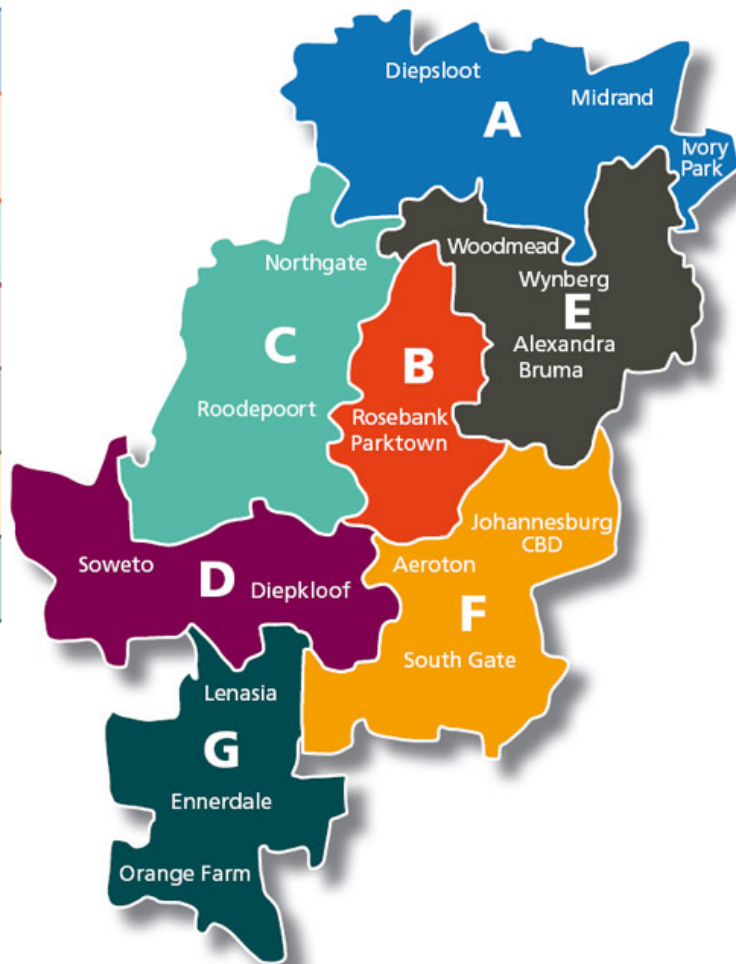
OVERVIEW

1. CoJ Context
2. Challenges
3. Respond to the challenges
4. Lessons Learnt
5. Conclusion



CoJ CONTEXT

Region A	Diepsloot, Kya Sands, Dainfern, Midrand, Lanseria, Fourways
Region B	Randburg, Rosebank, Emmarentia, Greenside, Melville, Mayfair, Northcliff, Rosebank, Parktown, Parktown North
Region C	Roodepoort, Constantia Kloof, Northgate, Florida, Bram Fischerville
Region D	Doornkop, Soweto, Dobsonville, Protea Glen
Region E	Alexandra, Wynberg, Sandton, Orange Grove, Houghton
Region F	Inner City, Johannesburg South
Region G	Orange Farm, Weilers Farm, Ennerdale, Lenasia, Eldorado Park, Protea South



Rietfontein Environmental Education (EE) Centre : A & part of C



JBG & Zoo EE Centre : B & C



Kloofendaal Ecological Centre : C



Dorothy Nyembe EE Centre: D & G



The Wilds & Klipreviersberg Nature Reserve: E & F

Green disparities across the regions & the 10 million tree project to address this



CHALLENGES

- Some tree species associated with cultural superstitions and not wanted by communities (bring wildlife into communities e.g. owls)
- Trees being associated with criminal elements in communities
- General lack of interest in greening initiatives, limited and poor community participation, consequently poor survival rates of trees (i.e. trees shedding leaves in winter, roots)
- Food insecurity and high youth unemployment rate



CoJ RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES

- Needs analysis survey
- Zoo to you programme (owls to communities)
- Door to door community education & awareness
- Schools' involvement, training and education
- Youth empowerment and employment opportunities



OWL EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Biological facts to counteract fears, superstitions and myths

- Owl talks and workshops in the zoo and surrounding communities
- ✓ Understanding owl adaptations
- ✓ What owls do for people

The more information people have the better the decisions they can make



NEEDS ANALYSIS SURVEY

- Visit people at home to determine greenings needs
- Exploring tree species preferences
- Identify households that do not need trees in their spaces
- Determining concerns and general perceptions on greening especially on street trees and households tree planting



DOOR TO DOOR EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

- Educating people in the comfort of their own homes and content includes the following:
 - ✓ Value of trees, greening and open spaces
 - ✓ Why household and street trees greening
 - ✓ Trees to be planted and rationale including demystifying misconceptions around tree planting
 - ✓ Care and maintenance of the trees
 - ✓ Generic community participation, support and buy-in



SCHOOLS PARTICIPATION

Involves:

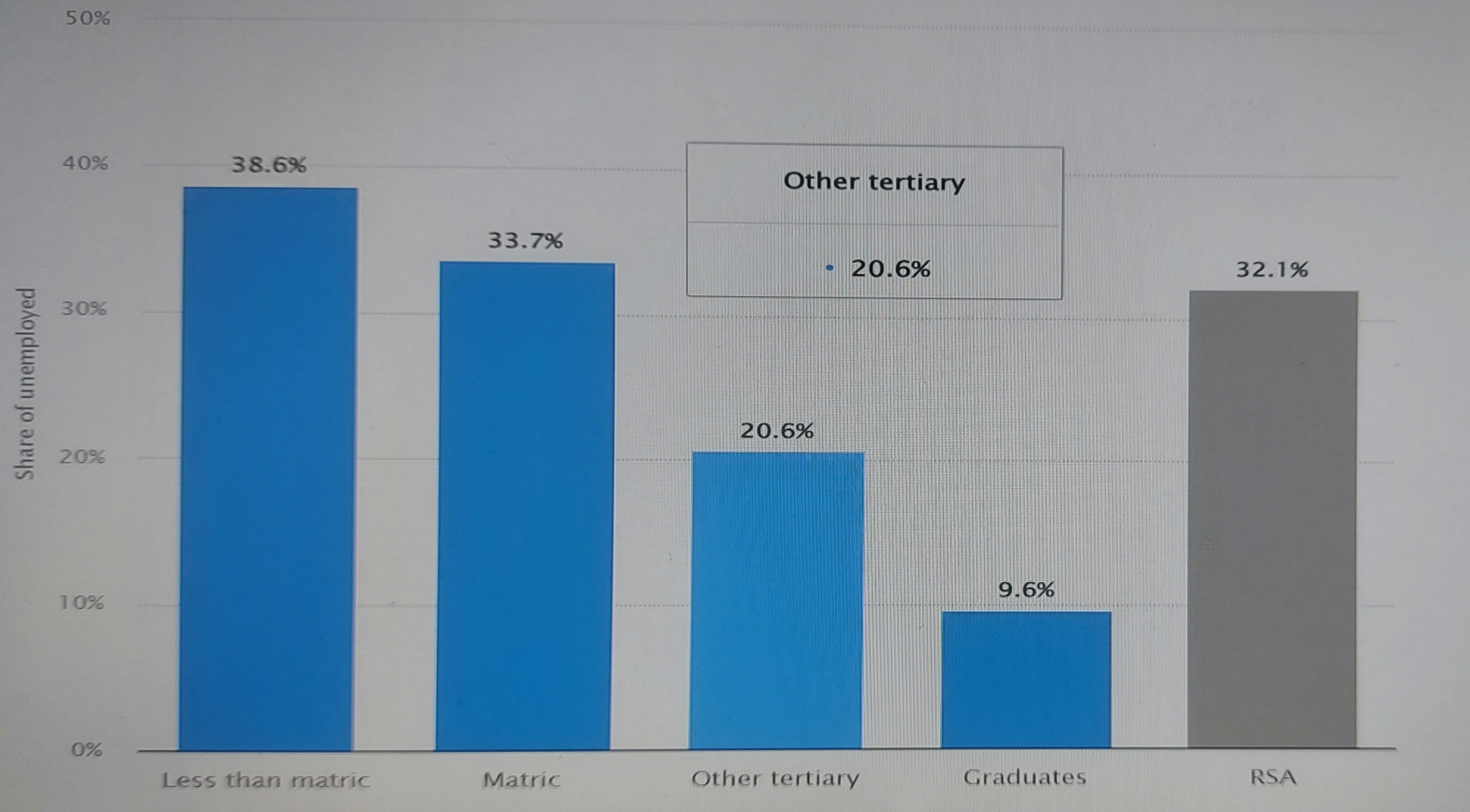
- Greening in schools through educators and learners' participation
- Selecting and training tree champions (greening teams)
- Conducting schools' assembly talks
- Aligning greening to the school curriculum, educating & disseminating information through all EE Centres and through outreach programmes (shows and exhibitions at public amenities) including shopping centres



SCHOOLS PARTICIPATION



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & EMPLOYMENT



SA employment by
educational level 4th Quarter
of 2024



YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT ATTRIBUTING FACTORS

Skills Gap: Lack of skills relevant to the workplace

Lack of/poor career guidance

Lack of experience and credentials that address employers' risk in making hiring commitments

Youth Unemployment attributing factors

Lack of available jobs suited to entry-level skills

No funding to pursue post matric studies

Lack of information, networks and connections among youth, especially youth from families lacking significant social capital



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN JCPZ

1. Train the trainer – A training and empowerment model designed to provide youth with knowledge and skills enabling them to solve their local environmental and green issues

Selection Criteria

- Grade 12 and/or further tertiary education with interest in environmental matters



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN JCPZ

- 1 • Need identification (skills, experience, interest)
- 2 • Development of a Tailor-made program based on the need
- 3 • Training and development
- 4 • Pilot- practical on the job training, shadowing of EE centres staff
- 5 • Independent implementation with guidance, coaching and assessment by EE centre staff
- 6 • Implentation in respective communities
- 7 • Ongoing support, provision of resources and co-designing and implementation of innovative projects and programmes

N.B. Voluntarism with compensation where possible subject to budget



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN JCPZ



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN JCPZ

2. Corporative Model: 12 – 18 months training programme

- 1st Step: Interested individuals/groups are assisted to form a legal entity/company with Companies & Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC).
- 2nd Step: JCPZ identify projects that the formed entity can provide services for on behalf of the organisation.

Start up is provided with minimum capital or assistance with basic resources.

Selected cooperatives will be exposed to a skills programme/incubation programme with the following formal training programmes:

- Business management acumen skills
- Service delivery principles (customer care and service standards)
- Supply chain processes and compliance
- Technical training responding to JCPZ mandate
- Basic financial and project management



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT : Corporative model



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN JCPZ

3. Eco guides:

- Unemployed youth from different wards within the City of Johannesburg are recruited to be Eco-guides (preference given to centre volunteers)
- 6 months project
- Environmental training based on distinct local environmental challenges



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT : Eco Guides

Edutainment

**Community
Educators**

**Greening in
schools**

**Green Talks
at schools**



LESSONS LEARNT

- Young people learn to take initiative, organize activities, and motivate others whilst taking sense of ownership and accountability for their surroundings
- Communities gain firsthand experience with conservation, sustainability, and ecological principles and adopt environmentally friendly behaviours and commitment to environmental stewardship.
- Community participation ensures citizen buy-in, support and active involvement and subsequently sustainable green canopy



*“Alone we can do so little,
together we can do so much.” -*

Hellen Keller



Thank You

