



**AFRICAN FORUM**  
ON URBAN FORESTS

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

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# The green ambiance: advocating for green spaces through urban school compounds in Kayunga district, Uganda



Presenter: <sup>1</sup>Irene Nagudi <sup>1</sup>Kichini Gardeners Initiative, Uganda

Co-Author: <sup>2</sup>Blessing Apamaku Asianzu <sup>2</sup>University of Texas at Austin



# Introduction

**Urbanisation in Uganda** is growing at **4.5% per annum**, leading to pollution & green space loss

- **Green spaces in urban schools** are being replaced by buildings, parking lots, or remain neglected
- **Impact on** mental well-being, social interaction, environmental awareness
- **Why Schools?** Students spend most of their day there → **Key for well-being & eco-responsibility**
- **Exploratory study (Nov 2022 – Aug 2023)**; explores transformation of urban school compounds for students' well-being and environmental consciousness
- **Focus Areas:** Social interaction, relaxation, ecological knowledge, and mental well-being.
- **Next step**; conduct an Urban green spaces transformation project in 2 schools





## Objective questions

1. How accessible and available are green spaces in urban school environments?
2. What are students' attitudes toward green spaces in school environments?
3. How does hands-on green space intervention contribute to students' overall well-being?







## Methodology

**Approach:** Mixed-method, focusing on qualitative engagement.

### Key Activities:

- Baseline survey and interviews with **20 students** on green space knowledge, attitudes, and preferences.
- Hands-on greening activity with **30 students** planting fruit trees, shrubs, flowers.
- Observations to track how students used and felt about the new green space.





# Results and Discussions

## Objective 1: Green Space Availability and Accessibility

- Baseline survey revealed very limited green space—either bare or built-up.
- Students reported no regular access to dedicated green spaces

## Objective 2: Students' Attitudes Toward Green Spaces

- 100% of respondents acknowledged green spaces are important and enjoyed planting

## Objective 3: Impact of Hands-On Green Space

- 66.6% of students see new green space as a safe and peaceful place to relax and interact with friends.
- 17% reported more relaxation and better social interaction during school breaks
- Observations confirmed that the green space became a popular hangout spot





# Conclusion and Recommendations

- **Transforming urban school compounds into green spaces** enhances students' sense of belonging, relaxation, and social connection.
- **Hands-on involvement in planting and maintaining greenery;** builds ecological awareness and pride in the school environment.
- **Schools are untapped opportunities for urban greening in Uganda,** benefiting both students and the wider community.

Hence, schools should:

- **Dedicate permanent green spaces**
- **Promote environmental education programs** like gardening, tree planting and green space designs
- **Collaboration with community members**
- **Peer-led** green space learning to foster policy advocacy for sustainable urban green policies





# References

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- WHO (2019). Green Spaces and Mental Health in Urban Settings.
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Partner: Nakivubo C/U Primary School.

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# Thank You.

