



## Women's Spaces Project launched at the NEFSALF meeting

Nairobi and Environs, Food Security, Agriculture and Landscape Forum (NEFSALF) is a place for deliberation on the food system of Nairobi city. For twenty years, beginning in 2002, it has been convened by Mazingira Institute. NEFSALF brings together small producers, processors and distributors, as well as mentors, officials, CSOs, researchers and scholars. The forum includes Women's and Mentors Hubs.



NEFSALF meeting brought together about 70 participants. They included over 40 urban farmers, NCC Food and Agriculture Sector officials, researchers and scholars, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), representatives of CGIAR centres and the Canadian High Commission

The most recent NEFSALF meeting took place on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at the Desmond Tutu Conference Centre. The programme included the launch of the **Women's Spaces Project**, presentations on training in urban agriculture and the food system, the Food System Strategy of the Nairobi City County (NCC) and reports from farmers in action.

The Women's Spaces Project is a regional initiative taking place in four countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya, Uganda, South Africa and Angola. It is coordinated by Rooftops

Canada-Abri International and executed with the financial support of the Government of Canada, through Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The initiative is guided by Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy.

The project in Kenya is executed by Mazingira Institute, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Sector, Nairobi City County. The intent is to advance gender-equal access to land and resources for urban agriculture. In Uganda, South Africa and Angola the more general intent is to implement gender equal rights to land, housing and livelihoods.

At the December meeting, Kimani Mungai, Development Officer at the Canadian High Commission, represented

### Women's Spaces Project: Nairobi City County (NCC) Gender in urban agriculture and the food system.

The project's ultimate aim is to enhance the implementation of gender-equal access to land and resources for urban agriculture. This will be accomplished through the following array of activities, planned to roll out over five years, from 2022 to 2027:

- Training of officials on urban agriculture and the food system and on gender sensitivity;
- Production of training materials;
- Studies, meetings and workshops;
- Active engagement with farmers and NCC through mentoring and monitoring, technical assistance, database development and building of a demonstration unit.

The project is implemented by Mazingira Institute, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Sector, NCC. It is an initiative of Mazingira Institute and Rooftops Canada-Abri International and is executed with the financial support of the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.



Janine Cocker, Head of Cooperation. He noted the continuing collaboration between Mazingira Institute and the Commission, and said **“Canada's commitment to gender equality and women's economic empowerment is unequivocal, and this project is a great example of how it can be done.”**

Mary Kibira, Acting Chief Officer, Food and Agriculture Sector of Nairobi City County, acknowledged and appreciated the presence of representatives from the Canadian High Commission, Mazingira Institute, Nairobi City County and farmers. She said as a follow up to the meeting, her team, in liaison with the participants present, will consolidate data available on different groups doing various types of urban farming.

Albert Miare, a long-standing NEFSALF participant and Mazingira Institute trainee who



Kimani Mungai, Development Officer, Canadian High Commission, making the remarks on behalf of Janine Cocker, Head of Cooperation



Dr. Simon Heck, lead CGIAR Resilient Cities Research Initiative, through sustainable urban food systems, based at CIP/ILRI

farms in Kasarani, said “I have been practicing mixed farming, growing vegetables and rearing dairy cows since 2007. The produce from the farm is sold to earn an income.” He mentors other farmers and encouraged those at the meeting to take up the upcoming training for urban agriculture and the food system at Mazingira Institute. Albert, to his credit, was elected the chairperson of the Food Liason Advisory Group (FLAG) at its first meeting in July. It is the stakeholder engagement component of the NCC Food System Strategy.



Albert Miare is a farmer trained at Mazingira Institute. He is the chairperson of the FLAG



Albert Miare, chairperson of FLAG, presenting a kikapu of assorted vegetables from an urban farm, to Mary Kibira, Acting Head, Food and Agriculture Sector, joined by NCC officials and Davinder Lamba, Executive Director, Mazingira Institute



Dr. Josiah Mwangi Ateka, Urban Food System Researcher, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)

He stated “FLAG brings all stakeholders in the food sector together, to deliberate on various issues as well as give solutions.”



Sam Ikuia Thiong'o, Project Coordinator Mazingira Institute, presenting the Women's Spaces Project.



Dr. Samuel Omondi, Urban Food System Researcher, University of Nairobi



Vera Ochieng, Kenya National Farmers Federation (KENAFF), and the secretary of FLAG



Albert Miare, chairperson FLAG, presenting a kikapu of assorted fresh vegetables from an urban farm to Kimani Mungai, Development Officer, Canadian High Commission

## NCC Food System Strategy



Patrick Muiruri, Acting Head of the Food System and Sector Programmes Directorate presenting the NCC Food System Strategy

Patrick Muiruri is the Acting Head of the City's Food System and Sector Programmes Directorate. It oversees the implementation of the food system strategy and coordinates cross-sectoral functions such as budgeting, performance contracting, policy formulation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation. He elaborated the operations of the Food and Agriculture Sector and the Food Systems Strategy. The operations of the sector include crop development and forestry, food system sector programmes,

livestock and fisheries, and veterinary services.

At the national level, the Strategy is anchored in Kenya Vision 2030 and food policies such as the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy, as well as the Constitution of Kenya Article 43 (1). The objectives of the Strategy are: increase in food production, stable food supply and incomes, reduction of food losses and good welfare of food consumers.

The Strategy includes a set of institutional components. They are as follows:

**Food Board:** Gives directions on food waste management, food recovery programme, subsidized food for the poor and corrective measures.



NCC Food and Agriculture officials (front and rear, left to right): Patrick Muiruri, Mary Kibira Acting Head, Food and Agriculture Sector, Winfred Katumo, & Margret Ndumia

**Food Liaison Advisory Group (FLAG):** True to its name, it flags potential food system related problems and advises decision makers.

**Joint Committee:** To facilitate mutual agreement on food supply within NCC.

**Inter-governmental Committee:** Consultation and cooperation between NCC and the national government.

Patrick stressed that sustainable food systems are fundamental to ensuring that future generations are food secure and consume healthy diets.φ

## Urban farmers in action: How it all began?

### Grace Wachira



Trained at Mazingira Institute in 2013, she inherited a small

farming enterprise from her late father Francis Wachira. Located in an open space within the Maringo Housing Estate of NCC in Makadara sub-county, it is permitted by the local administration.

The farm produces vegetables, has dairy goats, rabbits and

poultry. The droppings from the goats are turned into manure both for the farm's own use and for sale. Rabbits are sold both live and as meat, and poultry are sold as meat in the neighborhood.

Dairy goat milk also sells very well. Household processing

includes making yoghurt for goat milk for retailing in the neighborhood. She employs one person and the farm supports Grace and her two children.φ

## Ruth Muhia



Trained at Mazingira Institute in 2012, Ruth is located in Ruai where she has her own backyard. She produces vegetables and herbs, maintains a fruit tree nursery and keeps rabbits and poultry. Ruth has excelled in household food processing, using milk to make probiotic yoghurt, with flavours. It is packaged and sold in the neighborhood. She earns about Shs. 20,000 monthly from

these activities. She remarked “Opportunities come to those who are prepared, opportunities come once and opportunities come from God!” She participates in a local group of women farmers, consults with other mentors and contributes to the welfare of the community.

## Obiero Were



Trained at Mazingira Institute, he set up Jawe Farming Business in Kisumu. It is a small enterprise which produces spring onions. They are transported and sold to retailers and vendors at various markets in and around Nairobi, where the demand for spring onions is high. The enterprise, which yields good income, has enabled him to acquire a pick-up. It is used for distribution of onions in and around the city. It is parked at his home in Nairobi when not in use.

Obiero is a producer and distributor. There are no middlemen in his spring onion supply chain. This has reduced

the distribution costs and it ensures the quality and the food safety of the produce.

Obiero is seeking investors for the expansion of his business. “There is money in the food business” he remarked.

## Kevin Uduy



Trained at Mazingira Institute in 2015, he is located in Huruma in Mathare sub-county. He leads the Huruma Town Youth Group, composed of about 25 women and men. The group operates in an open public space and is permitted by the local administration. They keep dairy goats, chickens and ducks and grow vegetables. Eggs, vegetables, live chickens and ducks and dairy goat milk and yoghurt are sold in the neighborhood. φ



Rebecca Muia, an urban farmer, trained at Mazingira Institute in 2015, she does household food processing to make peanut butter and crisps for sale. On her left is Florence Mbogo, NCC Extension Officer, buying peanut butter



Based in Nairobi Kenya

The newsletter is produced by Mazingira Institute which is responsible for its content.

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