



Governor Nyong'o goes green by embracing mini farming agriculture in Kisumu city

The Kisumu Green Spaces



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Image: [Gleaner Magazine](#)

The Gleaner Magazine published an article about Governor Prof. Anyang Nyong'o who recently attended the workshop of the Global Challenges Programme project Women Food Entrepreneurs in Kisumu. He promised to give stakeholder groups in Kisumu engaged in urban agriculture an opportunity to take part in the ongoing Geo-physical and spatial mapping of Kisumu city to identify and establish green spaces for urban farming and recreation.

Urban agriculture is a hot topic for discussion currently in the wake of African city development. The role of women food entrepreneurs who aim to meet the growing demands of fresh fruits and vegetables in city markets, is paramount but they are struggling. For many years agriculture in urban areas especially in towns and major cities of Kenya has been unthinkable since most of the supply is coming directly from rural areas neighbouring the cities. However, through the collaboration of the Centre for African Bio-Entrepreneurship (CABE), Victoria Institute for Research on Environment and Development (VIRED) and the University of Amsterdam, a study was put together to build inclusive business models for food security for city slums in Kisumu (Kenya) and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) through the **Women Food Entrepreneur (WFE)** project.

Dr. Nicky Pouw, the WFE coordinator, when making her presentation on the project's progress before Gov. Nyong'o of Kisumu County and other stakeholders noted the achievements of the program. She outlined the great steps taken by farmers of Balaaa group in Obunga to increase productivity using irrigation and improved farming methods; the success of Kibuye waste management CBO whose project of cleaning Kibuye market and making compost manure from the waste has been well documented and the serious role the county government department of agriculture is undertaking to provide extension services, basic entrepreneurial training and value addition by means of food processing in the market.

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The success story of this project was hailed by the governor who took to address the key policy issues raised by Dr. Nicky. First he took to acknowledge his admiration of urban farming giving an example of his one-time trip to Singapore where he was amazed at the scale and magnitude of city farming in balconies of city flats making him a champion for urban farming. He also promised, in line with the policy messages, that the ongoing Kisumu geo-physical and geo-spatial mapping and planning will take into account the identification and establishment of green spaces for food production and processing.

He also proposed a hybrid system where the green spaces exist within the city and also in the suburbs, through satellite gardens. The Governor however, had reservations on the policy to promote animal husbandry in the city citing large number of cattle that is freely roaming the streets and causing havoc. the Women Food Entrepreneurs team agreed with removing freely moving animals from the city.

The steps addressed by the governor opens the way for the various stakeholders in Kisumu, especially the women food entrepreneurs, to be directly involved in the urban planning process, urban development programs. it is important to learn from their experiences and innovative methods to sustain 'mini-farming' in small spaces.

Hopefully in the future, there is more opportunity to explore new partnerships of women food entrepreneur groups with the county government of Kisumu, Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI) and the business community (including banks)among others.

In taking this bold move to empower women urban farmers of Kisumu, the renowned Professor has proved once again as a maverick, that he is among the best governors promoting inclusivity and supporting research and development studies as evidence-base of well- informed policy decisions that will always uplift the port city of Kisumu *dala*.

Source: [The Gleaner Magazine](#)