

URBAN GREENING

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

*Increasing green space quality, availability and accessibility
in cities in Sub-Saharan Africa through urban greening activities.*

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1. THE GREENPOP FOUNDATION: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Greenpop Foundation situates all of our work within the theoretical framework of positive environmentalism. We interpret this framework to have four primary stances:

1. **Pro-Nature:** Nature should be conserved and restored both because it is inherently valuable and because it makes our planet habitable.
2. **Pro-People:** Ensuring equality of access to nature and its benefits for all people (present and future) is critical for a just world.
3. **Pro-Innovation:** Creativity, new technology and innovative design are key tools for tackling environmental challenges.
4. **Pro-Action:** Swift environmental action within every sphere (personal, economic & legislative) is essential for a sustainable future.

2. PROGRAMMATIC APPLICATION OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Greenpop Foundation applies the concept of positive environmentalism to all of our projects which fall within three focal areas:

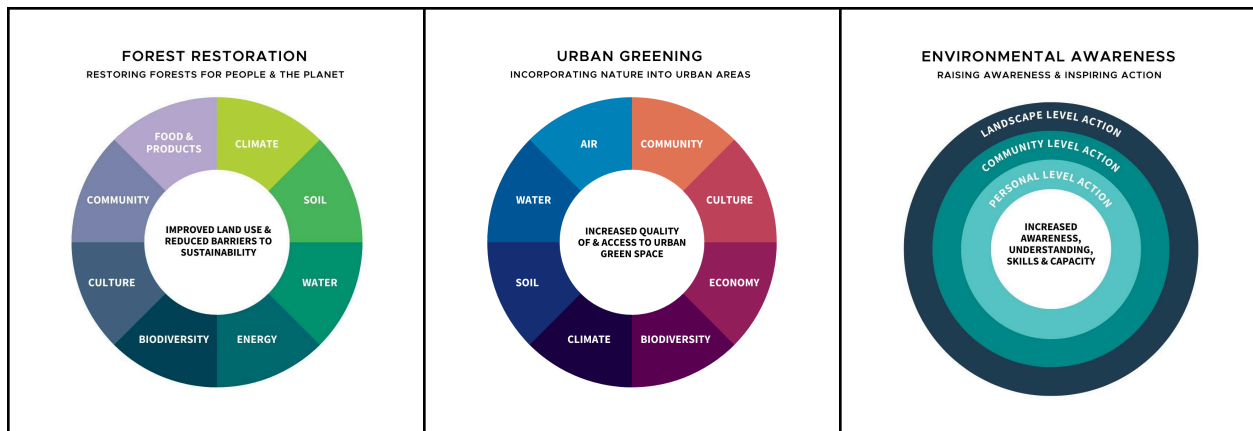


Figure 1. Greenpop's three focal areas of positive environmentalism, namely: Forest Restoration; Urban Greening; and Environmental Awareness

3. INTRODUCTION: URBAN GREENING PROGRAMME

Africa is the world's most rapidly urbanising continent. Between 2000 and 2030 the urban population will more than double and urban space will increase by more than 700%. As this happens, ecosystems and the essential natural assets they provide will come under threat. During this time of expansion and innovation, [it is imperative that natural spaces are both protected and incorporated into urban landscapes.](#)

Green urban spaces are an essential part of ecological and social well-being. They regulate urban temperatures, improve air quality, reduce stormwater runoff, improve water and soil quality, reduce noise pollution, provide habitats for urban wildlife, provide locally grown food, help combat climate change, improve mental and physical health, provide spaces for recreation and spirituality, and increase urban residents' sense of pride of place, community, and home. In spite of these numerous benefits, many urban landscapes (particularly those in under-resourced communities) lack safe, beautiful, and productive public green spaces.

In order to remedy the impacts of accelerating urbanisation, numerous urban greening projects are being developed and implemented around the globe; from ancient cities in Vietnam to coastal towns in Belgium to school rooftops in Serbia. These projects are multifaceted in their goals and may include activities aimed to: create visually striking green walls and roofs within urban centres; increase nature access in public spaces such as hospitals, schools and parks; provide locally grown produce, redevelop brownfield sites; make cities more walkable or suited for safe outdoor recreation; or increase urban ecosystem services such as air filtration, carbon sequestration and reductions in urban temperatures. The abundance of successful examples of urban greening initiatives provides a useful opportunity for new projects to draw on the existing body of knowledge surrounding opportunities and best practices for impactful urban greening.

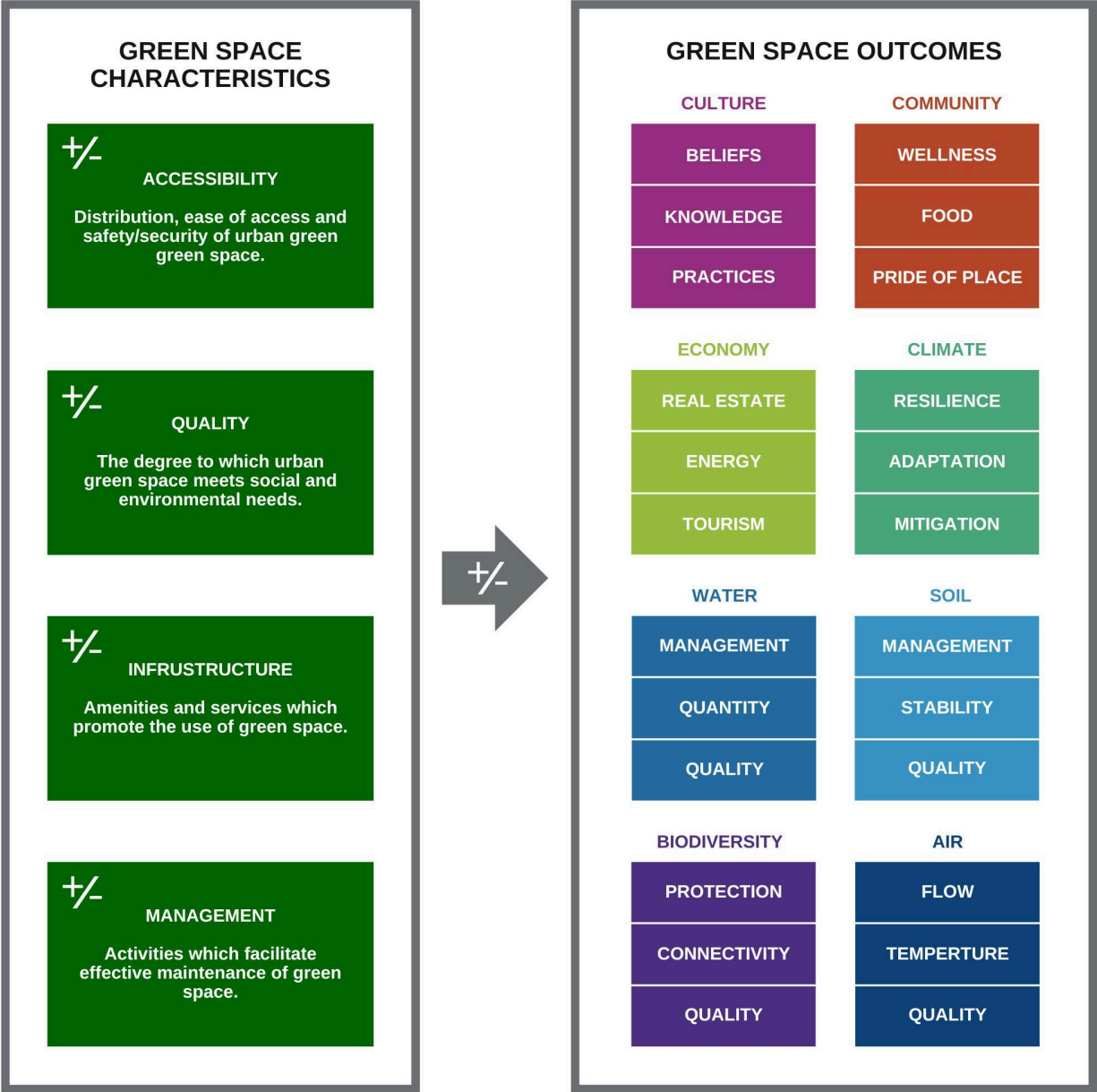
Urban greening is at the heart of Greenpop's programmatic work. In 2010, our first-ever project aimed to plant 1,000 trees in 1 month at under-greened schools in Cape Town. Since then, our urban greening work has spread across South Africa and Zambia and expanded from trees to also include indigenous and food gardens.

At Greenpop, we're on a mission to inspire an urban future where abundant natural spaces are both accessible and co-managed by an active and inspired citizenry. We aim to provide green spaces and food gardens to marginalised communities and create biodiversity corridors across urban landscapes.

4. URBAN GREENING FRAMEWORK

According to the [World Health Organisation \(2017\)](#), "urban green space interventions are defined as actions that significantly modify the quality, quantity and accessibility of urban green space." Taking this definition one step further, and drawing on the work of Milvoy & Roué-Le Gall (2015), Greenpop defines urban greening interventions as those which modify the accessibility, quality, infrastructure, and management of urban green spaces in order to improve green space outcomes.

A Framework for Urban Greening



5. URBAN GREENING OUTCOMES

As introduced in the previous section, Greenpop’s Urban Greening Projects aim to improve a number of green space outcomes. These are further detailed in the table below. While some projects may focus on one outcome, others encompass several outcomes.

CATEGORY	THEME	OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION
Social	Community	Wellness	Improvements in physical & mental wellness.
		Food	Increased access to locally grown food.
		Pride of Place	Increased pride of place.
	Culture	Beliefs	Increased environmental appreciation (biophilia).
		Knowledge	Increased environmental knowledge.
		Practices	Increased participation in activities based in nature.
	Economy	Real Estate	Increased property values.
		Energy	Reduced energy usage for indoor cooling.
		Tourism	Increased eco-tourism.
Environmental	Biodiversity	Protection	Increased biodiversity protection.
		Connectivity	Decreased distance between green spaces.
		Quality	Increased plant/animal species biodiversity.
	Climate	Resilience	Increased capacity to deal with shocks & stressors.
		Adaptation	Decreased impact of shocks & stressors.
		Mitigation	Increased biomass and carbon sequestration.
	Soil	Management	Increased use of soil conservation practices.
		Stability	Improved soil compaction & permeability.
		Quality	Improved soil health.
	Water	Management	Increased use of water conservation practices.
		Quantity	Decreased stormwater runoff.
		Quality	Improved water quality.
	Air	Flow	Reduced wind speed.
		Temperature	Reduced urban temperature.
		Quality	Improved air quality.

6. URBAN GREENING INTERVENTIONS

The Greenpop Foundation’s Urban Greening Programme includes a variety of urban greening interventions which all aim to solve site-level problems and deliver the above-mentioned urban greening outcomes.

CATEGORY	PURPOSE	URBAN GREENING INTERVENTIONS
Accessibility	To increase availability, accessibility, and safety/security of urban green space.	- Creation of new green space in undergreened or degraded areas
Quality	To increase the degree to which urban green space meets social and environmental needs.	- Urban forests - Statement trees - Windbreaks - Fynbos/indigenous gardens - Green walls - Rain gardens - Food gardens
Infrastructure	To ease and promote the use of urban green space.	- Seating - Shade structures - Signage - Fencing - Plant identification guides - Irrigation systems
Management	To build capacity for effective urban green space management.	- Strategic guidelines - Management/maintenance guidelines - Training programmes

7. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

Greenpop's Urban Greening projects do not utilise a one-size-fits-all method for greening urban spaces. Instead, they take into account the unique characteristics of the site and surrounding community, barriers which prevent the space from being greened without our intervention, current best practices and research, stakeholder (community, local NGOs, local government) goals, and advice from advisors.

These projects are conceptualised through a Concept Note development process in the [Greenpop Foundation format](#). This process includes the development of a Theory of Change and uses a top-down project development approach (Impact → Outcomes → Outputs → Activities → Inputs). These Concept Notes are accompanied by a work plan, M&E plan, and budget for each project in the Greenpop Foundation format.

8. CURRENT & ONGOING PROJECTS

PROJECT	LOCATION	YEARS	DESCRIPTION	UG PURPOSE	UG IMPACTS	UG STRATEGY
HGZ	Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, Tswane	2024 - Present	Forthcoming	Accessibility Quality Infrastructure Management	1. Wellness 2. Pride of Place 3. Enviro Beliefs 4. Enviro Knowledge 5. Enviro Practices 6. Biodiversity Quality	- New Green Space -Indigenous Gardening - Statement Trees - Seating - Shade structures - Management Guidelines - Training
Gardens for Good	Cape Town	2023 - Present	Through Gardens for Good, we work with schools, hospitals, and other community organisations to plant gardens, run engaging gardening days for corporates and communities, support teachers, and build the capacity of groundskeepers. Through these activities, we aim to increase green space and the ecosystem services it provides, improve green space maintenance and management, and increase nature appreciation and stewardship in urban areas.	Accessibility Quality Infrastructure Management	1. Wellness 2. Pride of Place 3. Enviro Beliefs 4. Enviro Knowledge 5. Enviro Practices 6. Biodiversity Quality	- New Green Space -Indigenous Gardening - Statement Trees - Seating - Shade structures - Fencing - Management Guidelines
Family Food Gardens	Cape Town	2020 - Present	In collaboration with Urban Harvest, this project aims to empower people in Cape Town to grow their own food at home through the distribution of Family Food Garden Pods, an in-person workshop, and an online course delivered via WhatsApp.	Accessibility Quality Management	1. Wellness 2. Food 3. Pride of Place 4. Enviro Beliefs 5. Enviro Knowledge 6. Enviro Practices	- New Green Space - Food Gardening - Training Programme

9. COMPLETED & CLOSED PROJECTS

PROJECT	LOCATION	YEARS	DESCRIPTION	UG PURPOSE	UG IMPACTS	UG STRATEGY
Fynbos for the Future	Cape Town	2018 - 2022	<p>The vision for Fynbos for the Future is to inspire a green urban future, where biodiversity is accessible, valued, and protected by an active, engaged, and inspired citizenry through community-oriented urban nature conservation.</p> <p>The core objective is to provide interactive fynbos learning spaces in under-greened schools and implement a 3-year programme engaging students and communities in the effective management and conservation of fynbos.</p>	<p>Accessibility Quality Infrastructure Management</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wellness 2. Pride of Place 3. Enviro Knowledge 4. Enviro Beliefs 5. Enviro Practices 6. Connectivity 7. Biodiversity Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Green Space - Indigenous Gardening - Seating - Shade structures - Fencing - Management Guidelines
Fynbos Corridor Collaboration	Cape Town	2018 - 2021	<p>The Fynbos Corridor Collaboration saw Greenpop, Communitree, and Ingcungcu come together to develop a strategic plan for consolidated off-reserve fynbos restoration in Cape Town, South Africa.</p>	<p>Accessibility Quality Management</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enviro Knowledge 2. Enviro Practices 3. Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indigenous Gardening - Strategic Guidelines
Trees for Cape Town	Cape Town	2010 - 2017	<p>Trees for Cape Town was Greenpop's first project. Over 7 years, we planted over 15,000 trees at 350 community sites (schools, community centres, clinics, etc) across undergreened neighbourhoods in Cape Town.</p>	<p>Accessibility Quality</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wellness 2. Pride of Place 3. Enviro Knowledge 4. Enviro Beliefs 5. Enviro Practices 6. Connectivity 7. Biodiversity Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tree Planting