



## **FAWCO Target Project 5**

### **AWESOME BLOSSOMS: Edible Fresh Fields for Sustainable Life in the Slums**

FAWCO member clubs selected AWESOME BLOSSOMS, an Urban Farming Project, (AB) as FAWCO's Target Program for 2022-2025: **Environment.**

Awesome Blossoms Urban Farming Project is an initiative taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit the negative impacts of climate change.

It is the vision of Peninah Nthenya Musyimi, founder of the Safe Spaces Organization (Safe Spaces), a community-based girls education and empowerment program located in one of the most impoverished areas in the world, the Eastland Slums in Nairobi, Kenya.



Peninah was the first woman from the Eastland slums to attend university and become an attorney and the only one to become a Kenyan basketball star. Peninah never forgot her roots, returning to the slums in 2008 to start Safe Spaces with a mission: to create a safe space there for girls and young women to learn, develop and grow into strong qualified women who can escape poverty, violence and systematic exclusion and go on

to become confident leaders, problem-solvers in their communities and now stewards of the environment.

Safe Spaces motto is “I’m the change,” the philosophy is “Each one, Teach one” and the ambition is to Educate, Engage and Empower.

Target Project 5, Awesome Blossoms, is the culmination of their vision to build a hopeful future for marginalized people as they adapt to climate change and food deserts, and deal with poverty.

What are the goals of Awesome Blossoms?

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Limit the negative impact of climate change
- Provide food security for the community in Nairobi’s Eastland slums
- Train women to care for the environment and provide for their families through hydroponic farming
- Feed and educate children by providing food for school lunches and educating the children on nutrition, organic gardening and how to care for the environment
- Create self-reliance by helping fund Safe Spaces girls’ education and empowerment programs
- Spread the knowledge by creating a Center of Expertise where Safe Spaces will gather, test and disseminate organic urban farming knowledge and create a sustainable model that can be duplicated in other slums worldwide.



**Farm at local school**

How will the FAWCO Target Project 5: Awesome Blossoms work?

- Create three new farms, each one located at a local school
- Each farm will contain 500 vertical hydroponic gardens
- The vertical gardens use clean dirt, rather than the chemically tainted dirt of the slums, less water and less land than traditional farming
- Organic methods to fight pests will be used, such as Mexican marigolds planted around the perimeter, in addition to organic fertilizer
- 75 women will receive two pre-funded gardens and training in hydroponics
- 150 gardens will be used to provide nutritional vegetables to the school children and be used to educate them on nutrition, organic gardening and caring for the environment.

The farms will be supported by Awesome Blossoms Center of Expertise which acts as a center for education. The training modules include hydroponic farming, plant nutrition and nutrient management, growing media and planting techniques, crop management and pest control and water conservation.



**Vertical Garden!**

## What is the Environmental Impact?

- Vertical hydroponic gardens use less water and space than traditional farming. For example, 25 kale plants can be grown hydroponically compared to six by traditional farming methods
- Carbon sequestration - through planting of kale, spinach and cowpeas in the circular gardens, CO<sub>2</sub> is removed from the atmosphere
- One acre of kale can sequester 2-3 metric tons of carbon per year
- The use of natural pesticides - natural pesticides, such as Mexican marigold, contain natural compounds toxic to many pests and reduce the need for synthetic pesticides
- The use of Mexican marigold will result in improved soil, reduction of soil erosion and increased water retention
- Nutrient cycling - the organic fertilizer which is used contains nutrients essential for vegetable growth
- Soil health- the use of organic fertilizers will assist in enhancing microbial activity in the soil leading to healthier plants and better productivity.

FAWCO'S Target Project 5, Awesome Blossoms will be a model of environmental stewardship by women, living in the harshest conditions. The women from Awesome Blossoms will demonstrate that people living in the slums are not victims but, by working together, they can protect their environment, resist climate change, produce safe foods and create independence and security.

**BE THE CHANGE** WITH FAWCO TARGET PROJECT 5: AWESOME BLOSSOMS!



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