



Informal Places For Active Recreation And Children's Play In Kampala Slums, Uganda



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1. Introduction

An earlier study carried out by Advocates for Public Spaces (APS) identified a lack of formal parks and open spaces in the city, particularly in outlying areas and slum settlements. Despite this, informal open spaces—that is, spaces not officially recognized as parks or other public spaces—may exist within slums and in proximity, wherein slum dwellers can undertake sports, play, relax, and other forms of recreation. Such informal spaces, more so than their formal counterparts, often exhibit safety hazards.

1.1 What is an informal open space?

Informal open spaces are similar to parks and other kinds of publicly accessible open spaces. However, they are not officially considered as such by authorities. They may, for example, exist in privately owned yards, empty lots, alleys, or some other form of open space. Like parks, informal open spaces may include any combination of green space, sports fields, children’s play equipment, and other park amenities.

We refer to many informal open spaces in this report as “playgrounds” based on the local vernacular. Here, playgrounds refer to areas used for recreation of any kind, typically team sports.¹

1.2 The importance of parks and other public open spaces

Parks and other public open spaces are taking on new importance internationally. For the first time in history, public space (and in particular public green space) has been recognized as an international priority through its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Target 11.7 under the cities goals states:

By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.²



Kagugube LDC ground



Kisenyi ring road ground



Kansanga KCCA ground

¹ This definition is broader than the one used in North America, where playgrounds are considered spaces with children's play equipment (e.g. swing sets, slides, monkey bars, etc.). Although not common, children's play equipment may be present in playgrounds as defined in this report.

² Source: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/L.1&Lang=E

Inclusion of this target in the SDGs means all nation states will be responsible for ensuring their residents can access parks and green spaces close to home. These must be inclusive spaces for all members of society and not just spaces designed to support the sports activities of adult males.

The reasons for including such a target in the SDGs are because, in addition to a host of ecological services, parks provide several public health benefits. First, they foster social and personal wellbeing in several different ways. Secondly, they facilitate physical activity through active recreation, through both structured and unstructured play. And finally, parks also provide opportunities for communities to engage in urban agriculture projects.

1.2.1 Social and personal wellbeing

Urban parks can contribute to social wellbeing by offering residents a place to relax, socialise, and be in contact with nature (Maller et al., 2008). As well, Maas et al. (2006) find that urban green spaces are linked to neighbourhood social cohesion. Urban parks may also contribute to a reduction in crime and violence (Branas et al., 2011; Garvin, Cannuscio, & Branas, 2012; Kuo & Sullivan, 2001). However crime reduction associated with urban parks is typically dependent on their use of design principles associated Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). For a review of CPTED, refer to Cozens et al. (2005).

In terms of personal wellbeing, green spaces in urban settings have been shown to reduce stress, depression, and anxiety (Aspinall, Mavros, Coyne, & Roe, 2015; Beyer et al., 2014; Roe et al., 2013; Ward Thompson et al., 2012). Additionally, people with a greater connection to natural environments have been shown to be happier (Nisbet & Zelenski, 2009). Research is also demonstrating significant impacts for children. Children who play regularly in natural environments show more advanced coordination, balance and agility and they are sick less often (Fjørtoft, 2001).

1.2.2 Facilitating physical activity through active recreation

Access to parks provides an important means to undertake physical activity through active recreation (Kessel et al., 2009). In particular, park quality is correlated with increased park use for physical activity purposes (Crawford et al., 2008; Veitch et al., 2014; Veitch, Ball, Crawford, Abbott, & Salmon, 2012).



Kawala Namungona ground



Kawala Northern by pass ground



Kawempe kiiko ground

Regular physical activity improves overall health (Bauman, 2004; Blair & Morris, 2009; Brown, Burton, & Rowan, 2007) and as a result reduces the risk of a wide range of non-communicable diseases. Physical activity also enhances psychological well-being: it relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety, and more generally improves mood (Berger & Motl, 2000; Rethorst, Wipfli, & Landers, 2009; Street & James, 2008). Conversely, a lack of physical activity is responsible for over three million deaths per year globally (World Health Organization, 2009).

There are two types of physical activities that can be enabled by well-designed park space: structured and unstructured play. Structured play has clearly defined goals and rules. Sports, such as football, netball, and basketball are examples of structured play as they have specific rules and overall goals. Both adults and children can engage in structured play. Unstructured play, on the other hand, is typically activity that children engage in and involves a set of activities that children create on their own with little to no adult guidance. Unstructured play is often forgotten when considering children's play spaces. But, it is particularly important for children's development. When children play in natural, unstructured environments their play is often more diverse with imaginative and creative play that fosters language and collaborative skills (Fjørtoft & Sageie, 2000; Taylor, Wiley, Kuo, & Sullivan, 1998).

1.2.3 Enabling urban agriculture

Food security for urban residents is a growing concern in many cities around the world and this will need to be addressed by cities and nations. Urban agriculture is one strategy that can address this issue. Urban agriculture is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in, or around a town or city. City parks and open spaces provide an ideal location for urban agriculture to be supported. Community gardens, in particular, are well suited to local parks. They provide an affordable way to access fresh produce for people willing to participate. Community gardens are typically

organized as a cooperative whereby community members contribute to the garden and share in its bounty. Participation in community gardens has resulted in increased vegetable and fruit consumption.



Kansanga KCCA grounds active agriculture

Research shows that people who participate, or have a family member that participates, in community gardens were 3.5 times more likely to consume at least five fruits and vegetables a day than people without a gardening household member (McCormack, Laska, Larson, & Story, 2010; Ober Allen, Alaimo, Elam, & Perry, 2008).

1.3 Study problem and justification

Open spaces have typically not been part of the public discourse associated with slum settlements. As a result, little is known about the availability and quality of informal open spaces in and around the slums where children play. Our assumption was that children and adults are playing somewhere: either at formal parks and public spaces far from their homes, or at informal—and perhaps unsafe—places closer to home.

The estimated 56 slum neighbourhoods³ within Kampala (Figure 1-1) are not adequately provided for in the country’s development plans. Where included, the plans focus more on streets, sanitation, security, HIV among commercial sex workers, and livelihoods. Open spaces hardly feature in these interventions, yet such spaces are particularly important to slum dwellers because of their crowded housing conditions. The lack of safe spaces to play affects children’s physical activity, as well as their ability to meet and play in groups.

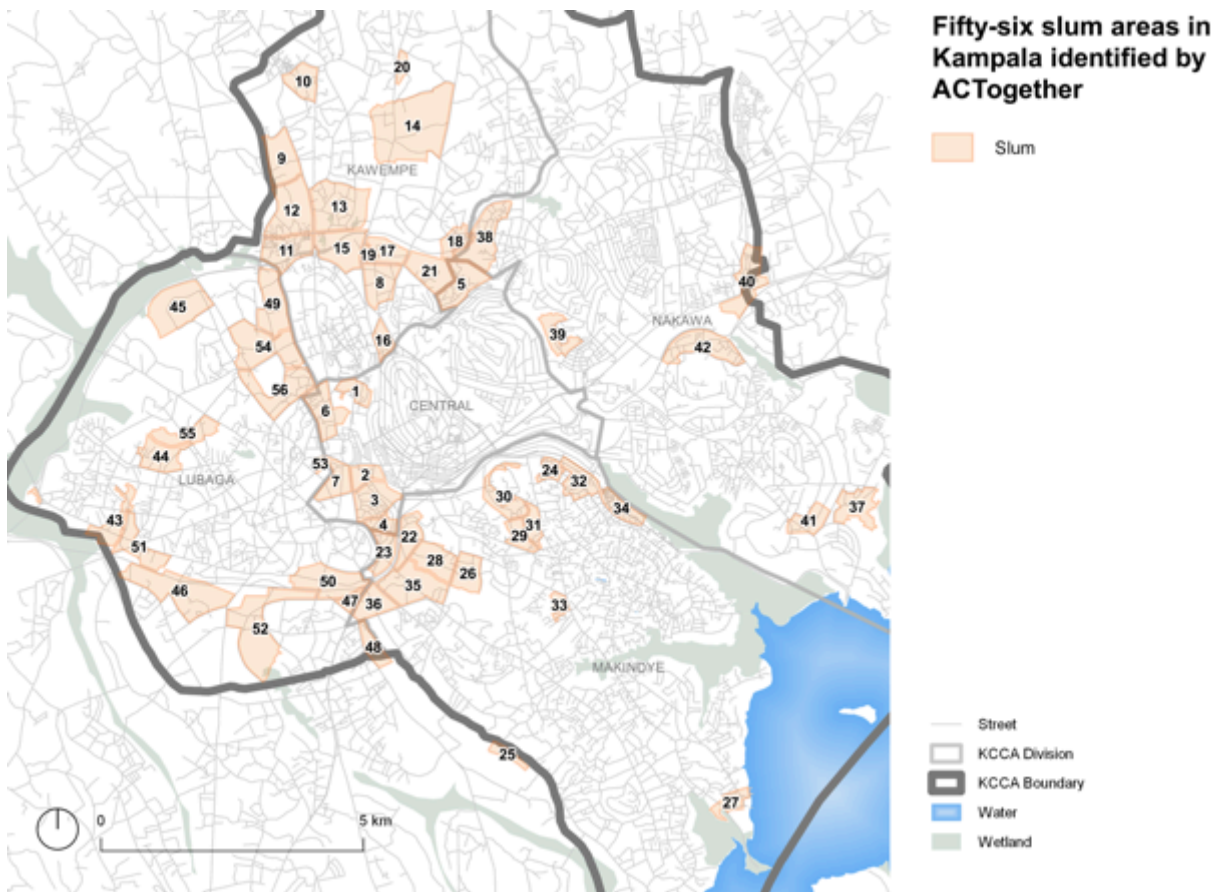


Figure 1-1 The 56 slum areas⁴ in Kampala identified by ACTogether

³According to research by ACTogether and the National Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda, Kampala Capital City Area is estimated to have 56 slums.

⁴The names of each slum are listed in Table 9-1 in the Appendix.

Our previous research, conducted in 2014, examined the quality and availability of public spaces in Kampala. It demonstrated a lack of formal parks and other open spaces for children to play, particularly in slum areas and outlying districts (Figure 1-2).

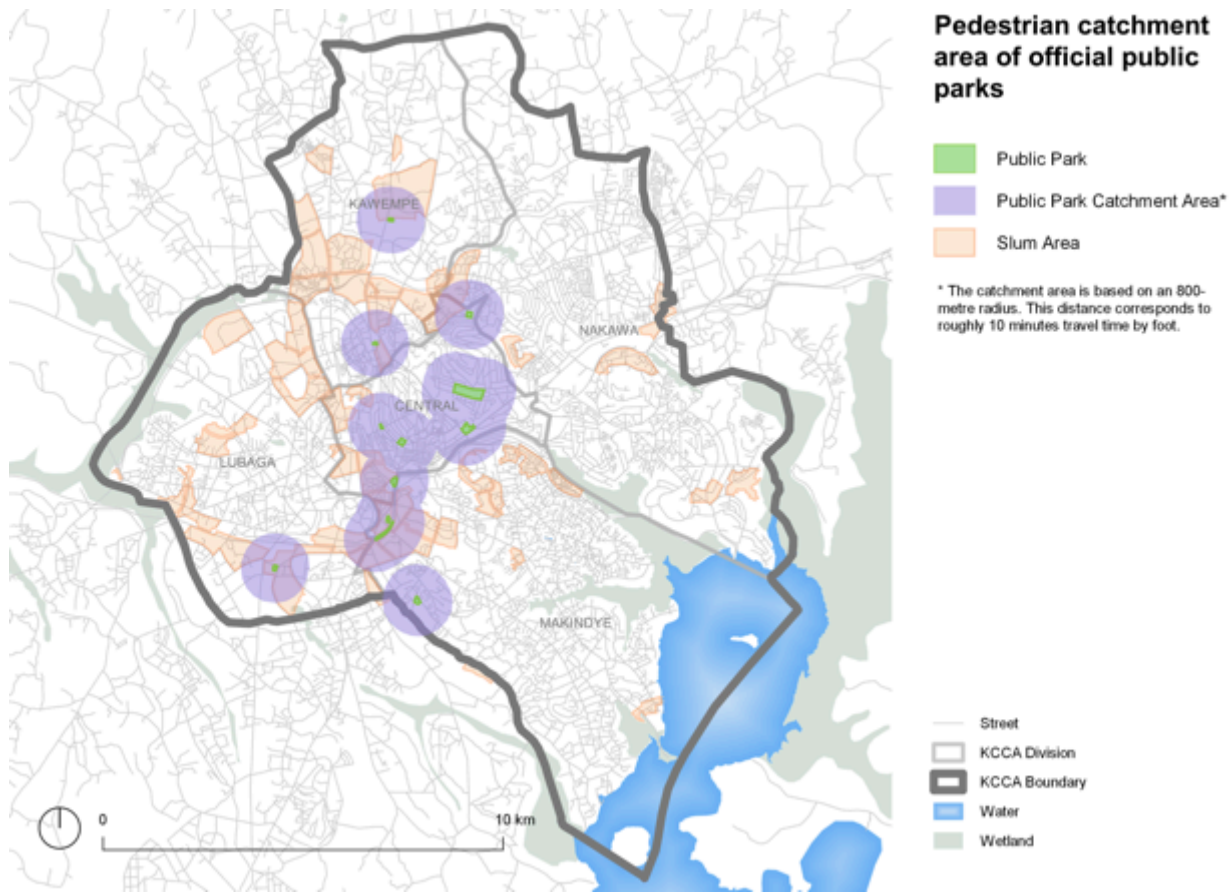


Figure 1-2 Official public parks in Kampala Capital City Authority, with 800-metre catchment areas surrounding them

This study builds on our 2014 research by assessing the availability and characteristics of informal open spaces in a sample of 10 slums and the areas surrounding the slums: two for each of the Kampala’s five divisions. In addition we work with the community to identify solutions to preserve, formalize, enhance, and expand the supply of open spaces in the slums of Kampala.

This information will help start a public dialogue on how to improve informal open spaces in slums, where children can safely play and socialize.

1.4 Study objectives

This study has three primary objectives:

1. To identify, describe, and map informal open spaces in Kampala Capital City slums where children play.

2. To better understand the perceptions of such spaces by slum dwellers, including desired improvements.
3. To develop a set of recommendations that will create safe and protected spaces for children and the community.

2. Study methodology

This section describes the study area and two data collection methods used for this report: (1) a direct observation survey of informal open spaces in (and near) the selected slum areas; and (2) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted in informal open spaces used by slum dwellers.

2.1 Study area

We randomly selected a sample of 10 slums to be included in our study: two for each of Kampala’s five Divisions. The slums are shown in red in Table 2-1 and Figure 2-1 (below).

Table 2-1 Sample of 10 slum areas selected for this study

| Slum name | Slum code | Division |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Kagugube | KAGU | Central |
| Kisenyi 1 | KIS1 | Central |
| Kawempe 1 | KAW1 | Kawempe |
| Kifumbira | KFB | Kawempe |
| Kansanga | KANS | Makindye |
| Wabigalo | WAB | Makindye |
| Butabika | BTBK | Nakawa |
| Naguru | NGRU | Nakawa |
| Kawala | KWL | Rubaga |
| Nateete | NATT | Rubaga |



The Kagugube FGD



The Kansanga FGD



The Kifumbira FGD

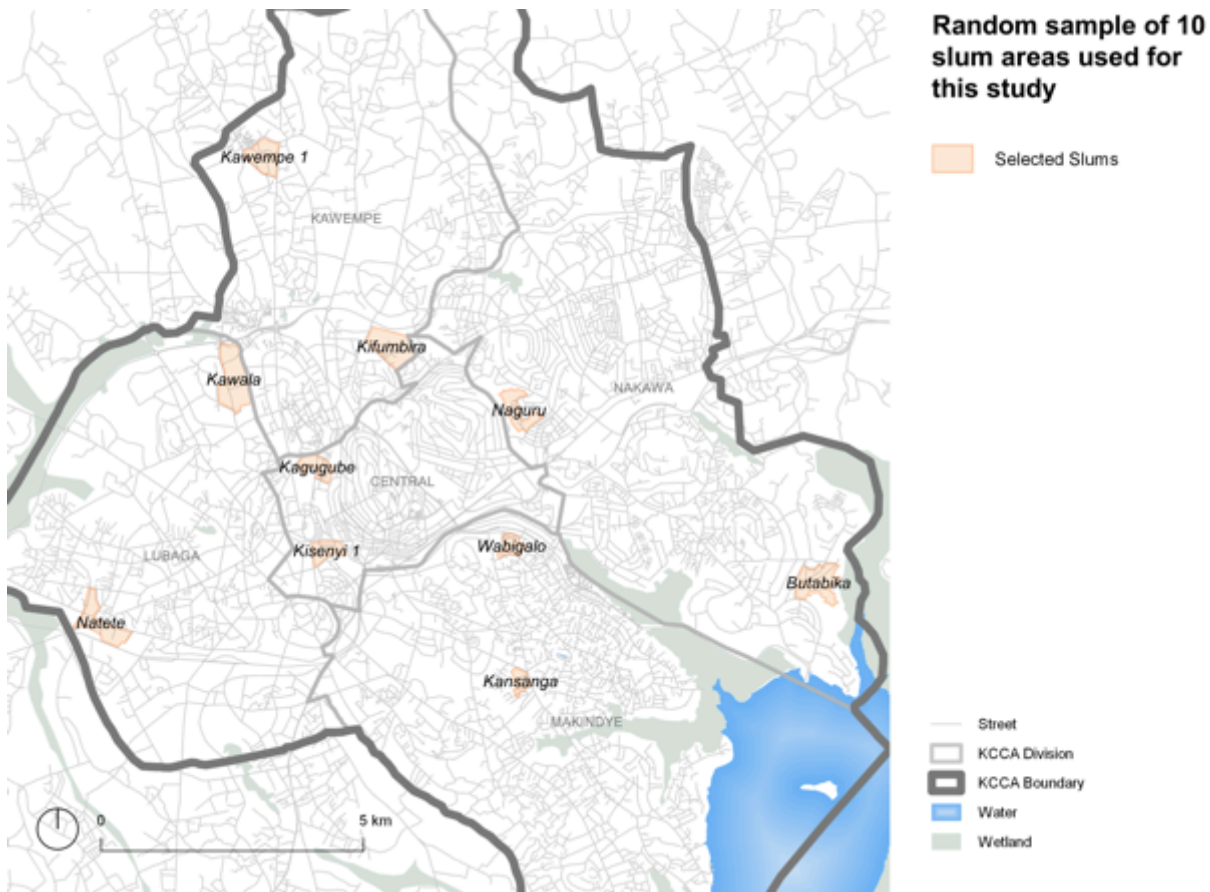


Figure 2-1 Sample of 10 slum areas selected for this study

2.2 Direct observation

The first data collection method was a short direct observation survey to assess the location and characteristics of informal open spaces in and around the 10 selected slum areas. Surveyors visited each of the 10 slums and asked residents for the location of informal open spaces used for recreational purposes by local slum-dwellers. The surveyors then visited the locations that residents mentioned, in order to conduct the direct observation survey. The results of the survey addressed the first purpose of this study:

1. *To identify, describe, and map informal open spaces in Kampala Capital City slums where children play.*

In other words, they allowed the research team to better understand the characteristics of informal open spaces in Kampala.

A blank copy of the survey, developed by NICC and Health Bridge, is provided in Figure 9-1 in the Appendix.

2.3 Focus Group Discussions

The second data collection method involved Focus Group Discussions. The research team conducted 10 Focus Group Discussions of between 10 and 21 participants (total: 120 participants), in a selection of informal open spaces in proximity to the 10 slum areas. All focus groups had at least two participants under 18, and all but one had female participation. They were conducted between July 14 and 20, 2015. Table 9-2 in the Appendix summarizes the location and characteristics of each FGD.

The discussions deal primarily with the second purpose of the study:

2. To better understand the perceptions of such spaces by slum dwellers, including desired improvements.

The FGD questions, developed by NICC and HealthBridge, (1) add depth to the direct observation survey results; (2) assist in identifying the improvements local residents would like to see; and (3) provide ideas on how to implement these changes. A copy of the FGD questions, developed by NICC and HealthBridge, is provided in Figure 9-2 and Figure 9-3 in the Appendix.

3. Findings from the direct observation survey

In this section we present the findings from the observation survey of informal open spaces. These include:

1. their location and proximity to the selected slum areas;
2. the types of spaces they occupy, e.g. alleys, empty lots, etc.;
3. the users of informal open spaces, including age and gender;
4. the recreational activities undertaken in the spaces;
5. the non-recreational activities undertaken in the spaces; and
6. the hazards and obstructions found within the spaces.

Combined, they paint a picture of the informal open spaces used for recreational purposes, and allow us to make recommendations for their enhancement in subsequent sections of this report.



The Wabigalo FGD



The Kawala FGD



The Natete FGD

3.1 Location of spaces and proximity to selected slums

The survey team identified 34 informal open spaces in and around the 10 selected slums. They labelled each space with a unique identifier including an abbreviated name and a single letter. The number of spaces ranged from two to five open spaces per slum. Figure 3-1 presents the location of each open space identified in the 10 selected slum areas. Table 9-3 in the Appendix contains a table with the same data as the map below.

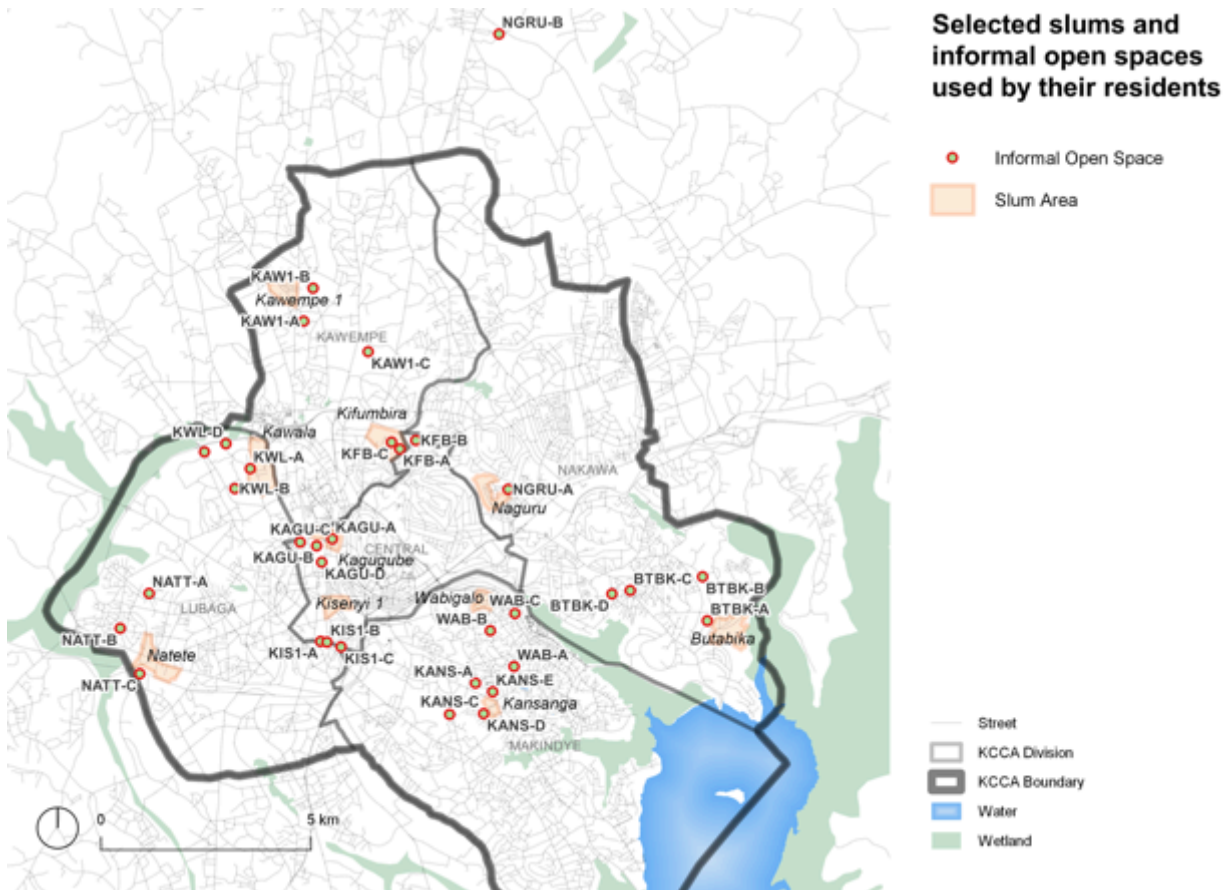


Figure 3-1 Location of the informal open spaces in relation to the selected 10 slums

With an 800-metre buffer surrounding each of the 34 informal open spaces, accessibility to spaces for recreation increases dramatically (Figure 3-2) relative to the map showing only official parks (Figure 1-2).

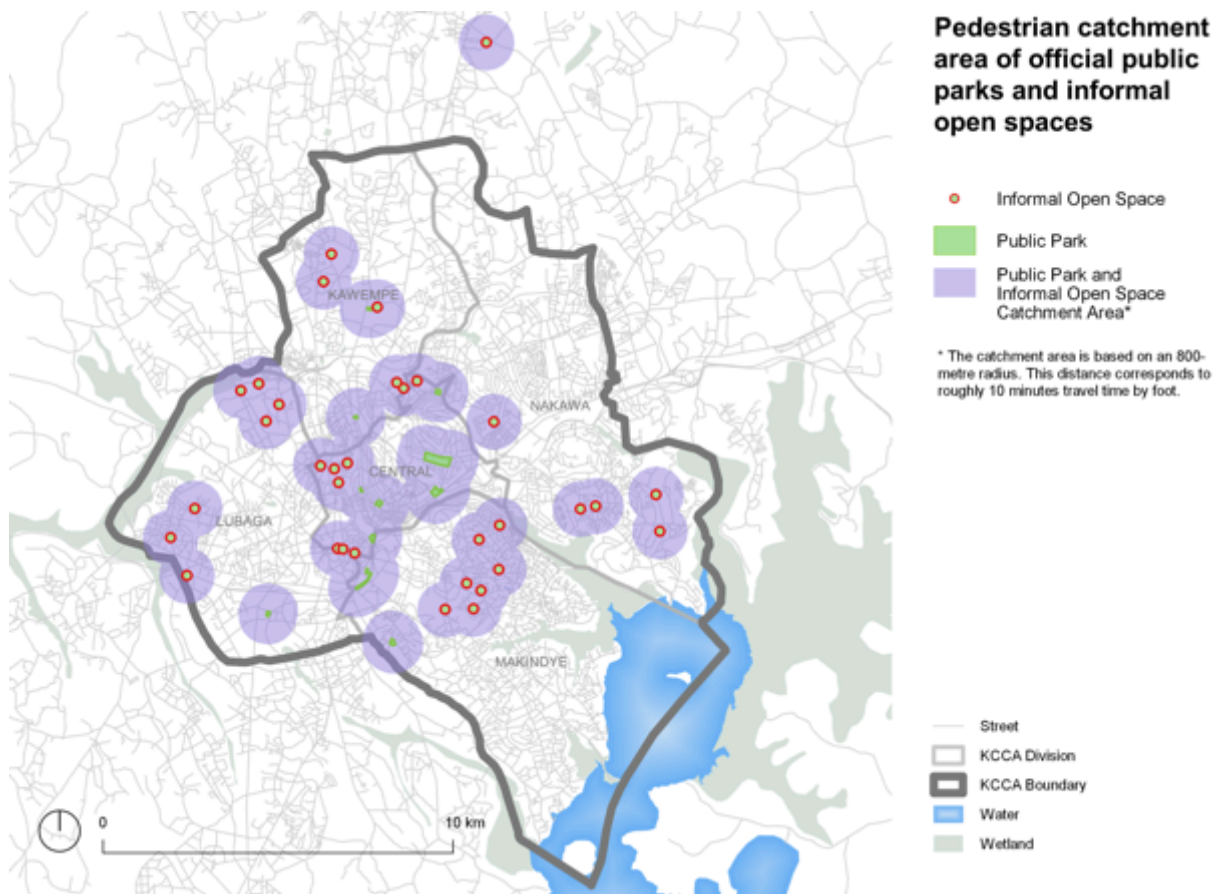


Figure 3-2 Pedestrian catchment area of official public parks and informal open spaces combined

With three exceptions, all informal open spaces were located outside the technical boundaries⁵ of their associated slums. Excluding these three exceptions, the mean distance between the centre of a given slum and the parks used by their residents was 1.3 kilometres, or nearly 20 minutes by foot. Nineteen (19) spaces are more than 800 metres from their slum, or more than 10 minutes by foot. When excluding Kataaka Playground (NGRU-B)—located 10.8 kilometres from the Naguru slum where residents mentioned using it⁶—the mean is 1.0 kilometres, or nearly 15 minutes by foot. For this same subsample, the distances range between 0.2 kilometres (KAGU-B) and 2.9 kilometres (NATT-B). Figure 3-3 presents the slum-to-space lines on a map. Table 9-3 in the Appendix lists the distance in metres between each informal open space and its associated slum.

⁵ Slum boundaries, while precisely defined by ACTogether and the National Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda, are not necessarily understood as such by residents.

⁶ This distance is well over treble the standard deviation of distances for the 31 open spaces located outside the boundaries of slums. As such, Kataaka Playground could be considered an outlier.

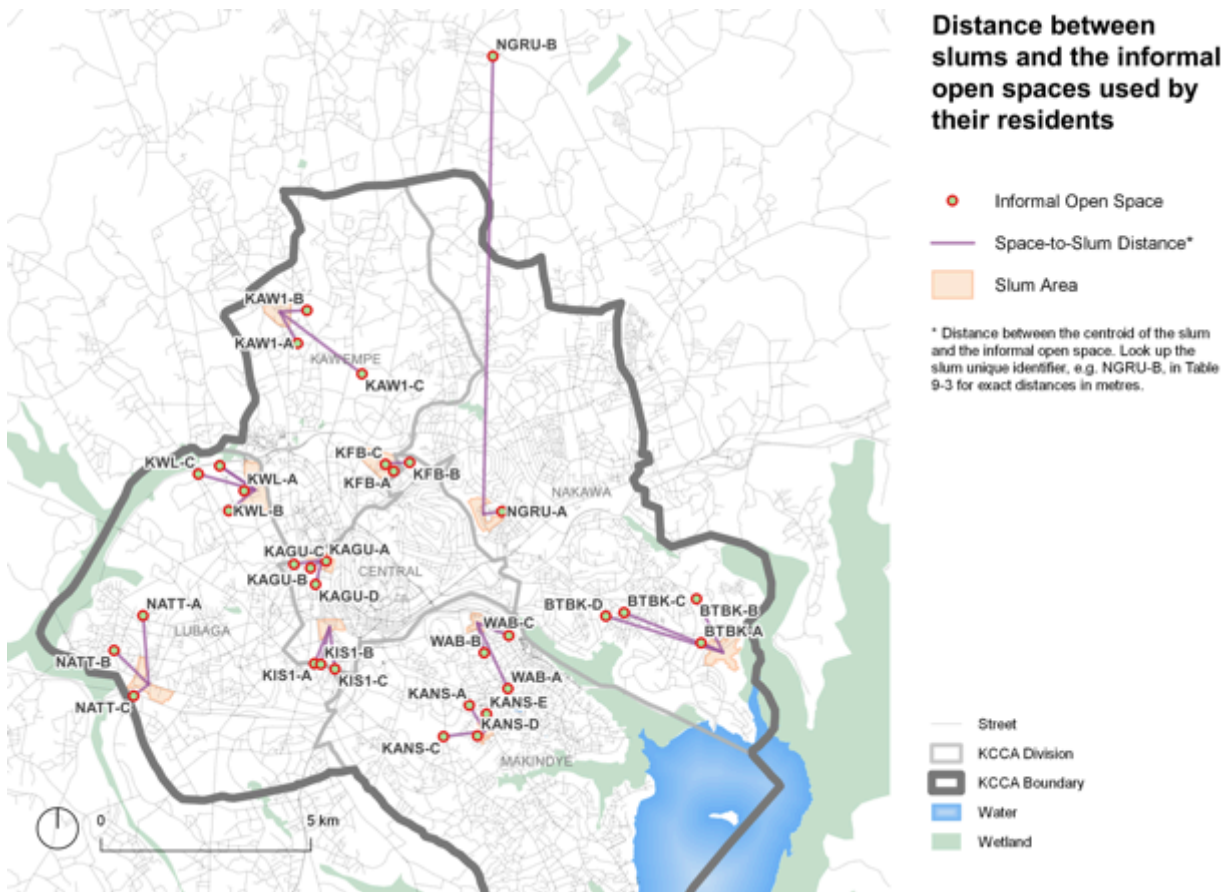


Figure 3-3 Distance between slums and the informal open spaces used by their residents

3.2 Types of spaces

Informal open spaces can take on a variety of forms: empty lots, underused rights-of-way, private yards, and so forth. Of the 34 spaces surveyed, the majority (23, or 68%) were yards owned by private individuals or organizations, followed by empty lots (7, or 20%). The remaining four spaces (12%) were alleys. Figure 3-4 shows informal spaces by type.

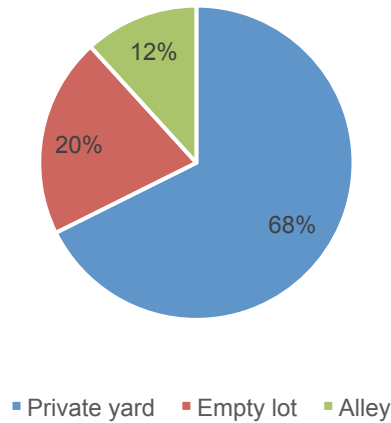


Figure 3-4 Types of informal open spaces

3.3 Users

Surveyors recorded the presence of people in each informal open space, by perceived age range (children, teenagers, adults, and elderly people) and gender (female and male). Presence in our study is represented as a binary variable. In other words, it has two possible values: “yes, present”, or “no, not present”. As a result, the variable does not account for the magnitude of people within each age range or gender.⁷

In terms of age ranges, adults were present in 32 out of 35 spaces (94.1%), teenagers in 31 (91.2%), children in 27 (79.4%), and elderly people in three (8.8%). Figure 3-5 summarizes these findings.



Figure 3-5 Age categories of people present at informal open spaces (% of spaces)

In terms of genders, males were present in all informal open spaces, whereas no females of any age were present in five informal open spaces (14.7%). Figure 3-6 summarizes these findings.

⁷In other words, if a space had one female adult present, and 100 male adults present, the female adult variable and the male adult variable would both be coded as “yes, present”.



Figure 3-6 Gender of people present at informal open spaces (% of spaces)

Among children, females and males were present in 55.9% and 76.5% of informal open spaces respectively. For teenagers, the same numbers were 50.0% for females, and 82.4% for males. Among adults, the presence of females and males rose to 67.6% and 88.2% respectively. Finally, very few female or male elderly people were present in the informal open spaces (5.9% and 8.8% respectively). Figure 3-7 summarizes these findings.

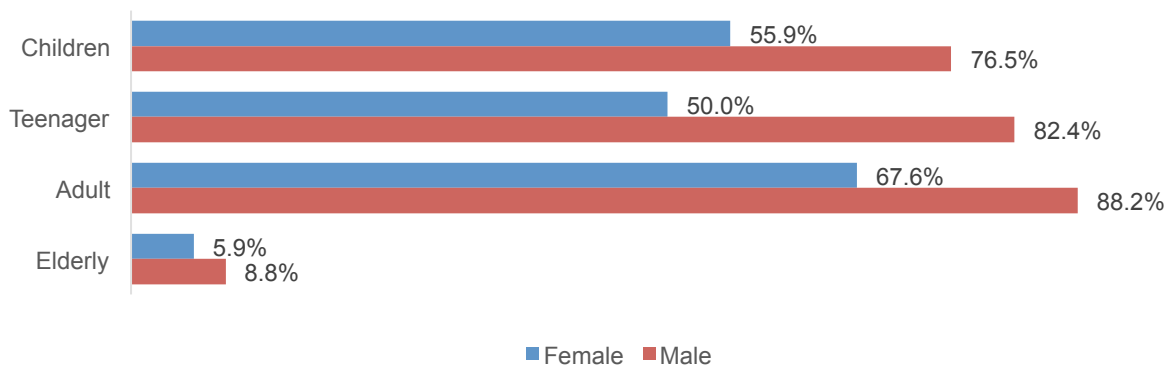


Figure 3-7 Gender by age category of people present at informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.4 Recreational activities

Surveyors recorded several types of recreational activities: sports (e.g. football), active recreation excluding sports (e.g. jogging), as well as non-active recreation (e.g. resting).

3.4.1 Sports

Surveyors recorded the types of sports being played at each informal open space. Football was by far the most common recreational activity: it was being played at 33 out of 34 spaces (97.1%). Among other sports, the most common were netball in seven spaces (20.6%), boxing in three (8.8%), and basketball and volleyball in two (5.9%) each.



St Kizito Butabika ground



The Kisenyi ring road ground



The KCCA Natete ground

Only nine spaces (26.5%) saw sports of any kind apart from football. Figure 3-8 summarizes these findings.

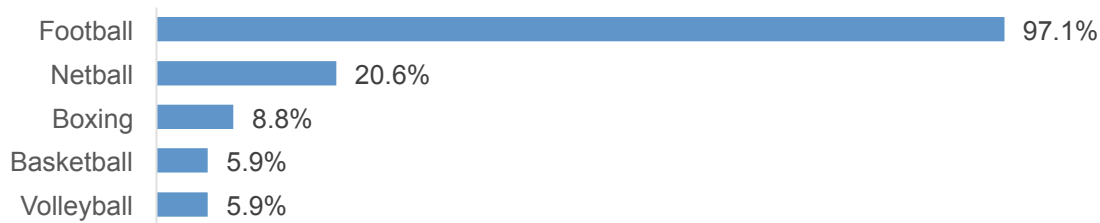


Figure 3-8 Sports activities in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.4.2 Other active recreation

Informal open spaces, like other open spaces, are often used for non-sport forms of active recreation (e.g. jogging). Active recreation activities excluding sports were noted in 19 out of 34 spaces (55.9%). The most common of these was running or jogging in 13 spaces (38.2%), followed by cycling in five (14.7%), physicals⁸ in two (5.9%), and jumping and tree-climbing in one space (2.9%) each. Figure 3-9 summarizes these findings.

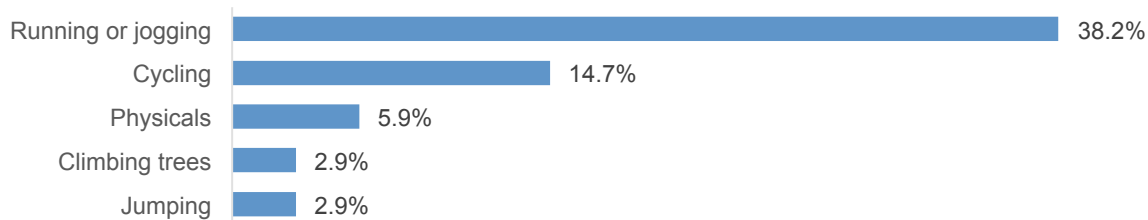


Figure 3-9 Non-sports active recreation in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.4.3 Non-active recreation

Surveyors also recorded the incidence of other types of recreation, like conversation and watching sports.



Kisugu play ground



Kilokole ground



Kyadondo ground

⁸ Physicals refer to strength training exercises, e.g. push-ups, sit-ups, etc.

Such activities were noted in 27 out of 34 spaces (79.4%). Unsurprisingly, the most common two non-active recreational activities were conversation (20 spaces) and resting (12 spaces), or 57.1% and 37.1% respectively. Figure 3-10 summarizes these findings.

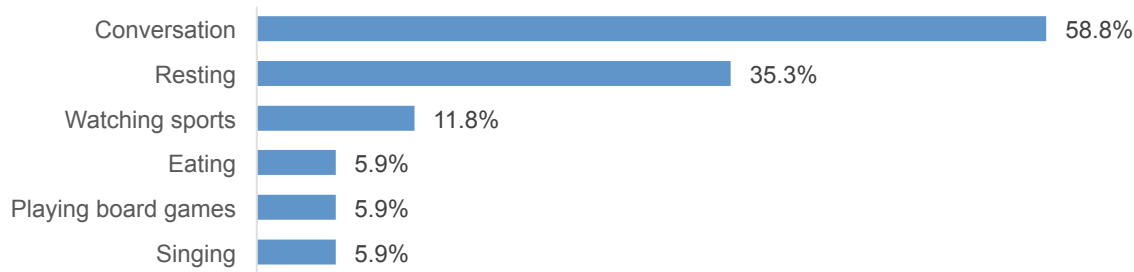


Figure 3-10 Non-active recreation activities in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.5 Non-recreational activities

Like many official parks, informal open spaces host several non-recreational activities.⁹ Our survey distinguishes between activities of daily living (e.g. hanging laundry) and commercial activities (e.g. mobile vendors).

3.5.1 Activities of daily living

Surveyors noted activities of daily living in 23 out of 34 informal open spaces (67.6%). Primarily, these involved active transportation: walking through the space to reach a destination (11, or 32.4%). (Bicycling for transportation was noted in one space, or 2.9%.) Apart from active transportation, people tending to gardens for horticultural purposes were spotted in eight spaces (23.5%), prayer was spotted in four spaces (11.8%), and animals grazing and undertaking laundry were found in three spaces (8.8%) each. Finally, drying fruit and fetching water were noted in one space (2.9%) each. Figure 3-11 summarizes these findings.

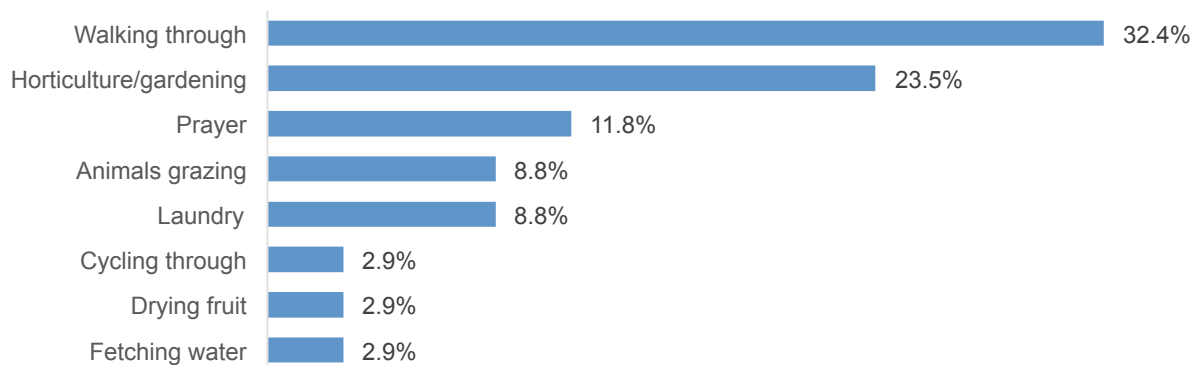


Figure 3-11 Activities of daily living in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

⁹These non-recreational activities may be obstructions to recreational activities, similar to those described in Section 3.6.2 (below). However the elements described in that later section are neither commercial activities nor activities of daily living.

3.5.2 Commercial activities

Commercial activities were also often present in informal open spaces (19 out of 34 spaces, or 55.9%). The most common of these were ordinary vendors in 14 spaces (41.2%), followed by brick making in four spaces (11.8%), and washing cars in two spaces (5.9%). Car repairs, bulk selling of sand, and milling maize were each found in one space (2.9%). Figure 3-12 summarizes these findings.

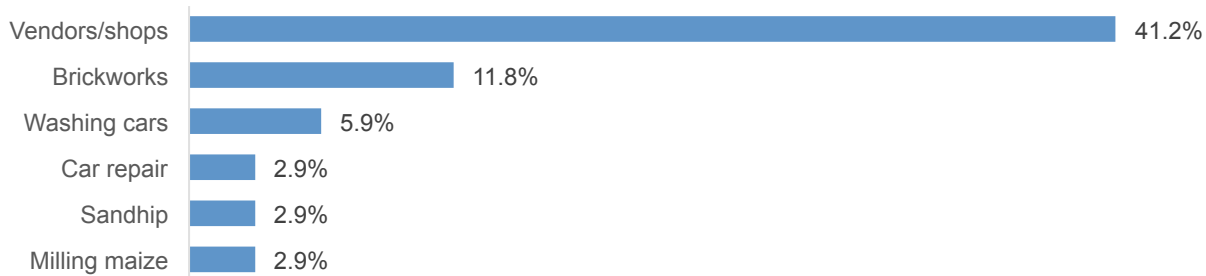


Figure 3-12 Commercial activities in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.6 Hazards and obstructions

Surveyors noted several additional elements in informal open spaces, each of which poses its own challenges: safety hazards, obstructions, in-progress construction, dwellings, and police armed with assault rifles. In some cases, these represent safety or public health risks. In others they may indicate encroachment of open space for permanent, private purposes. Unlike the commercial activities described above, which tend to be more ambulant and to contribute to the local economy, the items described below do not exhibit such features, generally speaking.



3.6.1 Hazards

Surveyors recorded safety hazards in all 34 informal open spaces. The most common hazard was non-level ground in 23 out of 34 parks (67.6%), followed by rocks and other large debris (22 spaces, 64.7%), garbage (19 spaces, 55.9%), bushes, roots, logs, and other brush (18 spaces, 52.9%), stray animals (14 spaces, 41.2%), risky litter (11 spaces, 32.4%), and open drains (10 spaces, 29.4%). Several less-common hazards were also identified. Figure 3-13 summarizes these findings.

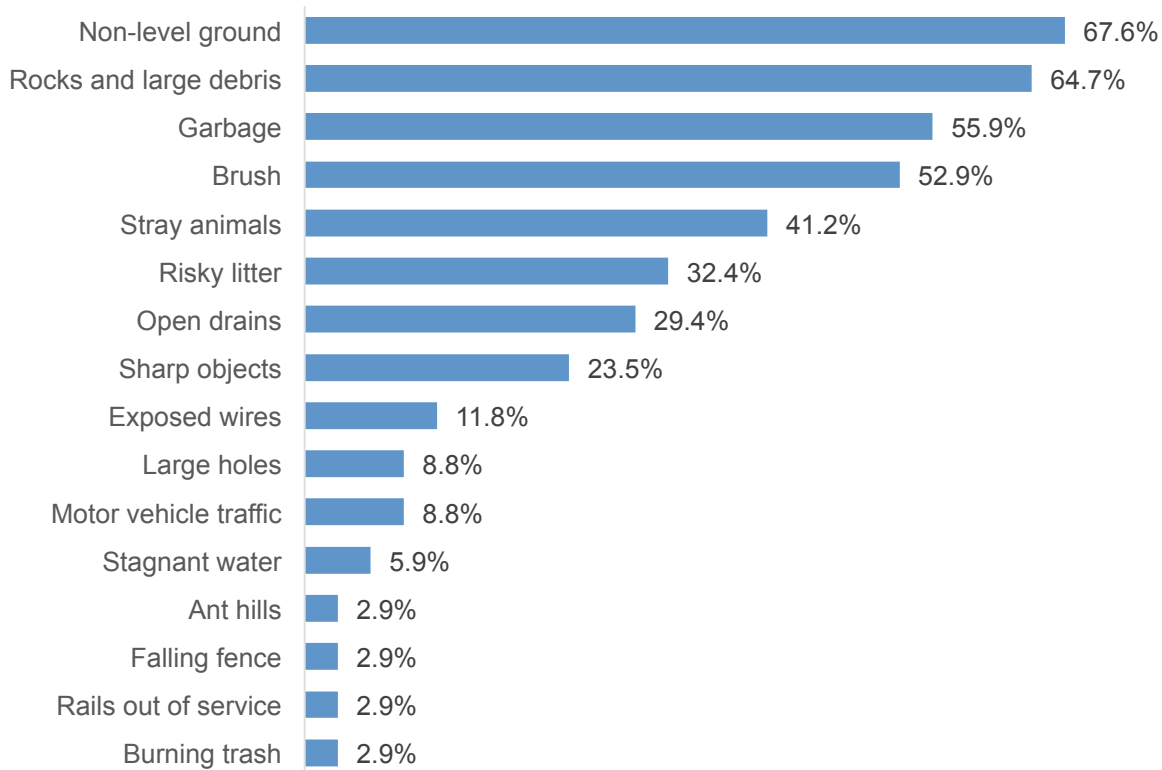


Figure 3-13 Hazards in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.6.2 Obstructions

Although many items previously mentioned above may also be characterized as obstructions, the elements described in this section are strictly speaking neither hazards, nor commercial activities. In the case of dwellings and in-progress construction they do, however, represent permanent encroachment.

Surveyors witnessed obstructions in 21 out of 34 informal open spaces (61.8%). Motor vehicle parking was the predominant form of obstruction, seen in 13 spaces (38.2%), followed by dwellings (8 spaces, 23.5%), piles of dumped garbage (5 spaces, 14.7%), construction materials with construction underway (4 spaces, 11.8%), and shipping containers (1 space, 2.9%). Figure 3-14 summarizes these findings.



Kifumbira ground



Kattaka ground



Kisenye open ground

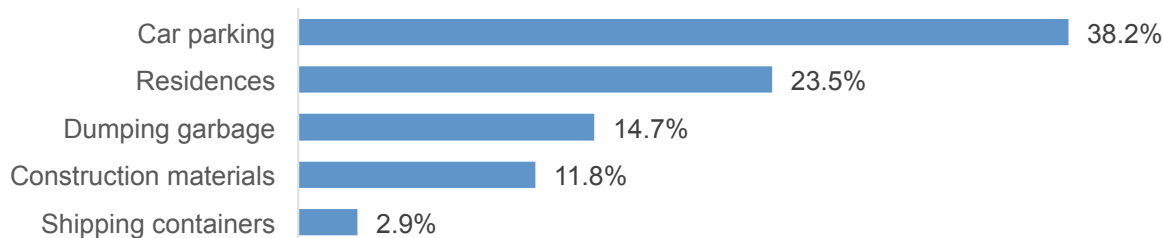


Figure 3-14 Obstructions in informal open spaces (% of spaces)

3.7 Summary of survey findings

The direct observation survey led to key findings across the six topics listed above. Table 3-1 summarizes these findings.

Table 3-1 Summary of findings from the direct observation survey

| Survey topic | Key findings |
|--|---|
| Location of spaces and proximity to selected slums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveyors identified 34 informal open spaces used by slum-dwellers from the 10 selected slums. Only three of the spaces are located within the technical boundaries of its slum. The mean distance between informal open spaces and their associated slum (excluding the three located within their slum area) is 1.3 kilometres. Nineteen (19) spaces are more than 800 metres from their slum. Excluding Kataaka Playground, which is over 10 kilometres from its slum and may be an outlier, the mean distance drops to 1.0 kilometre. For this subsample, the distances range between 0.2 kilometres and 2.9 kilometres. |
| Types of spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of spaces are private yards (23). Some spaces are located on empty lots (7) and in alleys (4). |
| Users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults (94.1% of spaces), teenagers (91.2%), and children (79.4%) are much more likely to be present at informal open spaces than elderly persons (8.8%). Men are more likely to use informal open spaces than women (seen at 100.0% and 85.3% of spaces respectively). Men are more likely to use informal open spaces than women, for all age categories. |
| Recreational activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football is the dominant sports activity, found at 97.1% of informal open spaces surveyed. Running, netball, and cycling trail in terms of physical activity: these were spotted at 38.2%, 20.6%, and 14.7% of spaces respectively. The most common two recreational activities not requiring physical activity were conversation (58.8% of spaces) and resting (35.3%). |
| Non-recreational activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal open spaces were very often used for pedestrian |

| Survey topic | Key findings |
|--------------------------|--|
| | <p>through traffic (32.4% of spaces).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticulture (23.5% of spaces), prayer (11.8%), animals grazing (8.8%), and laundry (8.8%), were also common activities of daily living. • Vendors and shops are the most common commercial activity present in informal open spaces, recorded at 41.2% of the surveyed spaces, followed by brickworks (11.8%) and washing cars (5.9%). |
| Hazards and obstructions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most common hazard was non-level ground in 67.6% of spaces, trailed by rocks and other large debris (64.7%), garbage (55.9%), and bushes, roots, logs, and other brush (52.9%). • Car parking and encroachment by residences were the most common obstructions, found at 38.2% and 23.5% of spaces respectively, followed by garbage dumping (14.7%), and construction materials (11.8%). |

4. Findings from the Focus Group Discussions

The second data collection method involved 10 Focus Group Discussions with 10-21 participants each, undertaken at a selection of informal open spaces. Table 9-2 in the Appendix summarizes the location and characteristics of each FGD.

The FGD questions, developed by NICC and HealthBridge, (1) added depth to the direct observation survey results, (2) assisted in identifying the improvements local residents would like to see; and (3) provided ideas on how to implement these changes. A copy of the FGD questions, developed by NICC and HealthBridge, is provided in Figure 9-2 and Figure 9-3 in the Appendix.

This section presents the findings from the 10 Focus Group Discussions. These are organized into five topic areas:

1. the distances participants walk to reach open spaces;
2. the ownership arrangements associated with various informal open spaces;
3. the types of activities undertaken in informal open spaces;
4. the challenges facing people who use these spaces, or who wish to use them; and
5. suggestions from participants.

The results help provide depth to findings from the direct observation survey, and allow us to better tailor our recommendations to the needs and concerns of the slum-dwellers who use the informal open spaces.

4.1 Travelling to informal open spaces

Focus group participants discussed where they go in order to engage in recreational activities. In many cases, participants said they do so in grounds nearest to their slum areas. However,

participants in four focus groups said they also go to recreation grounds in other neighbouring areas. For example:

- Participants in the Butabika focus group said they frequent the Mirambo playground for recreation activities, roughly one kilometer away from the Butabika slum.
- Participants in the focus group at the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) playground (Kagugube) said they frequent the Buganda Road playground, roughly 0.4 kilometres east of the SDA playground, just outside the Kagugube slum area.
- Participants at the Lubiri playground (Kisenyi 1) noted that they sometimes go to spaces along Kyagwe Road and at Old Kampala Senior Secondary School, each approximately 0.75 kilometres north by northwest of the Kisenyi 1 slum's centre-point.

Focus group participants also noted that several informal open spaces serve a very large catchment area, despite not having the status of official parks. They mentioned six spaces¹⁰, for instance, that serve many surrounding neighbourhoods (Figure 4-1):

- Mirambo Playground near the Butabika slum
- Namungona Playground near the Kawala slum
- Kilokole Playground at the northwestern edge of Kawempe Division
- Nateete Mills Playground adjacent to the Nateete slum
- Namuwongo Playground in Kisugu, near the Wabigalo slum
- Kilombe Playground on Kilombe Road in Makindye Division



Mirambo ground



Natete ground



Kilokole ground

¹⁰ Five out of the six informal open spaces were included in our direct observation survey. Kilokole Playground is the exception.

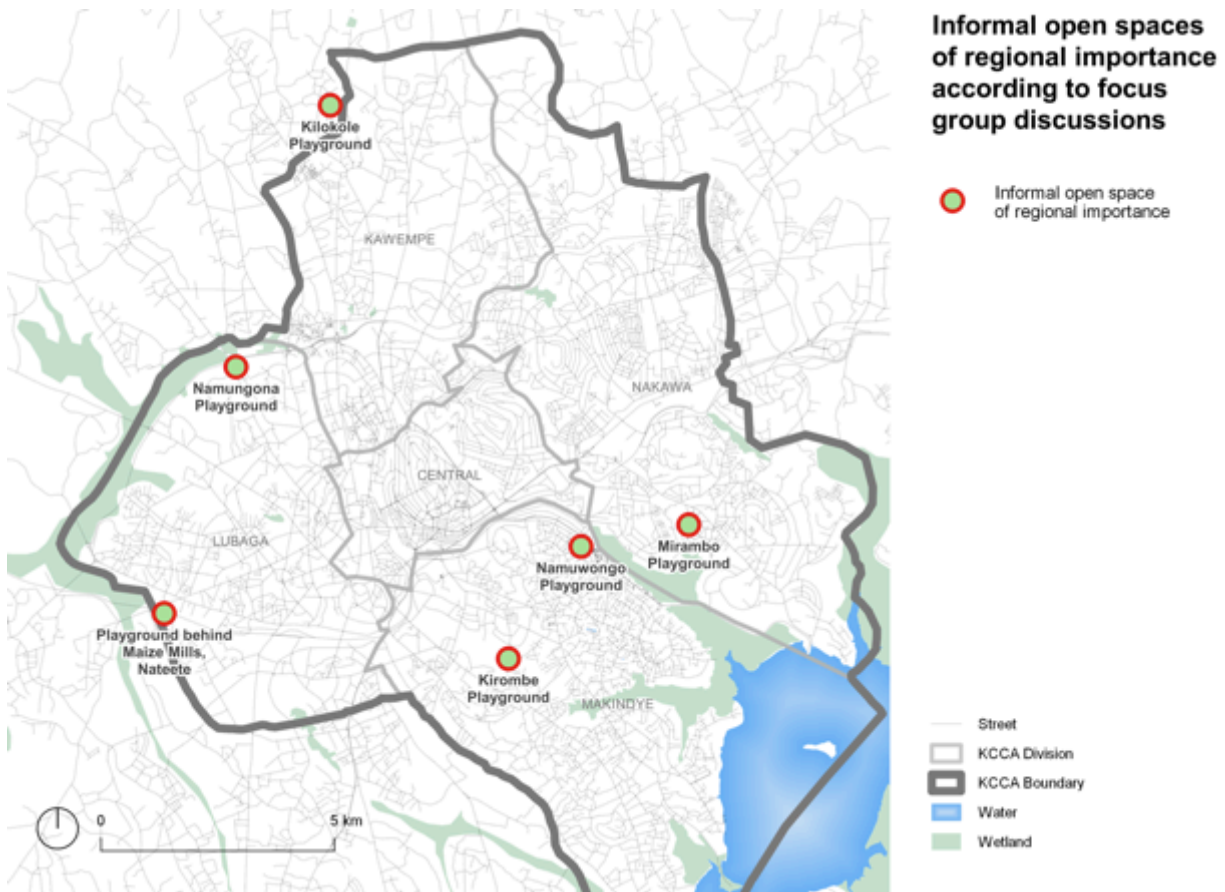


Figure 4-1 Informal open spaces of regional importance according to FGD participants

One participant pointed out that, “people come to Mirambo from as far as Wakiso, Kyengera, Mutungo, Luzira, Bugolobi, Kasokoso, and Bukasa, among others.” Figure 4-2 shows where these areas are in respect to Mirambo.

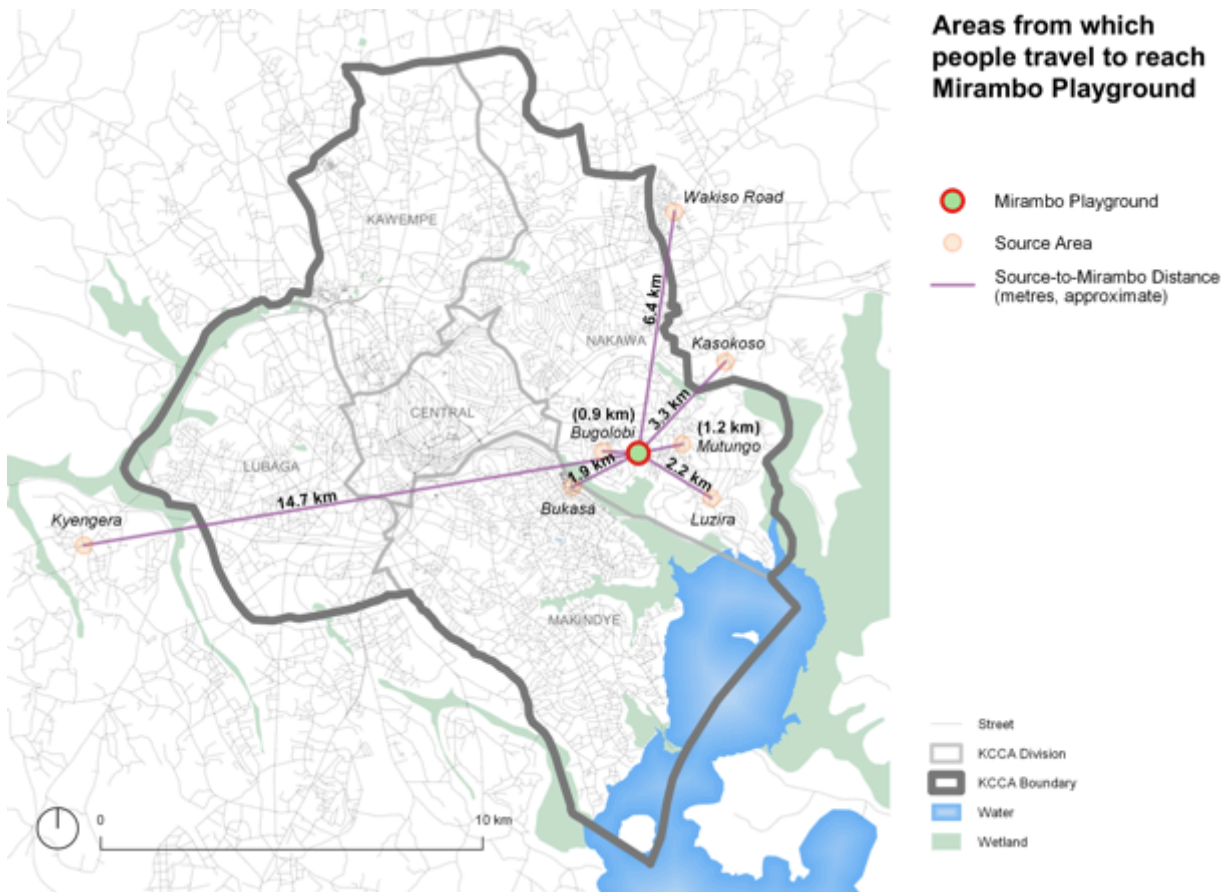


Figure 4-2 Areas from which people travel to reach Mirambo Playground according to FGD participants

Participants that do not enjoy the crowds at the spaces listed above mentioned that they often end up instead walking around shops and markets, playing pool in bars, going to watch films, or attending church to sing.

4.2 Ownership

According to the FGD participants, informal open spaces are owned by individuals, churches, the Kingdom of Buganda, the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), or the community directly.¹¹

In all focus groups, participants expressed a desire to have the informal recreational spaces made official parks, owned and managed by the surrounding community. This, they suggested, would protect the spaces from encroachment, allow for adequate maintenance, and ensure free access to the public.

4.3 Types of activities

The focus groups corroborated findings from the observation survey (Section 3) with respect to types of activities. Participants mentioned undertaking the following activities at the different

¹¹Table 9-4 in the Appendix lists the specific ownership arrangements for spaces discussed during the FGDs

recreation spaces: football, volleyball, netball, running, bike-riding, boxing, music, dance, drama, watching sports, local council community meetings, and resting and relaxing.

Participants stressed that football was the predominant recreation activity in informal open spaces. They suggested this was the case because (1) football is a simple game to play; (2) does not require much instruction to play; (3) relieves stress; and (4) has been played for many years. One said, “some of us are addicted to this game.”

Football is played all day at some informal recreation sites such as the Mirambo and Kilokole playgrounds. One participant, pointing towards the Mirambo playground, said, “see for yourself,” in reference to the various teams waiting for a chance to play. Participants also reported that teams are bussed to the Mirambo and Kilokole playgrounds from distant areas in order to play football.

Chairman of the Mirambo Playground Management Committee and focus group participant Yusuf Baale said, regarding the high demand for Mirambo Playground, that use of the facility is strictly rationed. Morning hours are dedicated to schools during the week. However, if they have no activities programmed, registered teams can play for a minimum of one hour each. In the afternoon, 2nd division and super league teams practice. At sunset, the Mirambo village team practices. The Namugona Playground has a football academy for children aged 10 to 15 years.

Participants also noted other activities at specific open spaces. For example:

- Mirambo Playground is used for outdoor sermons (gospel crusade) and Physical Education (PE) by surrounding schools.
- Kitintale Playground is used for immunization¹², and as a polling station during elections.
- Treasure Life Youth Centre (TLYC) Playground in Kamwokya is used for training youth in entrepreneurship and talent development. It is also the only playground with an internet café and a youth clinic.
- Lubiri Playground in Kisenyi reportedly has weight lifting facilities.
- Kilombe and Kisugu Playgrounds in Makindye host military drills.

Many of the informal open spaces therefore have many different purposes. They provide recreational and non-recreational opportunities to residents, nearby schools, churches, other civic sector organizations, and government agencies. However, the dominant activity at most spaces remains football.

4.4 Challenges

The focus groups reported many challenges facing informal open spaces. This section presents the four predominant themes that resulted from the discussions: (1) limitations of space and equipment; (2) safety hazards and lack of amenities, (3) encroachment and tenure; and (4) crime and safety.

¹²During *Child Days Plus*

4.4.1 Limitations of space and equipment

Focus group participants brought up limitations to using informal open spaces both in terms of space and equipment. First, the availability of facilities and equipment (e.g. basketball hoops) limited the ability to engage in certain games and sports. Second, the number of spaces available for sports and play was low relative to demand: participants cited overcrowding and denying children space to play.

Some of the grounds lack goal posts. All grounds lack facilities such as balls; those interested in using the grounds have to come with their balls and kits to use.

4.4.2 Safety hazards and lack of amenities

Focus groups participants listed several safety hazards in the informal open spaces. In particular, surfacing issues and motor vehicle traffic. Similarly, they noted a lack of certain amenities that resulted in unpleasant conditions for recreation.

In terms of amenities, most spaces lack shade or shelter of any kind, to shield users of the spaces when it is too hot or raining. Also, many spaces are dusty because of both overuse, and proximity to roads. Almost all spaces lacked latrines.

As far as surfacing is concerned, participants cited several issues that expose users to injuries: bare, non-level, or rough surfaces; sharp objects including broken glass, pieces of metal, and small nails; large stones and other debris; and large holes. As well, many spaces are used as dumping grounds for garbage. Finally, in the case of Nateete Mills Playground, the mills had blocked the drainage channels, leading to flooding during the rainy season.

Motor vehicle traffic represents an additional hazard for many spaces. The Nateete Mills Playground is also used as an offloading and loading space for trucks bringing maize and taking away flour. The resulting heavy traffic and dug-up roads are an impediment to recreation. The Treasure Life Youth Centre playground in Kamwokya faces a threat of accidents because of a road that passes through the ground.

4.4.3 Encroachment and tenure

Participants mentioned that the open spaces are under threat from encroachment, particularly from housing developers. Most of the grounds have no organized leadership to oppose such encroachment. Because of issues with respect to tenure, the threat of eviction a constant concern, resulting in stress and psychological wear for users of the spaces.

In another form of encroachment, one focus group noted that the Seventh Day Adventist playground in Kagugube is in places used by local mechanics to repair cars, reducing space for recreation. The same playground is closed to the public on Saturdays and converted into parking for the church.

4.4.4 Crime and safety

Some focus groups also complained about crime and safety. Some participants mentioned that children sometimes fear the Lubiri playground in Kisenyi because it is frequented by street children who beat them. One participant described one incident there, where people armed with knives killed a young boy. More generally, participants cited incidents of theft, especially the stealing of money and phones, from pockets and bags of participants.

Of particular note, participants stressed that children and women face special challenges in accessing open spaces for recreational purposes; football takes up much of the space and is dominated by male adults—especially in the afternoon and evening hours.

4.5 Suggestions from participants

Participants provided many suggestions for informal open spaces in Kampala. In particular, they (1) expressed a desire for additional activities, (2) provided input on ways to formalize informal open spaces, and (3) suggested how to maintain such spaces, and by whom.

4.5.1 Eagerness for additional activities

The focus group participants were dissatisfied with the lack of a wider range of activities in which to engage at the open spaces. They had several suggestions for additional activities, some more feasible than others. Table 4-1 summarizes these suggestions.

Table 4-1 Desired additional facilities in informal open spaces

| Focus group | Desired additional facilities |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Mirambo playground | Circus equipment; bouncing castles; swings for children |
| Nateete Mills playground | Handball; martial arts; basketball |
| Treasure Life Youth Centre playground | Roll ball; arts and crafts; vocational skills development |
| Namungona playground | Wood ball; handball |
| Kisungu playground | Designated pitch for football so that others can engage in non-football activities outside the pitch |
| Kilombe playground | Chess; luddo |

4.5.2 Formalizing informal open spaces

The discussion on the subject of formalizing informal open spaces raised several opinions including the following:

- The entire community (under the guidance of strong local leaders) should take part in the formalization process.

- It may be a good idea to partner with authorities at KCCA and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, because they may be already aware of the lack of parks in the city.
- Other possible partners include organisations with an interest in sports and public health who can also advocate for the grounds to be made official parks.
- Coordination is required between users, grounds managers, and owners (e.g. private individuals, places of worship, Buganda Land Board, Government of Uganda).
- Consider seeking the involvement from the Federation of Uganda Football Associations (FUFA) and other sports bodies.
- Hold peaceful demonstrations demanding for the grounds to be made official parks.

Participants held the strong belief that local community members, if well organized, are well-positioned to initiate this process. Participants were of the view that the most important institution in this process would be KCCA at the district level and the Ministry of Sports at the national government level.

Participants in the Kagugube focus group suggested that the SDA church should abandon its plans of expanding the church into the recreation ground. The younger participants expressed their wish to have the place made an official park because there is no other alternative in their community.

One participant, in reference to playgrounds on land owned by the Kingdom of Buganda, asserted that “Our leaders here on the ground, together with the community leaders should be responsible for meeting and securing this playground with Buganda Land Board.”

4.5.3 Maintenance of informal open spaces

Participants were of the view that the teams that play on the ground would be willing contribute towards making changes to informal open spaces. They also felt that the local communities would be willing to participate in making changes. If approached with a plan, they felt that local leaders and charity organisations could be willing to contribute to the changes. Other respondents suggested that the government (through the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports) could assist in making changes to the informal open spaces.

In two focus groups, more specific suggests were made. Participants at the Kamwokya focus group stated that Kamwokya Christian Care Community should continue to be responsible for maintaining the Treasure Life Youth Centre, in close collaboration with the centre’s coordination office. The management has already levelled the ground and tarmacked some parts. In the Kisugu focus group, participants identified donor-funded organisations interested in public health as some of the stakeholders who can be approached to work with management to improve the grounds.

4.6 Summary of findings from Focus Group Discussions

The Focus Group Discussions led to key findings across five topics listed above. Table 4-2 summarizes these findings.

Table 4-2 Key findings from Focus Group Discussions

| Focus group topic | Key findings |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Travelling to informal open spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many participants said they travel outside their neighbourhood for recreational purposes. • Some spaces, while informal, serve many surrounding neighbourhoods: Mirambo Playground, Namungona Playground, Kilokole Playground, Nateete Mills Playground, Namuwongo Playground, and Kilombe Playground. |
| Ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spaces are owned by owned by individuals, churches, the Kingdom of Buganda, the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), or the community directly. • Participants expressed the desire to upgrade informal open spaces to official parks, owned and managed by the surrounding community. |
| Types of activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football is the dominant recreational activity according to participants. • Informal open spaces are nonetheless polyvalent: participants stated that they are also used for volleyball, netball, running, bike-riding, boxing, music, dance, drama, watching sports, community meetings, resting, prayer, temporary clinics, polling stations, capacity-building programs, weight training, and military drills. |
| Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants expressed, first and foremost, that there is a shortage of space and facilities for recreation. • Most spaces face ongoing threats of encroachment due in large part to their legal status. • In terms of amenities, many spaces lack shade and shelter from rain, as well as latrines, and appropriate drainage and surfacing. • In terms of hazards, participants spoke of bare, non-level, or rough surfaces; sharp objects including broken glass, pieces of metal, and small nails; large stones and other debris; and large holes. As well, many spaces are used as dumping grounds for garbage. • Participants cited motor vehicle traffic as a problem in several informal open spaces. • Crime can be a hurdle to park use, especially among women and children after sunset. |
| Suggestions from participants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most focus groups, the desired additional recreational facilities were simple: designated sports pitches and posts, space for non-sports activities like arts and crafts and board games; and children's play equipment like swings. • Participants suggested that local community members are best positioned to own and manage the informal open spaces. They also stated that such spaces require legal status as official parks. |

5. Analysis of findings

This section discusses the findings from the direct observation survey and the Focus Group Discussions with an analytical lens. Where the previous two sections answer the "what", this section attempts to explain the "why". It is organized into seven sections, each of which covers a key interpretation of our findings:

1. Informal open spaces increase coverage
2. Shortage of space and facilities
3. Consideration for women, children, and the elderly
4. No framework for non-recreational activities
5. Threat of encroachment
6. Hazards
7. Community engagement

The analysis in this section will help us formulate recommendations to improve the availability, quality, and usage of open spaces for recreation in Kampala.

5.1 Informal open spaces increase coverage

Compared to official parks alone (Figure 5-1), informal open spaces greatly increase the coverage of open spaces in Kampala (Figure 5-2). Informal open spaces are critical components of residents' access to recreational space in the city. This is true despite the fact that our study only covers a sample of 10 slum neighbourhoods.

Figure 5-1 shows the pedestrian catchment area of official public parks alone. Many parts of Kampala fall outside a 10-minute walking distance of a public park.

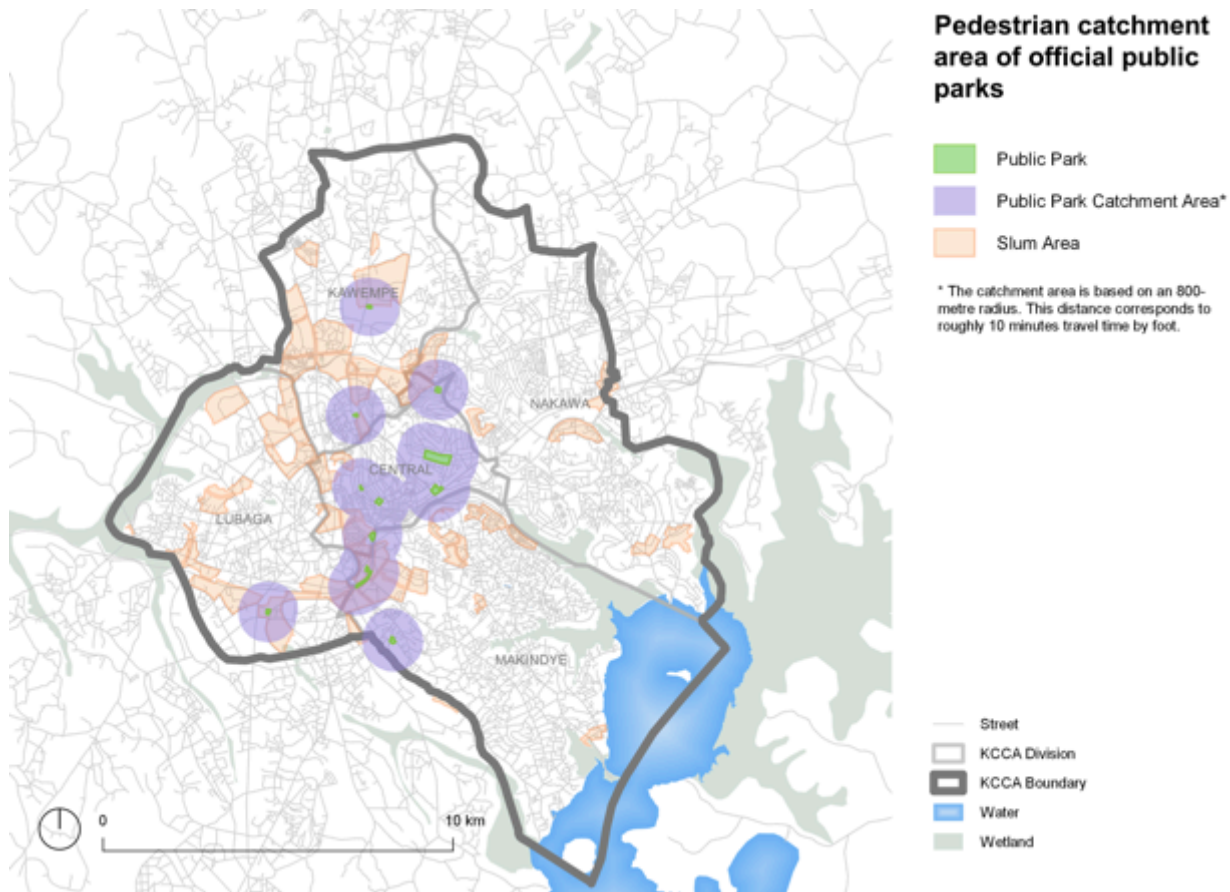


Figure 5-1 Pedestrian catchment area (800-metre radius) of official public parks

However, when including the informal open spaces included in our direct observation survey, many additional parts of the city fall within a 10-minute walking distance of a space for recreation. Figure 5-2 presents the pedestrian catchment area of official parks in combination with informal open spaces.

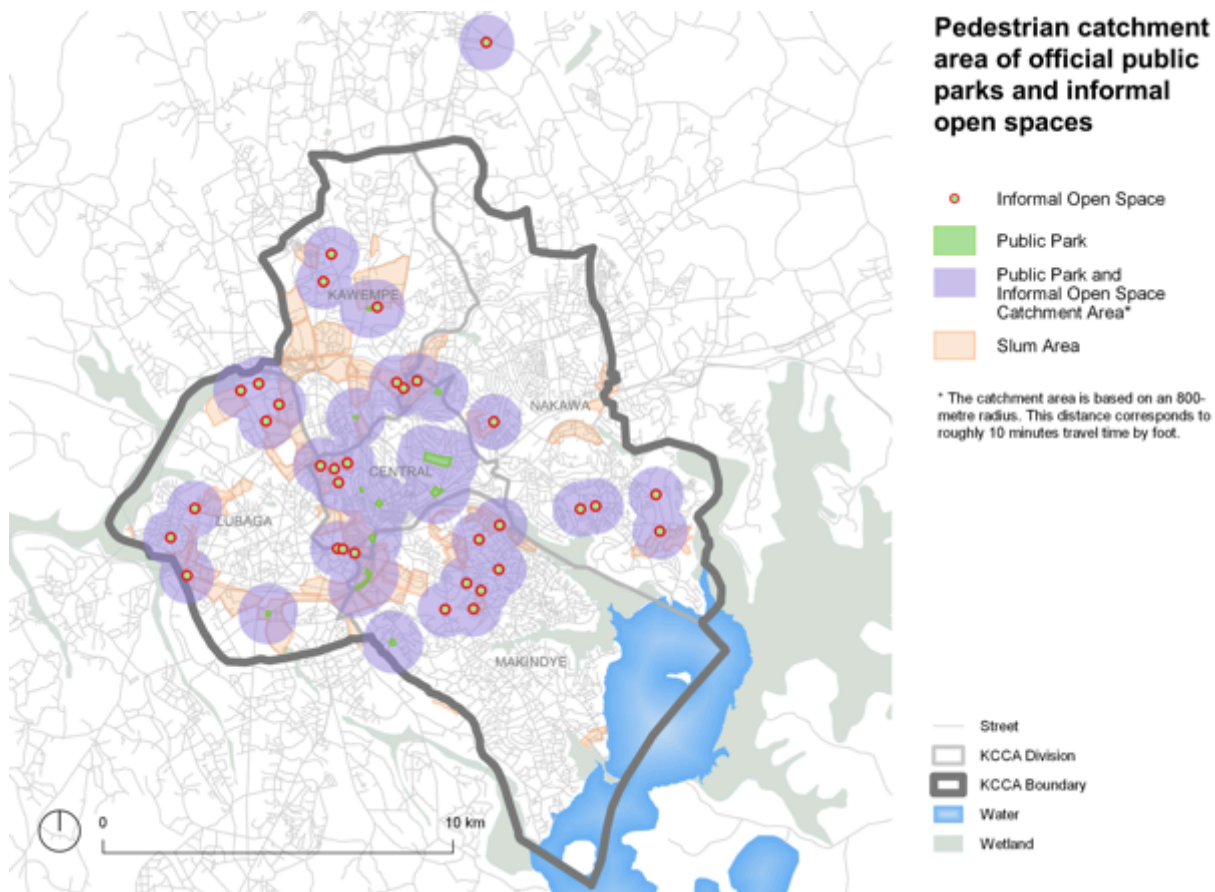


Figure 5-2 Pedestrian catchment area (800-metre radius) of official public parks and informal open spaces surveyed for this study

Informal open spaces therefore dramatically increase access to recreational opportunities within Kampala.

5.2 Shortage of space and facilities

Three of our findings point to a shortage of open spaces in Kampala Capital City. First, the observation survey recorded several recreational and non-recreational activities at all informal open spaces, from sports, to socializing, to activities of daily living, to commercial activities:

- Sports, e.g. football, were being played at all informal open spaces (100.0%).
- Non-sports physical activities, e.g. jogging, were occurring at 55.9% of spaces.
- Non-active recreation, e.g. resting, was taking place at 79.4% of spaces.
- Activities of daily living, e.g. walking for transport, were happening at 67.6% of spaces.
- Commercial activities, e.g. vendors, were occurring at 55.9% of spaces.

This indicates a high rate of utilization of the spaces that were surveyed. It was corroborated by focus group participants, who believed that there was a lack of space for recreational activities.

Secondly, focus group participants mentioned overcrowding, waiting lists and strict scheduling to play football, as well as other sports.

Finally, according to both FGDs and the observation survey, slum-dwellers travel long distances to reach open spaces. In the case of the observation survey, the mean distance between slums and the open spaces used by their inhabitants was 1.0 kilometres, or almost 15 minutes by foot.

5.3 Consideration for women, children, and the elderly

Participation in informal open spaces is lower among women, children, and the elderly, than it is among adults and males. Although this may occur for many reasons, our findings point to four possible explanations. First and foremost, football was the most common sport found in informal open spaces (33 out of 34 spaces). In the present context of Kampala, adult males dominate participation in football. Facilities for other sports like netball, which is more commonly played by women for example, are much less likely to be present in informal open spaces than football goal posts. This fact was corroborated by the suggestions for additional facilities mentioned by FGDs (Table 4-1) as well as the fact that some FGD participants would regularly bring their own sports kits to the grounds in order to play other sports.

In addition to the dominance of football, focus group participants noted a lack of amenities like shade, shelter from rain, and latrines. These factors—in particular the availability of toilet facilities—may be a greater deterrent for women, children, and the elderly, than for adults and males.

Third, women and children are regularly marginalized from use of these spaces, especially during peak periods (evenings and weekends) and are denied the opportunity to engage in recreation activities. Focus group participants stressed that children and women were sometimes intimidated when trying to reserve space for sports, and may have difficulty defending themselves in disputes regarding use of the grounds.

Finally, women, children, and the elderly face additional safety concerns. For example, FGD participants noted that children sometimes fear certain playgrounds because of the threat of violence. Similarly, women are especially vulnerable to theft of purses and bags.

5.4 No framework for non-recreational activities

Informal open spaces host many non-recreational activities—some benefit the surrounding community and some do not. Certain forms of non-recreational activities are already present in most informal open spaces that were surveyed. Many such activities—in particular mobile vendors—may be seen as beneficial to users of the spaces: their presence contributes to passive surveillance and therefore to the space's safety from crime; they contribute to the availability of products (e.g. fresh produce) in proximity; and they provide a low-overhead livelihood for individuals with low incomes.

On the other hand, many non-recreational activities have negative consequences. To offer some examples:

- Car parking, car washing, and through-traffic serve an elite population at the expense of space for local residents to play;
- Garbage dumping is both an obstruction and safety hazard;
- Hanging laundry and horticulture may be desirable activities in some respects, but need to coexist with recreational opportunities in a way that best benefits the community.

The informality of the spaces allow many different types of uses to coexist, which in some cases prevents them from being used for recreational activities. There is currently no policy framework for non-recreational activities in informal open spaces, nor any mechanism to enforce such a framework.

5.5 Threat of encroachment

The preservation of informal open spaces is under continual threat from encroachment. The private ownership of many informal grounds, as noted by FGD participants, makes them particularly vulnerable to private development. This creates an unstable tenure of use for recreation. It also undermines any prospects for improvement or proper management of these spaces to make them more attractive to slum dwellers seeking to engage in recreational activities.

Furthermore, encroachment is underway in many informal open spaces, according to the direct observation survey results. Dwellings were found in roughly one-quarter of the surveyed spaces, and construction of some kind was underway in four spaces.

5.6 Hazards

Multiple hazards were found in all surveyed informal open spaces. The number of hazard types present in each space ranged from one to 10, with an average of 4. This may not be surprising because of the precarious and ambiguous legal status of these spaces.

Non-level ground was the most common hazard (67.6% of spaces). In combination with debris, exposed wires, and risky litter, and many other hazards, non-level ground increases the risk of injury to users of informal open spaces.

When combined with rainfall or flooding, many hazards pose a public health risk in terms of polluted or otherwise contaminated storm water runoff.

5.7 Community engagement

Community engagement is critical for the preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of open spaces. The focus groups illustrate that slum dwellers are local experts. They have a very good understanding of the steps that could be taken to preserve, maintain, and enhance

informal open spaces. They want to take the lead in the advocacy process, supported by partners and other stakeholders in sports, public health, and civil society.

This echoes evidence from elsewhere¹³ indicating that public spaces benefit from community participation in their planning, maintenance, and management.

6. Recommendations

This section uses our findings and the analysis above, combined with examples of good practise from other parts of the world, to provide a list of six recommendations, based on the following topics:

1. Partnerships with owners
2. Collaboration with local organizations
3. Policy framework
4. Communication strategy
5. Women, children, and the elderly
6. Park master plan

These recommendations address the third purpose of the study:

- 3. To develop a set of recommendations that will create safe and protected spaces for children and the community.*

The purpose of the recommendations are to identifying solutions to preserve, formalize, enhance, and expand the supply of open spaces for the people living in Kampala generally and for residents of the slums specifically. In turn, this will help start a public dialogue on how to improve informal open spaces in slums.

6.1 Partnerships with owners

Engage with owners of informal open spaces (places of worship, Kingdom of Buganda, private owners) to arrange schemes that ensure the preservation of the spaces.

Kampala does not have enough open and green spaces to serve the population, a finding confirmed by our original study. Therefore one critical strategy for increasing the number of public spaces in the city is to look for ways to ensure the informal spaces in the city are protected for recreational uses. Because most of the informal spaces are privately owned, NICC, partners, and the city should work with private land-owners to arrange for ways that preserve and protect these spaces. Options include having the city purchase the land and developing agreements with landowners and local residents.

¹³See for example: [Building Neighbourhood Playgrounds: Lessons from the Field](#); [Beyond Engagement and Participation: User and Community Coproduction of Public Services](#)

6.2 Collaboration with local organizations

Work with local slum communities and organizations such as ACTogether in order to create a plan to enhance, manage, and maintain the informal open spaces.

Once the open spaces are protected, the community can begin the process of improving the space and develop plans for how the space will be managed and maintained. The Focus Group Discussions clearly demonstrated that the community was willing and interested in participating in the development and maintenance of their spaces. We recommend that a community engagement process be undertaken whereby citizens' input becomes a vital part of the development process.

The document *Building Neighbourhood Playgrounds: Lessons from the Field* provides great examples of a community engagement.¹⁴

6.3 Policy framework

Establish a policy framework, along with enforcement mechanism, for non-recreational activities (activities of daily living, vendors, dumping) in open spaces.

The spaces currently used as recreational areas are also important areas for commerce, including for vendors to sell their goods, and activities of daily living, such as growing food and drying clothes. For slum dwellers, these activities can be as important as recreational activities. However, not all activities serve the needs of the surrounding communities. It is important to ensure a balance is created whereby residents have a flexible space that meets their needs while reducing those activities that do not serve the greater good. Involving residents in the development of the framework and the policies is one important strategy to ensure the open spaces remain flexible in order to adapt to the changing needs of residents. Residents should have a say about what is and is not desirable behaviour within their open spaces.

6.4 Communication strategy

Local organizations should engage in a communication strategy to explain the importance of parks to the public, as well as bureaucrats and elected officials.

The important role parks and open spaces play in protecting and improving the environment, health and improving the quality of life of city residents needs to be understood by decision-makers and the public. As a first step, this report will be distributed to all interested parties including decision-makers at the municipal and national level, residents, local organizations, and media. The media will play a particularly important role in sharing information with the public.

¹⁴ http://healthbridge.ca/images/uploads/library/building_playgrounds_lessons_learned.pdf

6.5 Women, children, and the elderly

Develop a strategy to encourage women, children, and the elderly to use open spaces.

Unfortunately the informal spaces, in their current state, serve mostly one purpose: football played by adult males. Football is a very important activity and there should be room allocated for such purposes, especially given the obvious demand. However, women, children and the elderly are also in need of spaces to pursue activities that are of interest to them. The community engagement process that addresses the upgrading, management and maintenance of the open spaces should also include a component that specifically allows women, children, and the elderly to identify their needs and desired activities. In addition, it is important to ensure that women and children feel comfortable and safe in their public spaces. UN Women is currently developing tools and approaches through their Safe Cities Initiative that can assist in reducing violence against women in public spaces.¹⁵

6.6 Park master plan

KCCA should prepare a park master plan.

In order to ensure that all residents in Kampala have easy access to a quality park and open space, the city should consider developing a Parks Master Plan as an amendment to the Kampala Physical Development Plan (KPDP). This plan would outline the city's vision for parks and open spaces in the city and explain the implementation of the policies and maintenance of the parks and open spaces. Preparation of this plan would involve undertaking a more detailed study to examine all informal spaces and determine which of those spaces can be made more formal through agreements with landowners or through purchasing the spaces. Finally, the plan should include a clear financing component that identifies the funds needed to realize the plan and the ways the city will raise such funds.

7. Conclusion

This study had three primary objectives: (1) to identify, describe, and map informal open spaces in Kampala Capital City slums, (2) to better understand the perceptions of such spaces by slum dwellers, and (3) to develop a set of recommendations that would create safe and protected spaces for children and the community. To accomplish these objectives, we employed a direct observation survey and Focus Group Discussions with a variety of stakeholders. The findings of the survey and Focus Group Discussions are summarized in Table 3-1 and Table 4-2.

We drew seven key interpretations from our findings:

1. Compared to official parks alone, informal open spaces greatly increase the coverage of space for recreation in Kampala.

¹⁵ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>

2. There is an unmet demand for open spaces. Informal open spaces are often crowded, fully booked for sports time, and lack facilities for most activities apart from football.
3. Participation in recreational activities is low among women, children, and the elderly.
4. Informal open spaces host many non-recreational activities and some of these do not benefit the surrounding community.
5. The preservation of informal open spaces is under continual threat from encroachment and full-on redevelopment.
6. Multiple hazards were found in all surveyed informal open spaces. The safety conditions in most spaces were poor, especially for children and women.
7. Community engagement is critical for the preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of open spaces. Slum dwellers are local experts. They are eager and well-positioned to take care of their open spaces.

We then used our findings, along with the above analysis, to generate a list of six recommendations:

1. Engage with owners of informal open spaces to arrange schemes that ensure the preservation of the spaces.
2. Work with local slum communities and organizations such as ACTogether in order to create a plan to enhance, manage, and maintain the informal open spaces.
3. Establish a policy framework, along with enforcement mechanism, for non-recreational activities (activities of daily living, vendors, dumping) in open spaces.
4. Local organizations should engage in a communication strategy to explain the importance of parks to the public, as well as bureaucrats and elected officials.
5. Develop a strategy to encourage women, children, and the elderly to use open spaces.
6. KCCA should prepare a park master plan.

Slum dwellers, being on the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, tend to be forgotten when it comes to planning spaces for any form of recreation. This is despite the fact that they make up large numbers of the cities' population. The inhabitants of slums, more than those from other city neighbourhoods, need open spaces to engage in recreational activities, from resting to playing soccer to socializing with friends. As well, many slum dwellers depend on open spaces for their livelihoods, e.g. fruit vendors, cobblers, and so on. For all residents—but slum dwellers in particular—open spaces are critical for individual wellbeing and public health.

It is important to realize the international vision of ensuring everyone has easy access to a safe, comfortable park and open space. In order to achieve such a vision residents, community organizations, and decision-makers at both the municipal and national level need to work together to plan, create, protect, and maintain both the formal and informal spaces that exist in the city.

8. References

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9. Appendix

Table 9-1 Index of slums in Kampala, source: ACTogether

| Map number | Slum name | Slum code | Division |
|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Kagugube | KAGU | Central |
| 2 | Kisenyi 1 | KIS1 | Central |
| 3 | Kisenyi 2 | KIS2 | Central |
| 4 | Kisenyi 3 | KIS3 | Central |
| 5 | Kamwokya | KAM | Central |
| 6 | Bukesa | BKS | Central |
| 7 | Mengo | MEN | Central |

| Map number | Slum name | Slum code | Division |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------|
| 8 | Mulago 2 | MLG2 | Kawempe |
| 9 | Kazo Angola | KAZO | Kawempe |
| 10 | Kawempe 1 | KAW1 | Kawempe |
| 11 | Bwaise 3 | BW3 | Kawempe |
| 12 | Bwaise 2 | BW2 | Kawempe |
| 13 | Bwaise 1 | BW1 | Kawempe |
| 14 | Kanyanya | KANY | Kawempe |
| 15 | Makerere 3 | MAK3 | Kawempe |
| 16 | Katanga | KTG | Kawempe |
| 17 | Nsooba | NSO | Kawempe |
| 18 | Kyebando-Kisalosalu | KYEB | Kawempe |
| 19 | Kalerwe | KLRW | Kawempe |
| 20 | Mpererwe | MPRW | Kawempe |
| 21 | Kifumbira | KFB | Kawempe |
| 22 | Katwe 2 | KATT | Makindye |
| 23 | Katwe 1 | KATO | Makindye |
| 24 | Wabigalo | WAB | Makindye |
| 25 | Salaama | SLM | Makindye |
| 26 | Nsambya East | NSE | Makindye |
| 27 | Ggaba | GAB | Makindye |
| 28 | Nsambya West | NSW | Makindye |
| 29 | Kabalagala - Kataba | KTBA | Makindye |
| 30 | Kibuli | KBL | Makindye |
| 31 | Kabalagala - Kikubamutwe | KKBM | Makindye |
| 32 | Kisugu | KSGU | Makindye |
| 33 | Kansanga | KANS | Makindye |

| Map number | Slum name | Slum code | Division |
|------------|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| 34 | Bukasa-Namuwongo | WONG | Makindye |
| 35 | Kibuye 1 | KBYO | Makindye |
| 36 | Kibuye 2 | KBYT | Makindye |
| 37 | Butabika | BTBK | Nakawa |
| 38 | Bukoto 1 | BKT | Nakawa |
| 39 | Naguru | NGRU | Nakawa |
| 40 | Banda | BND | Nakawa |
| 41 | Luzira | LUZ1 | Nakawa |
| 42 | Kinawataka | KINA | Nakawa |
| 43 | Busega | BUSG | Rubaga |
| 44 | Lungujja | LGJ | Rubaga |
| 45 | Namungoona | NAMG | Rubaga |
| 46 | Mutundwe | MUT | Rubaga |
| 47 | Kizito Block - Najjanankumbi 2 | KZT | Rubaga |
| 48 | Najjanankumbi | NJJ | Rubaga |
| 49 | Kawala | KWL | Rubaga |
| 50 | Ndeeba | NDB | Rubaga |
| 51 | Natete | NATT | Rubaga |
| 52 | Wankulukuku | WANK | Rubaga |
| 53 | Namirembe-Bakuli | BAKL | Rubaga |
| 54 | Kasubi | KSB | Rubaga |
| 55 | Kosovo | KSV | Rubaga |
| 56 | Nankulabye | NAK | Rubaga |

Table 9-2 Summary characteristics of Focus Group Discussions

| Location | Participants | Male | Male % | Female | Female % | Under 18 | Under 18 % | 18 or over | 18 or over % |
|----------------------------|--------------|------|--------|--------|----------|----------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Mirambo | 11 | 10 | 91% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 8 | 73% |
| Kitintale | 11 | 7 | 64% | 4 | 36% | 3 | 27% | 8 | 73% |
| Seventh Day Adventist | 10 | 7 | 70% | 3 | 30% | 3 | 30% | 7 | 70% |
| Kisenyi | 13 | 9 | 69% | 4 | 31% | 5 | 39% | 9 | 69% |
| Kilombe | 11 | 10 | 91% | 1 | 9% | 3 | 27% | 8 | 73% |
| Nateete | 12 | 11 | 92% | 1 | 8% | 5 | 42% | 7 | 58% |
| Treasure Life Youth Centre | 10 | 7 | 70% | 3 | 30% | 3 | 30% | 7 | 70% |
| Namungona | 10 | 8 | 80% | 2 | 20% | 2 | 20% | 8 | 80% |
| Kisugu | 21 | 15 | 71% | 6 | 29% | 6 | 29% | 15 | 71% |
| Kilokole | 11 | 11 | 100% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 27% | 8 | 73% |

Table 9-3List of informal open spaces located by surveyors

| Space UID | Space name | Slum | Division | Latitude | Longitude | Slum-space distance (m) |
|-----------|---------------------------|------|----------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| KAGU-A | KAGU SDA | KAGU | Central | 0d19'31.57" | 32d34'15.17" | 104 |
| KAGU-B | KAGU LDC | KAGU | Central | 0d19'26.27" | 32d34'3.16" | 332 |
| KAGU-C | KAGU | KAGU | Central | 0d19'29.12" | 32d33'50.42" | 673 |
| KAGU-D | KAGU Aga Khan | KAGU | Central | 0d19'13.65" | 32d34'7.01" | 599 |
| KIS1-A | KIS one Lubiri playground | KIS1 | Central | 0d18'12.69" | 32d34'6.19" | 940 |
| KIS1-B | KIS one Ring Road | KIS1 | Central | 0d18'12.14" | 32d34'11.07" | 910 |
| KIS1-C | KIS 1 | KIS1 | Central | 0d18'8.47" | 32d34;21.94" | 1007 |
| KFB-A | KFB | KFB | Kawempe | 0d20'40.78" | 32d35'7.2" | 346 |
| KFB-B | KFB Treasure Life | KFB | Kawempe | 0d20'47.5" | 32d35'19.52" | 676 |

| Space UID | Space name | Slum | Division | Latitude | Longitude | Slum-space distance (m) |
|-----------|--|------|----------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| | Youth Centre (Kamwokya) | | | | | |
| KFB-C | KFB Potter's House | KFB | Kawempe | 0d20'46.06" | 32d35'0.85" | 101 |
| KAW1-A | KAW one Kiiko | KAW1 | Kawempe | 0d22'19.23" | 32d33'53.13" | 860 |
| KAW1-B | KAW 1 | KAW1 | Kawempe | 0d22'44.62" | 32d34'0.41" | 649 |
| KAW1-C | KAW one Fromer Express Football Field Kyebando | KAW1 | Kawempe | 0d21'55.7" | 32d34'42.8" | 2450 |
| WAB-A | WAB Tankhill Road | WAB | Makindye | 0d17'53.38" | 32d36'35.12" | 1714 |
| WAB-B | WAB Muyenga Church of Uganda | WAB | Makindye | 0d18'20.97" | 32d36'16.88" | 723 |
| WAB-C | WAB Namuwongo Ground | WAB | Makindye | 0d18'34.21" | 32d36'35.87" | 807 |
| KANS-A | KANS Kiu Ground | KANS | Makindye | 0d17'40.57" | 32d36'5.43" | 712 |
| KANS-C | KANS Kirombe | KANS | Makindye | 0d17'16.47" | 32d35'45.53" | 991 |
| KANS-D | KANS KCCA | KANS | Makindye | 0d17'17.03" | 32d36'11.69" | 207 |
| KANS-E | KANS Didi's World | KANS | Makindye | 0d17'33.9" | 32d36'18.72" | 408 |
| BTBK-A | BTBK | BTBK | Nakawa | 0d18'28.61" | 32d39'3.96" | 569 |
| BTBK-B | BTBK Butabika Hospital Ground | BTBK | Nakawa | 0d19'2.48" | 32d39'0.37" | 1416 |
| BTBK-C | BTBK Kitintale | BTBK | Nakawa | 0d18'51.92" | 32d38'4.61" | 2539 |
| BTBK-D | BTBK Mirambo | BTBK | Nakawa | 0d18'49.26" | 32d37'50.53" | 2922 |
| NGRU-A | NGRU St. Jude Church | NGRU | Nakawa | 0d20'9.78" | 32d36'30.56" | 448 |
| NGRU-B | NGRU Kataaka | NGRU | Nakawa | 0d26'0.28" | 32d36'23.58" | 10832 |
| KWL-A | KWL Kawala Church of Uganda | KWL | Rubaga | 0d20'25.70" | 32d33'11.99" | 266 |
| KWL-B | KWL St. Peters | KWL | Rubaga | 0d20'10.34" | 32d33'0.14" | 803 |
| KWL-C | KWL Namungona | KWL | Rubaga | 0d20'38.60" | 32d32'36.73" | 1405 |

| Space UID | Space name | Slum | Division | Latitude | Longitude | Slum-space distance (m) |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|------|----------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| KWL-D | KWL Northern Bypass Ground | KWL | Rubaga | 0d20'44.9" | 32d32'53.23" | 1016 |
| KWL-E | KWL | KWL | Rubaga | 0d20'44.9" | 32d32'53.23" | 1016 |
| NATT-A | NATT KCCA | NATT | Rubaga | 0d18'49.67" | 32d31'54.12" | 1632 |
| NATT-B | NATT Busega St Joseph | NATT | Rubaga | 0d18'22.81" | 32d31'31.83" | 1150 |
| NATT-C | NATT Nateete (behind maize mills) | NATT | Rubaga | 0d17'47.78" | 32d31'46.94" | 451 |

Preliminary survey

| Slum code | Open space ID letter | Surveyor name |
|-----------|----------------------|---------------|
| | | |

1. Describe the type of informal open space. Be very specific.

Examples: Empty lot, street, alley, private yard, etc.

2. What active recreation activities are currently occurring in the space?

- Sports Specify: _____
- Exercise Specify: _____
- Play Specify: _____
- Other Specify: _____

3. Who is currently using the space for active recreation?

| | Children | Teenagers | Adults | Elderly |
|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Female | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. List all other activities that you see taking place in the informal open space.

Examples: Vendors, prayer, conversation, eating, drinking, car parking, car traffic, etc.

5. Who is currently using the space for other purposes (not active recreation)?

| | Children | Teenagers | Adults | Elderly |
|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Female | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. What safety hazards are present in the informal open space?

- Non-level surfaces
 - Large holes
 - Open drains
 - Large debris
 - Sharp objects
 - Stray animals
 - Exposed electrical wires
 - Risky litter (e.g. syringes, etc.)
 - Other
- Specify other: _____

Figure 9-1 Direct observation survey used for informal open spaces

Topic guide for focus group discussions on informal open spaces in Kampala

This document is intended to be a rough agenda for the FGDs, including questions and probing suggestions.

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome and self-introductions

1.2 Purpose

For this study, we want to know the location, characteristics, and perceptions of informal open spaces used for active recreation within a sample of 10 slum neighbourhoods in Kampala. Ultimately, we would like to improve informal open spaces for the purpose of active recreation and in particular children's play.

We are using focus group discussions to supplement findings from our preliminary survey of informal open spaces. By undertaking focus group discussions, we wish to better understand:

1. the types of active recreation and play undertaken by participants, as well as barriers to active recreation and play among different subgroups of the population (notably women and children);
2. the location of spaces used for active recreation and play, as well as the proximity and characteristics of these spaces;
3. input on governance—existing and potential—of these spaces, including ownership, improvements, and maintenance.

1.3 Background

Uganda's development plans provide inadequate support for slum dwellers. Where slums are mentioned, the plans typically focus on streets, sanitation, security, HIV among commercial sex workers, and livelihoods. Among these interventions, open spaces feature modestly or not at all. Yet open spaces are particularly important to slum dwellers on account of overcrowded housing conditions, which lack fresh air and spaces for recreation. The shortage of safe informal spaces to play affects children's prospects for physical activity, as well as their ability to meet and play in groups.

Active recreation includes any leisure activity that involves physical activity. The primary focus of this study is on children's play, but we are also interested in other forms of active recreation. Some examples include sports, playing, exercise, and walking or cycling for pleasure.

The failure by various slum improvement interventions to include open space issues has kept the subject out of public discourse. As a result little is known about the availability and quality of informal open spaces in the slums where children play.

ACTogether and the National Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda identified 56 slums in Kampala Capital City Area in 2014.

In this study we shed light on the presence, location, and characteristics of informal open spaces in slum settlements. This information is necessary to start a public dialogue on how to improve the informal open spaces in slums for the purpose of active recreation—especially children's play.

Figure 9-2 Focus group discussion questions, page 1 of 2

2. Questions about open spaces, parks, active recreation

2.1 Types of active recreation and play

Private ownership means ownership by a person or business. Public ownership means ownership by a government.

1. What types of active recreation do you undertake (including play)? (Probe: Are you interested in this activity for a particular reason? How popular is this activity? At which times of day or seasons do you do this activity?)
2. What types of active recreation would you *like* to undertake (including play) which you do not currently participate in? (Probe: Why do you not undertake these activities presently? Lack of motivation? Missing equipment? Fear of crime? Physical hazards like open wires? Lack of level ground? Shortage of open space? Crowding by other activities? Etc.)

2.2 Location of active recreation and play

1. Where do you go for active recreation (including play)? (Probe: Describe these places. Are they large? Small? Level? Paved? Crowded? Do you feel safe? Etc.)
2. How near or far are these places? (Probe: Nearby? Far away? Accessible by foot? By bicycle? Describe the route. Etc.)
3. What obstacles do you face in undertaking active recreation at a nearer location? (Probe: Lack of space? Preference for anonymity? Safety hazards? Fear of crime? Etc.)

2.3 Ownership, improvement, and maintenance places used for active recreation and play

4. Are the spaces in which you undertake physical activity publicly- or privately-owned? (Probe: If you don't know, how would you guess? If you think they are publicly-owned, do you think they are official parks? If not, would you prefer if they were official parks?)
5. What steps do you think would be necessary to make these places official parks? (Probe: What people or organisations or government bodies might be involved? Who should be responsible for this? Local government? Central government? Volunteer organisations? Community members?)
6. What changes to these places would make them more pleasant? (Probe: Who do you think would be willing to make these changes? Who do you think should make these changes? What things do you like about other parks and playgrounds?)
7. Who do you think should be responsible for maintaining these places?

3. Conclusion

3.1 Closing remarks

Before we end, I'd like to go around the room once more and ask each of you if there's anything else you'd like to say about active recreation, children's play, or informal open spaces. Is there anything we haven't mentioned that is important to your use of informal open spaces for active recreation or any other purpose?

3.2 Thank you

Figure 9-3 Focus group discussion questions, page 2 of 2

Table 9-4 Ownership of informal open spaces mentioned during Focus Group Discussions

| Informal open space | Ownership |
|---------------------|-----------|
|---------------------|-----------|

| Informal open space | Ownership |
|--|--|
| Mirambo Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communally owned¹⁶ |
| Kitintale Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public land owned by KCCA • Planned use not known |
| Seventh Day Adventist Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by Seventh Day Adventist Church |
| Lubiri Playground (Kisenyi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by Buganda Kingdom |
| Kilombe Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communally leased, interest in seeking official park status • Owned by Buganda Land Board, leased to community |
| Nateete Mills Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by Kaala family |
| Treasure Life Youth Centre Playground (Kamwokya) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by Kamwokya Christian Caring Community (NGO) • Officially registered as a recreation, play, and development facility |
| Namungona Playground (near Kawala) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispute over legal owner • Owner thought to an Orthodox church |
| Namuwongo Playground (Kisugu) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by the Church of Uganda, Namirembe Diocese • Officially accessible to the public • Fee (SHS 30,000) for football matches with more than 10 players |
| Kilokole Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned by an evangelical church |

¹⁶ Communally-owned refers to ownership by the community itself, not an official government body.