

URBAN FUTURES

1ST EDITION 2026

NEWSLETTER



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Message from the Project Manager



Mr. Ilishebo Susiku
Lead Programmes Manager

It is my great pleasure to introduce to you the 1st 2026 Urban Futures Newsletter edition, which highlights the remarkable progress we continue to make towards building inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban food systems in Chongwe District.

Over the past few months, the Urban Futures Project has continued to empower young people with practical knowledge, leadership skills, and entrepreneurial opportunities that are transforming lives and communities. Through business mentorship programmes, school gardening initiatives, stakeholder engagements, youth-led policy dialogues, digital campaigns, podcasts, radio programmes, and practical agroecology trainings, we have witnessed young people taking a leading role in shaping the future of sustainable food systems.

This edition also reflects our commitment to inclusion. We have continued to create spaces where youths with disabilities actively participate in project activities, ensuring that no young person is left behind in our journey towards sustainable development.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening youth participation in food systems governance, expanding innovation through digital platforms, promoting agroecology and climate-smart agriculture, and fostering partnerships that deliver lasting impact. We firmly believe that investing in young people today is an investment in healthier communities, stronger local economies, and a more sustainable future for Zambia.

I extend my sincere appreciation to our funding partner Hivos, our implementing partner, Global Network Solutions, Chongwe Municipal Council, participating schools, community stakeholders, and the dedicated Urban Futures Youths whose passion and commitment continue to drive this project forward. I also thank every young person who has embraced this opportunity to learn, innovate, and lead change within their communities.

I invite you to explore this newsletter and celebrate the inspiring stories, milestones, and achievements that demonstrate the transformative power of youth-led action. Together, we are building cities where sustainable food systems thrive, communities flourish, and young people lead the way towards a better future.

Building the next generation of food system leaders

By: Josephine Tembo



Victor Kayombo and Henry Nabende

Across Chongwe District, a new generation of young people is redefining the future of food systems. Equipped with practical skills, innovative ideas, and a shared vision for sustainable development, these young leaders are demonstrating that meaningful change begins at the community level.

For Victor Kayombo, the Urban Futures Youth Lead for Agroecology, and his brother Henry Nabende, their entrepreneurial journey started with just two catfish caught from the Chongwe River.

Inspired by the potential of fish farming, the brothers constructed a small pond to rear the fish, an experience that laid the foundation for what is now known as Two Cat Fish Farm. What started as a small experiment has grown into a thriving youth-led agribusiness driven by passion, determination, and innovation.

Their journey gained new momentum after joining the Urban Futures Project, where they received mentorship, technical training, and ongoing support in sustainable agriculture and aquaculture. Equipped with practical knowledge and new skills, the brothers expanded their operations beyond fish farming to include integrated backyard gardening, creating a diversified and climate-smart farming system that maximizes available resources while promoting sustainable food production.

Today, Two Cat Fish Farm produces tilapia, catfish, fingerlings, and a variety of vegetables, supplying quality produce to the local community while creating opportunities for future growth. The enterprise demonstrates how innovation, coupled with targeted youth empowerment, can transform small ideas into sustainable businesses that contribute to food security, improved livelihoods, and environmental sustainability.

"Our journey started with just two catfish and a dream. Through the mentorship and support of the Urban Futures Project, we have gained the skills and confidence to grow our farm into a sustainable enterprise. We hope our story inspires more young people to see agriculture and aquaculture as opportunities for innovation, business, and community development." — Victor Kayombo, Urban Futures Youth Lead for Agroecology.



Victor Kayombo



Two fish farm pods currently



Henry Nabende

By: Josephine Tembo

U.F Establishes School Clubs to Inspire Young Change-Makers

The Urban Futures Project has established Urban Futures School Clubs at Matipula Primary School and Silver Rest Primary School in Chongwe District to nurture the next generation of champions for sustainable food systems. The clubs provide learners with a platform to explore topics such as nutrition, environmental conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable agriculture while encouraging active participation in school gardening and other practical learning activities. Through these clubs, learners are being empowered to become ambassadors of healthy living and environmental stewardship within their schools and communities.



Matipula Primary School Urban Futures Club pupils.



Urban Futures Youths engage in local Policy

Urban Futures Youth Champions participated in a Chongwe Municipal Council Management Meeting, providing firsthand insights into how youth-led innovation and entrepreneurship are contributing to sustainable food systems and local economic development. Through real-life success stories and practical experiences, the engagement demonstrated the positive impact of the Urban Futures Project while strengthening dialogue between young people, local authorities, and project partners.



Equipping Youth with Climate-Smart Farming Skills

Building resilient food systems begins with empowering young people with practical, sustainable agricultural solutions. Through a hands-on Bokashi organic manure training, the Urban Futures Project introduced participants to an environmentally friendly soil fertility management technique that transforms locally available organic materials into nutrient-rich fertilizer, reducing reliance on costly chemical inputs.

The practical training enhanced participants' knowledge of regenerative agriculture and demonstrated how organic farming practices can improve soil health, increase crop productivity, and promote environmental sustainability.



Justine's Journey to Organic Farming

By: Josephine Tembo



Justine Phiri and his backyard garden

For Justine Phiri, farming was once an expensive undertaking. Like many small-scale farmers, he relied heavily on chemical fertilizers and other external inputs to produce his crops. While these methods supported production, the high costs often limited profitability and posed challenges to sustaining his farming enterprise over the long term.

His journey took a new direction after joining the Urban Futures Project, where he received practical training in organic and climate-smart farming practices. Through the project, Justine learned how to produce organic fertilizers using locally available materials such as compost and manure, reducing his dependence on costly chemical inputs while improving the health and productivity of his soil.

The knowledge has enabled him to farm more sustainably, lower production costs, and build greater resilience in the face of changing environmental conditions.

"The Urban Futures Project has transformed the way I farm and the way I think. Today I produce my own organic fertilizer, spend less on farm inputs, and I'm proud to share this knowledge with other farmers in my community." – Justine Phiri

Beyond transforming his own farm, Justine has become an advocate for sustainable agriculture within his community. He now shares the knowledge and skills gained through the Urban Futures Project with fellow farmers, encouraging them to embrace organic farming as a practical pathway to healthier food production, improved soil fertility, and environmental conservation. His story reflects the lasting impact of investing in youth-led innovation and demonstrates how empowering one young farmer can inspire positive change across an entire community.

Photo Focus

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Urban Futures Youths During the Youtube Podcast Recording



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Radio Programmes at Chongwe Radio



International Women & Youth in Agribusiness Indaba Conference



Youth Business Mentorship Training



Advancing Inclusive Food Systems Through Stakeholder Dialogue



By: Josephine Tembo

The Urban Futures Project convened a stakeholder engagement meeting in Chongwe, bringing together youths with disabilities, youths with albinism, government representatives, youth champions, and other key stakeholders to strengthen inclusion in sustainable food systems.

The dialogue explored opportunities for greater participation in entrepreneurship, waste management, and skills development, reaffirming the project's commitment to ensuring that no young person is left behind.

The engagement highlighted the importance of creating equitable opportunities for all young people to contribute as leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs. Participants also identified practical pathways for improving accessibility, expanding mentorship, strengthening digital inclusion, and promoting youth-led enterprises.

Driving Innovation Through Aquaculture and Aquaponics



Through practical training in aquaculture and aquaponics, Chongwe youths are learning how to integrate fish farming with crop production to maximize limited land and water resources while producing nutritious food in an environmentally responsible way.

In promoting these innovative farming technologies, the project is creating new opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, improving food security, and encouraging environmentally sustainable agricultural practices.

Youths are embracing climate-smart technologies, building resilient livelihoods, and contributing to the transformation of sustainable food systems within their communities.



Hatching a Brighter Future Through Poultry Farming

By: Josephine Tembo



Prisca Luputa in her poultry



What began as a passion for poultry farming grew into a promising enterprise for Prisca Luputa, a young entrepreneur from Chongwe.

Through the Urban Futures Project, Prisca received poultry support valued at K26,000, enabling her to establish an organic poultry business that is creating opportunities for both her and her community.

Today, she is raising 200 Sasso chickens, with plans to supply high-quality eggs and poultry products while expanding her enterprise.

"The support I received has transformed my passion into a business that is helping me finance my education while making a positive contribution to my community." — Prisca Luputa

Beyond generating income, the business is helping Prisca pursue her studies in Public Health Nursing, demonstrating how youth-led agribusiness can create pathways to education and economic independence.

For Prisca, the support received through the Urban Futures Project has gone beyond financial assistance.

It has strengthened her confidence, enhanced her entrepreneurial skills, and reinforced her belief that young people can build successful businesses while contributing to sustainable food systems.

Her journey reflects the power of investing in youth-led enterprises that create lasting social and economic impact.

As she looks to the future, Prisca is determined to expand her poultry business, create employment opportunities, and encourage more young people, especially young women to embrace agriculture as a pathway to self-reliance.

Her story is a testament to how targeted investments in youth can transform lives, strengthen communities, and inspire the next generation of agripreneurs.

Promoting Safe Food for Healthier Communities



By: Josephine Tembo

In commemoration of World Food Safety Day 2026, CUTS International Lusaka joined national efforts to raise awareness on the importance of safe food under the theme "Safe Food: From Burden to Solution." The organisation participated in community sensitization activities at City Market, engaging traders and consumers on food safety, hygiene, and the shared responsibility of ensuring that safe food is available at every stage of the food value chain.

The awareness campaign culminated in the official national commemoration held at Kabulonga Boys Secondary School, where CUTS International Lusaka was represented by Mr. Sajeev Nair, who delivered a consumer perspective on food safety. In his address, he emphasized the collective responsibility of governments, businesses, and consumers in ensuring access to safe, nutritious, balanced, and affordable food, reaffirming that safe food is fundamental to healthy communities and sustainable food systems.

Strengthening Food Systems Through National Dialogue



CUTS International Lusaka participated in the 1st National Food Systems Transformation Dialogue for 2026 held in Shibuyunji and Mumbwa Districts under the theme, "Building Healthy, Eco-Friendly and Resilient Food Systems."

The dialogue brought together government institutions, traditional leaders, civil society organisations, farmers, youth, and development partners to explore sustainable approaches to food systems transformation. Through field visits to community-led initiatives, participants gained practical insights into indigenous seed preservation, community seed banks, organic farming, and climate-resilient agriculture,



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