Minimum Cost Housing Group
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Our site design aimed at incorporating ideas and principles in order to create a sustainable community. We emphasize the importance of retaining the control of land and programs within the community.

Our site contains plots that have different tenure systems. There are some larger plots that are Fair Market Value that serve to subsidize the costs of infrastructure for the rest of the site. The majority of the plots on the site work with the Community Land Trust (CLT) tenure system. These plots are arranged in a way that the individual plots and the larger plots (intended for two families) can be reorganized according to the demand for each plot size. If more residents require smaller plots, then the two 300 m^2 plots located side by side can be changed into three 200 m^2 plots.

The CLT entity will have a democratically elected board and management/advisory committee and "transparent accounting procedures" (Hartzok). The management committee will assign plots on a lottery basis. The plot assigned will be within a specific category based on the tenure system (one or two family lots) and the desire or lack of desire to be involved in the control of the harvestable land, which involves the plots surrounding gardens. This will ensure a case-by-case review of families applying for the larger two-house lots and families wanting to participate in cooperative farming activities. Conditions of the lease will include: stipulations to ensure that the current occupants of the land have priority (brickworks workers); clear regulations regarding equal access and right to land for women and men; regulations on a minimum percentage of land that must be used for agriculture and any other stipulations that the committee deems necessary.

The CLT states the type of use for which the land is used and the method for calculating the rent that is paid into the trust (which will work on a sliding scale/ Rent Geared to Income (RGI) principle). It also includes agreements for subletting and terminating a lease, as well as outlining the arbitration process should any conflicts arise (Hartzok). The money collected from rent will go towards the maintenance of infrastructure in the community and interest free Revolving Loans Funds, which will be made available for building materials, farming materials and developments of small and cooperative commercial activities.

The harvestable land is controlled by three different entities; the local school, the Church, and the residents of the adjacent plots (see "Land Control" diagram). The Church will be responsible for hiring a maintenance person to maintain aspects of the site (i.e.: purification ponds, water collection bins, etc.) with the income generated from the sale of produce. The school will employ principles of Primary School Agriculture (PSA) in order to teach the children about sustainable and local farming practices, while generating income that is put towards school feeding programs and the teacher's salaries (FAO). The children's involvement in the management of the produce is crucial in forming a trusting relationship between the student and the teachers (FAO).

The floating garden in the middle is the site is pumped with a water powered ram pump that can be constructed using materials from a hardware store and is easily maintained (Journey to Forever). This is to avoid stagnant water and the possibility of mosquito breeding. The floating garden is used to employ natural grey water cleansing principles.

The grey water comes from adjacent communal clothes washing basins (water provided from collected rainwater).

Throughout the site there is a network of troughs (along streets and footpaths) that channel water to three (3) principal water collection bins. The three bins provide water for the whole site if the maximum walking distance to the bin is 150 meters.

Each plot has a private double vaulted composting toilet and employs sustainability principles such as rooftop rainwater harvesting, composting, and grey water gardens. Should water and/or sewage services be provided in the future, they will work on a gravity-fed system. A future sewage system will include natural water treatment principles using the existing ponds on the site.

The school site, in addition to running PSA, also has the potential for educating higher grade levels. It also contains a community center that runs Urban Agriculture education programs (possibly with an educational garden) to encourage sustainable farming practices.

We encourage exploring the benefits of agro-forestry, utilizing trees that have various properties such as drying soil (in marshy areas), reducing erosion, etc. Specifically, we recommend the use of the Leucaena tree (which is a non- native species but is already widely used in Uganda and other non-native tropical countries). This tree is grown for livestock feed, fuel wood and living fences. It is a source of mulch and enriches the soils with nitrogen.

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