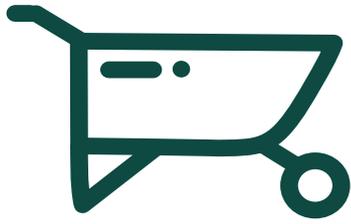




Living Lab Dortmund-Huckarde, Germany



NBS 3

Community-based urban farming and gardening on post-industrial sites

Food forest and permaculture orchard in Huckarde



NBS description

The community-based food forest of St. Urbanus is built on 3,000 m² of land owned by the catholic church. The St. Urbanus parish community provided the underused space for creating a self-sustaining woodland ecosystem designed for food production while fostering social interaction in the Huckarde district.

The food forest and permaculture orchard was created together with the boy and girl scouts and members of the St. Urbanus church community. In 2021, it opened to all citizens of Huckarde. The vegetable and fruit garden features climbing aids, herbs, berry bushes, wild fruit bushes and fruit trees. In addition to food production, it serves as a place of education for local citizens to learn about sustainable cultivation methods for their private gardens.

The urban garden is supervised by a group of 20 local community members who take care of maintaining the garden.

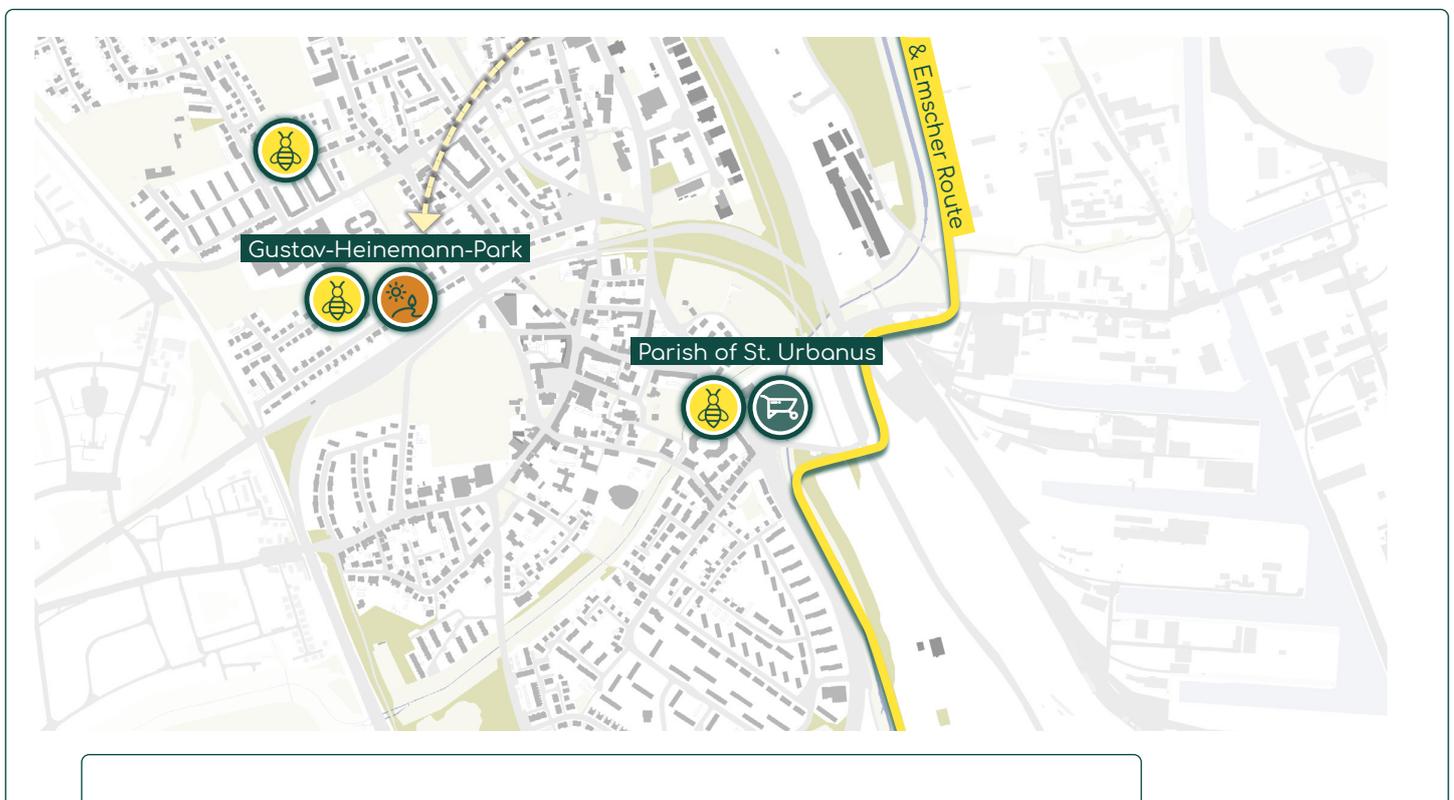
Aim & goals

The overall goal is to create a community managed permaculture food forest on underused green space in the Dortmund Living Lab. The NBS addresses social innovation in order to:

- Encourage care for the environment and producing better quality and productive vegetation
- Foster a sense of responsibility for the garden area among local citizens
- Encourage social interactions and inclusiveness through farming activities and seasonal themed festivals
- Production of local food
- Use the space as an education facility for the girls and boys scouts

Area of implementation

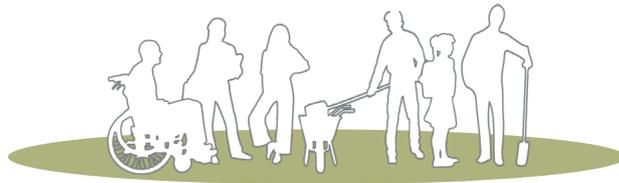
3,000 m² at the rear of an unused green area at St. Urbanus church community center.



GPS coordinates: 51.530686, 7.418268

Target groups

- Boy and girl scouts
- Local citizens of Huckarde
- St. Urbanus community
- Disadvantaged people without own garden



Stakeholder constellations

Main responsible partner

South Westphalia University of Applied Science is the key partner involved in:

- budget management
- Advising
- Technical and organizational support.
- designed all activities,
- in charge of pre-implementation and implementation phases,
- currently managing the social gardens area,
- organise courses and workshops

St.Urbanus church community:

- land owner, supporting planting activities and management of the site will guarantee the continuity of this NBS over time.

ProGfreg partners involved

The NGO Die Urbanisten e.V.:

- Planning planting activities
- Co-design, co-implementation, participation, workshops
- Landscape design of the garden

The city of Dortmund is responsible for the environmental monitoring of Work Package 4 NBS benefit assessment (air quality, air temperature and humidity, SOPARC and visitor questionnaires).

Other stakeholders involved

Boy and girl scouts

- Supporting in planting activities and landscape physical transformations of the area

Local citizens of Huckarde

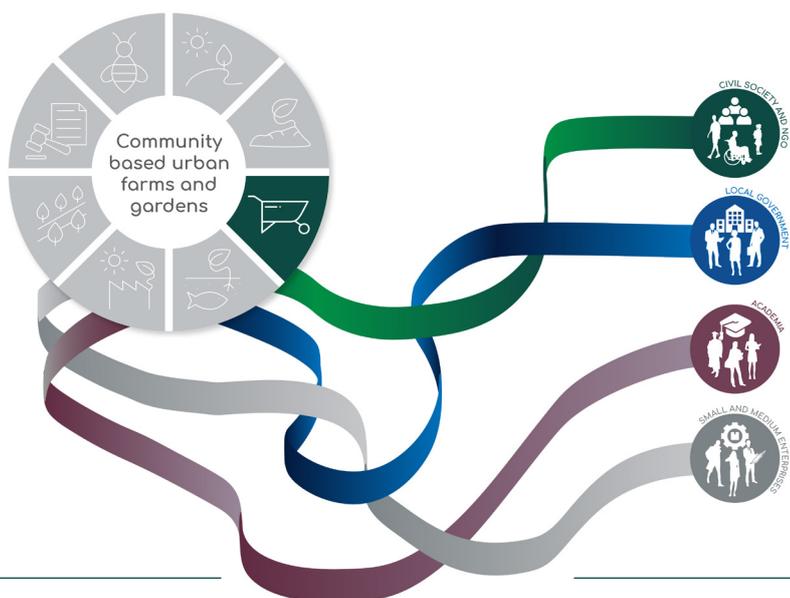
- Supporting social inclusion and voluntary activities

Experts in urban gardening and permaculture/food forest

- Supporting plants selection for the garden and pollinators



Co-design activities, stakeholder engagement, and pre-implementation activities



Planning and preparatory activities (administrative and technical procedures)

In 2018, the parish of St. Urbanus church had cleared a part of the land at its community center to plant some fruit trees in 2019. The NGO Die Urbanisten contacted the church community through the local water authority Emschergenossenschaft.

After first idea exchanges with the respective pastor, a verbal approval was made (no rent or use contract) to use part of the St. Urbanus garden to establish a food forest. It was decided to design and implement the NBS together with the boys and girls

scouts and users of the site from the neighboring residential area.

The church executive committee formally decided on cooperating with the NGO Urbanisten within the framework of the proGReg project. In several meeting the co-design and the co-implementation process of the food forest had to be explained.

The local soil protection authority was contacted to enquire about potentially necessary soil samples for soil contamination, however, the testing revealed that the area had no industrial uses in the past. Permaculture experts were consulted to determine whether the area was suitable for establishing a food forest.

Implementation budget

The implementation of this NBS has been funded by European Horizon 2020 project proGReg.



Total implementation budget: 10.000 €
 Other funds: 0,00 €
 proGReg Partners funds: 10.000 € (Die Urbanisten 8.500 €, South Westphalia University of Applied Science 1.500 €)



Co-design and engagement activities

The area of NBS 3 had been occasionally used for activities by the local scouts. It was their wish to make the area more bee-friendly before the forest garden was built and to use raised beds as design elements. The following co-design events to activate various stakeholders and local community in design, implementation and management took place:

Weekend workshop (72-Hour) in May 2019 started the co-design process with the scouts and the executive board of the church community center.

- Five raised beds set up together with many helpers and planted with bee-friendly flowering plants and vegetables in St Urbanus.
- Participants' ideas were taken up and discussed of how to implement the food forest. Together with an expert in permaculture, a plan was drawn up, adapted to the conditions of the site with different focal zones.
- In March 2020, presenting the concept to the church community center members and interested citizens.
- In October 2020, planting campaign (Pflanzaktion St Urbanus) in the forest of St. Urbanus: planting 35 soft fruit bushes and 20 wild fruit trees (raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, rock pear, elderberry and cherry). Participation limited to 10 people due to COVID-19 social distancing.
- In June 2020, online information evening due to social distancing rules. Project partners, nine external participants and permaculture experts attended this workshop. Advertising the online workshop in various project channels and social media platforms attracted some new interested people from the local community to participate in co-implementing the NBS.
- Establishing the food forest garden group during the online information meeting. Participants from the church community and the surrounding neighborhoods participated in the planting, irrigation and soil fertilization activities.
- Establishing a WhatsApp group: members are meeting every week on Tuesday to maintain the garden.
- In June 2020, organising a campaign for planting and landscaping the urban garden. New paths with tree trunks and bark mulch were created. Since then, the group has been meeting regularly and has been undertaking activities of planting and the landscaping of the urban forest. This continued in 2021 and until today.

Key achievements, implementation results

The co-design activities resulted in introducing new population groups to the topic of permaculture, planting new plants in the garden instead of a meadow orchard and strengthening the social cohesion among the church community.

The collaboration with the church has proven to be uncomplicated and unbureaucratic with active engagement of the Huckarde community.

The following interventions have been carried out:

- Converting the former abandoned area at the church community into a food forest and gardening area.
- creating new paths with tree trunks and bark mulch.
- Involving diverse social groups of the Huckarde civil society in the implementation of this NBS.
- Involving disadvantaged people and children in the care and implementation since May 2019.
- Planting hedges, shrubs and many trees.
- Installation of several bee boxes, achieving two honey harvests in 2022.

Critical issues and barriers encountered during implementation



The COVID-19 lockdowns represented the main challenge of the NBS implementation as social distancing rules limited joint planting activities. Co-design and planting activities had to be either cancelled or postponed several times.

Financial support for maintenance and planting activities were secured by seeking external proGReg funds to ensure future planting activities and management of the garden. Proposals and funding options for long-term maintenance are currently being investigated by the responsible partner, the Urbanisten.

Synergies with other proGReg activities

Linked to NBS 8 - planting bee and insect friendly plants at several spaces in the Living Lab.



NBS 8: Improving and monitoring pollinator biodiversity in Huckarde

Feeding into monitoring and assessment activities of WP4 (General questionnaire, visitor questionnaire, economic and labor impact questionnaire air quality, air temperature, particulate biomonitoring

Communication activities



- From May 2019 onwards, communication activities focused on creating a community, online and offline workshops and planting events.
- Blog (dieurbanisten.de) about co-design and co-implementation activities.
- Article in local newspaper „Ruhr Nachrichten“
- Die Urbanisten presented the food forest during a climate protection event of the Dortmund church communities.
- Creating new website about urban gardening activities of the Living Lab in Huckarde in collaboration with City of Dortmund and ICLEI (hansagruen.de).
- Short YouTube videos of the food forest released <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drvqEAKBM4I>.
- Contribution to the proGReg online training MOOC “Nature-based Urban regeneration”.
- Website entries about co-design activities of the food forest for citizen participation activities of the city initiative „nordwärts“.
- WhatsApp garden group to facilitate direct communication

Links with other external projects or activities

Collaboration with other urban gardening projects in Dortmund managed by the NGO die Urbanisten (e.g. Aquaponic raised growing beds, building insect hotels).

Maintenance & Sustainability beyond proGReg

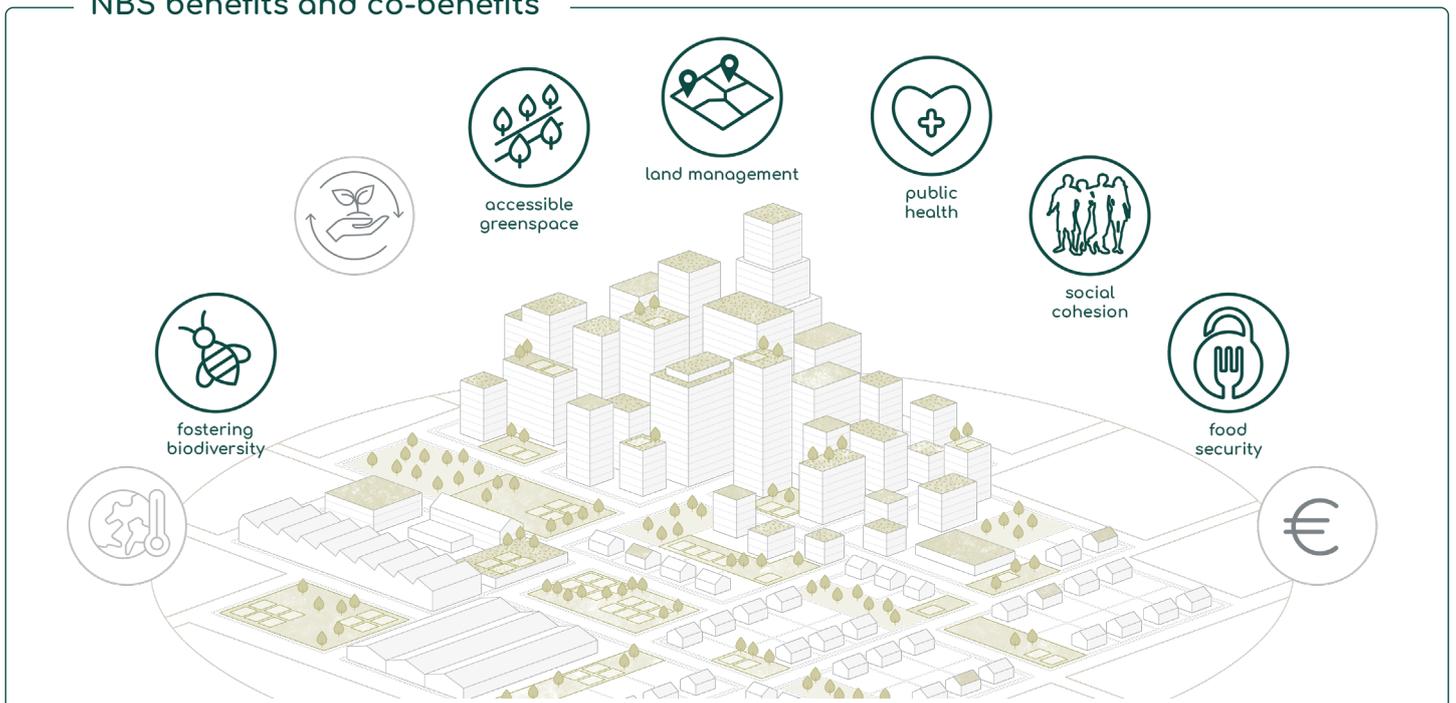
The St. Urbanus Church community center will continue to maintain and manage the area beyond the end of proGReg. The boy and girl scouts as well as members of the local community of Huckarde scouts will ultimately take over the management and play an active role in the garden maintenance. Additionally, community members will have the possibility of taking sponsorship for parts of the food forest.

Benefits for the Living Lab Dortmund-Huckarde

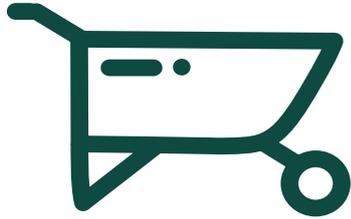
The NBS has created successful collaborations between the private land owner of the St. Urbanus parish, its members, the local NGO Die Urbanisten and the Dortmund municipality.

It has strengthened social cohesion as increasing numbers of local residents are taking interest in joining the gardening activities, supporting public health by producing healthy food, access to quality green spaces while fostering bio-diversity.

NBS benefits and co-benefits



Fact Sheet



NBS 3



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Contact:

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🌐 dieurbanisten.de/tag/food-forest



🌐 www.progireg.eu

🐦 [@proGReg](https://twitter.com/proGReg)

in [proGReg-project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/proGReg-project)

📘 [proGReg: Nature for Renewal](https://www.facebook.com/proGReg-Nature-for-Renewal)

📷 [#proGReg](https://www.instagram.com/proGReg)

📺 [proGReg: Nature for Renewal](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

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Partners



die urbanisten

Stadt Dortmund

