



RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER

AAK AT THE KENYA URBAN FORUM 2023

AAK attended and exhibited at the Kenya Urban Forum organized by the State Department of Housing and Urban Development from 14th-16th June 2023. Apart from exhibiting at the event, the AAK president presented on the critical gaps in the presentations made on Urban Housing by the National Housing Corporation and the national government. Some of the salient issues included: the need for having proper plans in place before planning and implementing the AHP, inadequate inclusion of the private sector, counties having a critical role in AHP and we do not have proper structures to manage the proposed housing fund.



PARTNERSHIPS

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL (HFHI)

The housing impact assessment study established an understanding of how the housing concept was affected by COVID-19 within the Nairobi Metropolitan Region. On 29th June, AAK conducted a training based on the Healthy Homes Guidelines and Checklist, a framework. AAK developed the guidelines for use in building new healthy and safe homes, retrofitting existing ones, and as a guide to those renting homes. The training received 10 accreditation points from the National Construction Authority (NCA) and 2.5 points from the Board of Registration of Architects and Quantity Surveyors.



AAK MENTORSHIP AT KIST

On the sidelines of the Healthy Homes training, a team from AAK held a student mentorship talk with the Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology students and encouraged them to join AAK. We also received positive feedback from KIST and agreed on the need to partner to connect the students with the built environment professionals.

MULIKA MJENGO INITIATIVE

This project seeks to create a public policing platform that allows the members of the public to identify buildings and construction practices which do not adhere to the laid down standards.

A web page of the Mulika Mjengo Site has been added on the AAK website as well as on the BuildHub website. The project will be launched during the AAK Je, Una Mjengo? Campaign.

The advertisement features the AAK logo at the top left, which consists of a red triangle with a white 'A' inside. The main text reads 'MULIKA MJENGO' in large, bold, red letters, followed by the slogan 'If you see it, say it!' in a smaller font. Below this, it says 'Report any building breaking the law to AAK'. The background of the ad is a red and white architectural drawing of a building structure. At the bottom, there are icons for social media and contact information: 'Post a picture on social media using #MulikaMjengo and tag us', 'Email: aak@aak.or.ke', 'Whatsapp: 0721 691337', and 'Social Media Pages'. Social media handles for Facebook (@ArchKE), Twitter (@arch_ke), and Instagram (@arch_ke) are listed at the bottom.

PARTNERSHIPS

SIKA ACADEMY

On 30th June, a team from AAK attended a training on fire protection solutions by Sika Academy. The training sought to equip them with the necessary understanding and skills to implement effective fire prevention and protection strategies and ensure the safety of buildings and occupants. Participants were kept abreast with the latest advancements and best practices in fire protection, ensuring they can provide informed guidance and expertise to clients and contribute to building safe environments in Kenya.



KARA FORUM ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

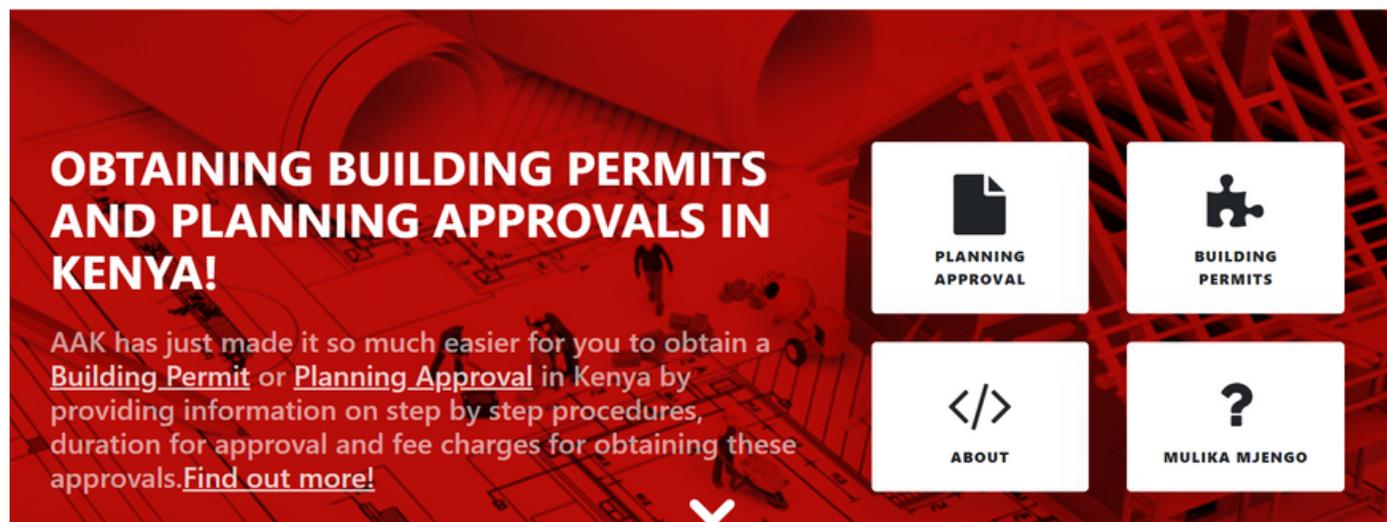
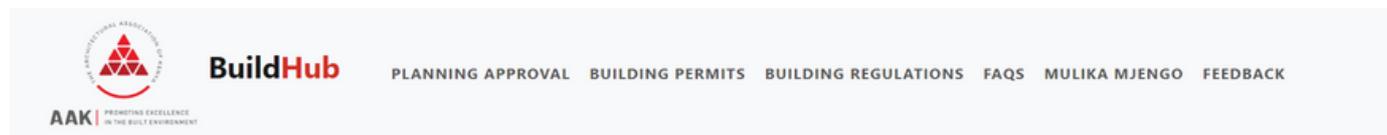
On 30th June, AAK president Arch Florence Nyole took part in the forum organized by the Kenya Alliance of Residents Associations. The President emphasized the importance of the government to improve land availability, public-private partnerships, social housing programs, financial support, capacity building, and the involvement of organized community groups like resident associations in realizing the affordable housing agenda.

AAK VISITS 6TH YEAR ARCHITECTURE STUDENT EXHIBITIONS

President Arch. Florence Nyole led a team from AAK to visit the 6th Year Architecture Student Exhibitions held at the University of Nairobi. The event showcased the impressive works of the university's final year architecture students, highlighting their innovative design projects and research findings. The event was an opportunity for industry professionals and fellow students to engage with the emerging talent and witness the future of architecture in Kenya.



AAK BUILDHUB



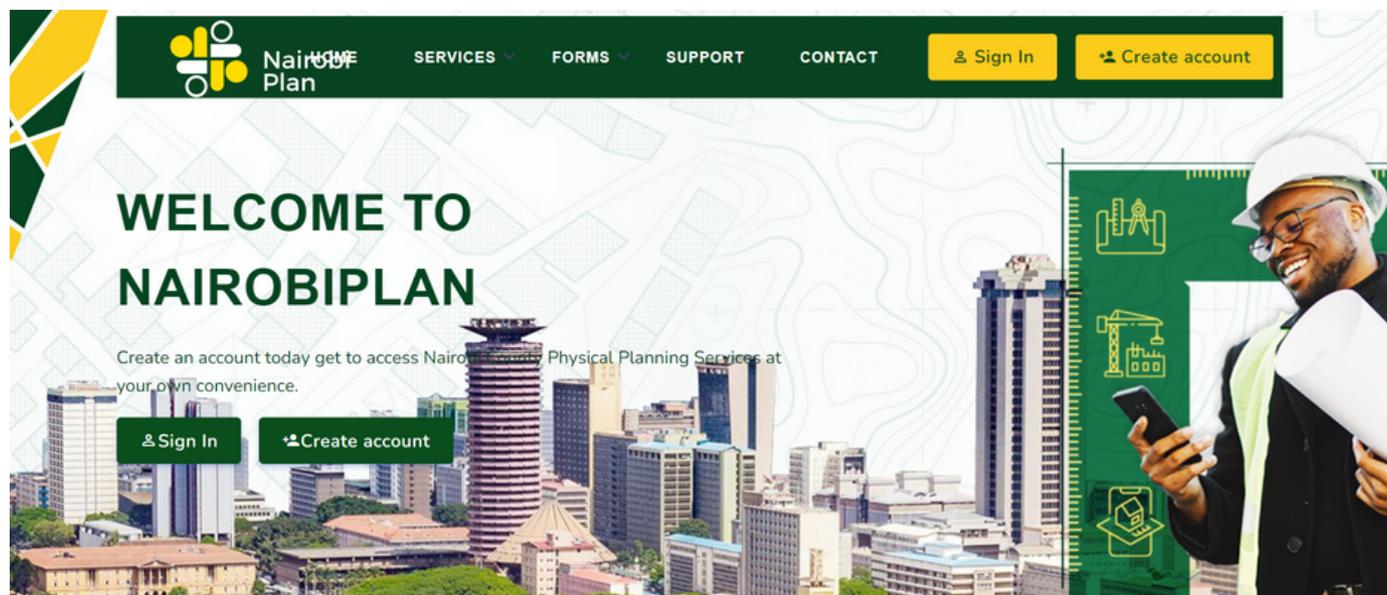
Access to information on development approval, either a building permit or planning approval, remains a significant challenge in the country. This is despite the reality that each County's Processes for obtaining the documents differ, and no County has documented its processes. The lack of clarity in the processes involved in the application for these documents makes the application for completing an application unpredictable, long, and tedious.

Following this, AAK commissioned research on the above processes in select counties in Kenya with the aim of providing the public with the information. As a result, AAK has now made it much easier for you to obtain a Building Permit or Planning Approval in Kenya by providing information on step-by-step procedures, the duration for approval, and fee charges for obtaining these approvals.

The portal is still being updated and we have data on 33 counties so far. We have also uploaded all the relevant legal and policy frameworks to the Hub, making it a one-stop shop for all the information you need in the approval processes. Find out more: <https://buildhub.aak.or.ke/>

AAK SURVEYS

THE NAIROBI PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NPDMS) USER EXPERIENCE 2023 SURVEY



The department conducted a comprehensive survey on the user experience of the Nairobi Planning & Development Management System (NPDMS). This initiative was prompted by numerous complaints received from our esteemed members regarding the system's functionality and efficiency. The findings revealed that members continue to experience a lot of challenges using the system.

Specifically, several experts mentioned difficulties and challenges during the migration from eDAMS, such as the need for human intervention, loss of previous applications, and longer processing times.

Other challenges experienced included delays in getting approvals, with some taking up to one year, 93.2% of the professionals end up making physical visits to the county, which defeats the essence of an online system, as well as the recurring concern over the inadequate communication channels.

Some of the recommendations members gave were the need to prioritize applications which are still stuck in the eDAMS system, the county should eliminate human interference in the system and take legal action against county officials who tamper with the system, the need for the county to regularly maintain the system to improve its efficiency and user-friendliness and the necessity of efficient communication channels.

Read more here: <https://aak.or.ke/download/the-nairobi-planning-development-management-system-npdms/>

MEETINGS & ENGAGEMENTS

AAK URBAN THINKERS CAMPUS 8.0



We successfully held the discussions on the Urban Thinkers Campus. The campus was well attended, with speakers from organizations such as

- UN-Habitat
- International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA)
- Konza Technopolis Development Authority (KoTDA)
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Friedrich-Erbert Stiftung (FES)
- Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI)
- GoDowns Arts Center
- National Housing Corporation (NHC)
- Kenya Green Building Society (KGBS)
- German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)
- Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)
- Flone Initiative
- Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)
- Association of Electric Mobility

The campus was able to attract participants from Kenya, the USA, Ethiopia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Australia, Malawi, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Malaysia. We are in the process of planning the UTC activation day and we will share more details on our channels.

THE SECOND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS HABITAT ASSEMBLY



The association attended the UN-Habitat assembly which was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 5 to 9 June 2023. The theme of the session is “A sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism: achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in times of global crises.”

AAK also participated in the side events, including the Roundtable hosted by the Commonwealth Africa Initiative on the themes of sustainability, construction and the future of the built environment in Kenya. During the period, AAK hosted the President of the Commonwealth Association of Architects, Peter Oborn, Vice President, CAA Senior Vice President Stephen Oundo, CAA Vice President Africa Wilson Mugambi, and the President of the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Architects, Curisa Smith.

PRESS BRIEFING ON THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS



AAK held a press briefing on the 9th June 2023 to give recommendations on the affordable housing crisis in Kenya. In the briefing, AAK emphasized that housing is not just about building the structure but about building sustainable communities. Additionally, the government needs to put in place proper structures to guide and manage the housing program effectively, including establishing the Kenya Housing Board.

This press briefing attracted attention in the public space and led to our engagement with the media including appearances on television - KTN TV Big Morning Show on Kenya Urban Forum Launch and Citizen TV DayBreak on Construction Costs.

AAK MEETING WITH THE WORLD BANK

AAK and World Bank held a subsequent meeting after the meeting with the National Council of Economic Affairs on 31st May to further discuss the challenges and recommendations that the World Bank could support in spearheading. The objective is to develop an action plan up to June 2024.

ENGINEERING PARTNERSHIPS CONVENTION 2023



ENGINEERING PARTNERSHIPS CONVENTION | 2023

#EPC2023



AAK also participated in the EPC organized by the Engineers Board of Kenya through the engineers' chapter. Engineers chapter chair Eng. Paul Karara and the Vice President, Arch. George A. Ndege took part in panel discussions during the convention.

KOMAZA



On 16th June, AAK had a meeting with Komaza to discuss areas of collaboration. Among the areas discussed included the Grow a Classroom project, where they may be able to support this effort in their counties of operation. They have extensive experience in carbon standards and will start selling carbon credits this year. Additionally, they are happy to host AAK on a tour of their sawmill.

PICTORIALS

DAY BREAK | Experts speak on variables in housing construction amidst housing levy debate (...)





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