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Equitable Urban Green Space Planning in Vulnerable Neighborhoods

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In today's world, where climate change raises issues of environmental justice (Resnik, 2022), urban green spaces are believed to be one of the effective solutions to these challenges. However, the top-down planning of urban green spaces often results in injustices that exacerbate the vulnerability of certain populations in cities. Therefore, the question of how to plan urban green spaces in vulnerable neighborhoods remains a significant gap in the literature. This study aims to examine the impact of the availability of urban green spaces in vulnerable neighborhoods on environmental justice. This analysis will evaluate London (UK) from the perspective of the three dimensions of environmental justice (distributional, recognition, and procedural) at the city scale. To achieve this, climate data (Urban Heat Island, air pollution, noise pollution, flooding and lack of green space) and socioeconomic data will be mapped using GIS (Geographic Information System), and a mixed-method research will be used, incorporating grey literature. The findings reveal that the distribution of green spaces in vulnerable neighborhoods is inequitable. It is evident that the amount of green space alone is insufficient to define vulnerability; factors such as accessibility and attractiveness of green spaces should also be considered in planning. Another significant finding is that low socioeconomic status and participation rates are crucial in the vulnerability of neighborhoods. As a result, evaluating green space planning processes by considering the three elements of environmental justice (distributional, recognition, and procedural) can contribute to empowering vulnerable communities. By evaluating the impact of urban green spaces on environmental injustice, this case study provides valuable insights for policymakers aiming to plan more resilient cities. The research seeks to answer how more equitable urban green space planning can be achieved by examining the causality of injustices in vulnerable neighborhoods through a case study.