PARTICIPATORY DESIGN
FOR PUBLIC URBAN SPACES
Martha Patricia Galán Aguilar
I have dedicated a lot of effort to this project. However, it would not have been possible without the kind support and help of many individuals and organisations. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of them.

I am highly indebted to United Nations Global-Compact Cities Programme and especially Elizabeth Ryan for her guidance, constant supervision and providing necessary information regarding the project, as well as her support in completing the project. I would like to express my gratitude to Robbie Guevara, who helped me in the beginning of this journey to shape up this project.

I am grateful for meeting my great friend Sandra Moye. She introduced me to the Cities Programme and gave me ongoing support throughout this research project. ¡Muchísimas gracias!

I would like to express my special gratitude and thanks to all research participants for sharing their knowledge and experiences with me: Alexandre Apsan Frediani, Belinda Tato, Emma Cohlmeyer, Esben Neander Kristensen, Gisela Méndez, Liz Ogbu, Marisol García, Mike Lydon, Nerkis Kural and Susan Lengyel.

My special thanks to my love Daniel for his unconditional support. I dedicate this project to my beloved sons Yolotl Ochieng and Tanok Onyango.
The idea for this project arose out of Martha Patricia Galán Aguilar’s previous experience as an urban designer in various projects in Mexico. Some of these projects involved extensive liaison with members of the local communities, as well as local government officers. Community participation in those cases was spontaneous and proved to be an excellent approach to obtain community endorsement and support for the projects. By engaging the community, the design team ensured community’s needs were met where possible and negotiated others where technical issues mandated decisions.

From professional experience and through a specialist research internship with the UN Global-Compact Cities Programme, this project came to life as a way to find case studies from international public space projects and learn from them. The aim of this publication is not only to showcase the "good" aspects but also "what did not work as expected", as a self-reflection by the facilitators interviewed. It is written for the benefit of community leaders, professionals and governments for an improved understanding and uptake of participatory design.

Research Method
The research approach chosen was a semi-structured interview with a sample of 10 professionals with previous experience in facilitating participatory design. Research planning was done in 2014 and interviews undertaken in 2015. Ten facilitators from Australia, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Mexico, Spain, Turkey, UK, and USA were interviewed about nine projects in Australia, Canada, Chile, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, Paraguay, Turkey and USA. Some of this professionals were sourced through academic papers and others were recommended by research participants.

Key Findings
- Physical space where face-to-face interaction happens is preferred to online engagement.
- The use of appropriate language in a specific context is key to successful communication with stakeholders. This suggests that when facilitators communicate with participants, it is preferable to use "you" or "we" rather than "I".
- Facilitation needs to be adaptable to contexts and specific groups of people. Not all approaches and tools for participation work in the same way with everyone.
- Visual material is helpful to communicate ideas and act as an effective "ice-breaker" to start the dialogue.
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This publication reports on research, which identifies and analyses tools used in participatory design processes, as well as the role facilitators play in this process. The report is structured as a case study compilation, exploring nine projects from 10 facilitators’ perspectives. It was conducted by Martha Patricia Galán Aguilar in 2014-2015, an architect and urban designer, with support from United Nations Global Compact – Cities Programme, which advocates inclusive and collaborative multidisciplinary approaches to urban challenges.

This research study analysed:
- Which participation tools have demonstrated to be more effective taking into account the type of project and characteristics of the stakeholders involved in the design process?
- What is the role of the facilitator in the design process, their skills and the processes they follow to implement community input into the final design?

Why Participatory Design?
Design Participation is a collaboration between stakeholders such as community, government, businesses and professionals where all actively take part in the design process of a specific project. This design approach gives people acknowledgment for their input and final design aims to meet the main stakeholders’ needs.

The term ‘Design Participation’ first appeared in 1971 as an international conference title. It was the first attempt by the design community to explore user participation in design processes (Lee 2008). Nowadays, the practice of design is changing. It is going beyond creation of things and getting more interested in design experiences, products and processes.

“With the society pacing forward, human beings pay more attention to self-awareness, mental and physical needs. Urban public landscape design should not only consider the harmony with the natural environment, but also needs to pay attention to human physiological and psychological needs, to provide a convenient and pleasant environment, thus to create a harmonious relationship among people, landscape, and nature to achieve a relative balance.” (Gengli 2013)

To be able to achieve what Gengli defines as a balance it is necessary to address the collaboration gap between experts such as psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists and design professionals (Lee 2008). Participation in design requires multidisciplinary teams to facilitate the process, as well as establish continuous professional reflection among designers.
RESEARCH METHOD

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with facilitators of participatory designed public urban spaces. Participants were selected based on the following criteria:

1. previous experience in facilitating participatory design workshops;
2. previous experience in designing public urban spaces (temporary and/or permanent); and
3. an interest in sharing their experiences.

The interviews were conducted from Melbourne, either face-to-face or by teleconference. A snowball sampling method was used to access some of the participants for this study. Goodman (1961) defines Snowball Sampling as ‘a random sample of individuals drawn from a given finite population... Each individual in the sample is asked to name a different individual in the population...’.

The interview protocol developed for this study was designed to be flexible. However to guide the interview, a set of sample questions were drawn up and forwarded to the interviewees. These provided the participants with an idea of how the interaction would progress and indicated the key areas of interest. These sample questions were divided into four categories: a) Basic description of the project; b) Processes / Tools; c) Drivers; and d) Outcome (see Appendix A).

Interviews began with open-ended questions to encourage interviewees to elaborate. The interviews started by asking the participants to talk about the previous chosen project and when required, additional questions were added. The interviews were recorded and notes taken. The findings were synthesised into core information, highlighting the participatory design process and lessons learnt. These are presented in the following section.
CASE STUDIES

This section will synthesise information gathered from the interviews by case study (the project participants chose to elaborate about). It contains the following information: name of the project and country; participant’s name, organisation’s name and country where it is based; a brief description of the project; timeline; and participatory approaches and learning classified in approaches that had better outcomes and approaches that did not work as expected.
DREAMHAMAR
Norway

BELINDA TATO
Ecosistema Urbano
Spain

Image by: Ecosistema Urbano
**Belinda Tato**
Ecosistema Urbano
Spain

**What is the project?**
It is a re-configuration of Stortorget, the main square in Hamar. It is also a journey to re-think public space and Design Participation.

**Partners**
Hamar City, Norway launched a design competition in 2011, asking for creative proposals to reinvigorate Stortorget, the main city square. Once Ecosistema Urbano was granted with the commission of re-designing the main square, part of the team moved temporarily to Hamar.

Ecosistema Urbano is a Madrid based group of architects and urban designers operating within the fields of urbanism, architecture, engineering and sociology.

**Target users**
Residents of Hamar, Norway.
Drivers to use participatory approach
Ecosistema Urbano conducted extensive research on the city, its urban structure, people’s everyday life, traditions, habits, culture, interests, environment and context. Ecosistema Urbano then “thought that involving the community would provide a rich and enduring experience for both locals and future users” (Ecosistema Urbano 2013). Their main driver to use a participatory approach was to have a social impact that involves action, social empowerment and ‘planting seeds’.

Where did the participation process take place?
• Physical temporary space at the square.
• Online platform

What worked well
Physical Lab – a temporary lab on site where different theme workshops took place, as well as several tactical urbanism interventions.

Online workshops – people from different locations shared their ideas through an online platform.

Drawing – a total of 1300 children participated in drawing their visions for Stortorget, through a partnership with schools.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Graphic and visual communication and incorporating ludic activities.

Outcomes
This project was successful in constructing the plaza design through participation. It is now in full operation and one of the participants of the participation workshops is now employed by the local government to manage the space.

What did not work as expected
Facilitator couldn’t recall any of the tools used in this specific project that did not work as expected, but recognised that online techniques may not have the expected participation in places where access to technology is limited.

More information on this project:
http://ecosistemaurbano.com/portfolio/dreamhamar/
http://www.dreamhamar.org/about/
ANTOFAGASTA LIMPIA Y CONECTADA
Chile

MARISOL GARCÍA
Ciudad Emergente
Chile
What is the project?
It is a plan with an objective to improve life quality in the city through a holistic development vision to convert Antofagasta into an inclusive and innovative city in the long term. Antofagasta Limpia y Conectada is an implementation strategy, which is part of CREO Antofagasta - a strategic planning tool that imagines, builds, evaluates and improves Antofagasta.

Partners
Ciudad Emergente is a Lab of Tools and Tactics for Human-Centered Cities. It seeks to improve urban quality of life through social innovation and high impact participatory projects.

Target users
Antofagasta’s residents
ANTOFAGASTA LIMPIA Y CONECTADA

Chile

MARISOL GARCÍA
Ciudad Emergente
Chile

Drivers to use participatory approach
Antofagasta has long standing issues of informality, waste and lack of public space. There was a critical need to engage the community to value their neighbourhood and to be part of efforts to develop the area.

Where did participation process take place?
• Physical space on-site

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

What worked well
Arbol de ideas (Tree ideas) - divided by themes, participants get to write their ideas on the space to be designed and hang them on the 'tree'.

Maps - people engage to them and give their opinion and the territorial information gathered was valuable.

Territorial interventions (tactics in public space) - which attracted many to participate (that not always did so) and facilitated partnerships established with a broader network and community, like schools.

Facilitator's skills that enabled participation
Knowing how to listen and understand what you have been told, and above all to act as a translator of ideas rather than imposing your own ideas.

Outcomes
This project created a clean neighbourhood as its main objective but, more importantly it led to establishing a community atmosphere and diverse entrepreneurship initiatives in Antofagasta.

What did not work as expected
Use of certain language - it can lead to miscommunication if facilitator does not understand the local context

More information on this project:
http://www.ciudademergente.org/es/publicaciones/reportes/
http://issuu.com/ciudademergente_cem/docs/130110_reporte_final_malones_del_cr
What is the project?
Melbourne's urban forest is a critical element of the city’s fabric, liveability and cultural heritage. Melbourne has long been regarded as Australia’s ‘garden city’, however more than a decade of drought combined with the impact of severe water restrictions has left the city’s urban forest in a state of unprecedented decline.

In 2011, City of Melbourne initiated a four year Public Engagement and Community Planning program to design an Urban Forest Strategy to respond to these challenges. The Urban Forest Strategy puts forward the vision to develop the City of Melbourne to become a ‘city within a forest’. It has a target of doubling the City’s tree canopy cover to provide multiple benefits including, increasing the health and wellbeing of the community and cooling the city’s summertime temperatures.

Partners
City of Melbourne is the capital city of the Australian state of Victoria. It is the second most populous city in Australia with over four million people living in the greater geographical area.

Target users
Municipality’s residents, workers and visitors.
PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

Drivers to use participatory approach
The Lord Mayor’s leadership was a driver for the participatory approach. He acknowledged that there are few political, budget or policy decisions that must deliver for people in 100 years, therefore the community really needed to be fully involved.

Where did participation process take place?
- Physical space
- Online platform

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

What worked well
Community workshops - a number of community workshops were undertaken, ranging from co-design workshops through to development of precinct plans. These were always successful in attracting a considerable number of attendants.

Online tools - this was the first time City of Melbourne used an online platform and it was so successful it has now been transformed into Participate Melbourne for all projects that the municipality runs.

Transparency in provision of information and long term timeframes.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Where reported to be good community engagement skills and strategic development planning where the team set clear goals, targets and measurable variables.

Outcomes
Participation process still on-going, therefore no outcomes have been identified as yet, apart from successfully engage with stakeholders and diverse community members.

What did not work as expected
Levels of engagement by children and young people were lower than expected.

*Originally interviewed Susan Lengyel who was a contractor at the time.

More information on this project:
TACTICAL URBANISM FOR HAMILTON
Canada

MIKE LYDON
The Street Plans Collaborative
USA
MIKE LYDON
The Street Plans Collaborative
USA

What is the project?
Using Tactical Urbanism, the Hamilton project commenced in April 2013. The Hamilton/Burlington Society of Architects (HBSA) invited Mike Lydon as a keynote speaker and as facilitator for a tactical urbanism workshop. During the workshops, sites with a specific urban problematic were identified. With these sites the various stakeholders proposed solutions and Herkimer and Locke streets was one of the sites with a more successful outcome. From a tactical urbanism intervention temporary plastic hazard cones were placed in strategic locations to improve street crossings.

Partners
Hamilton/Burlington Society of Architects (HBSA) is comprised of members and affiliates from the local architecture community. The HBSA represents the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) locally, providing communication, public relations and professional development for its members.

The Street Plans Collaborative is an urban planning, design and research-advocacy firm.

Target users
Local residents of Hamilton, specifically residents directly affected by five road intersections identified as unsafe for pedestrians.
TACTICAL URBANISM FOR HAMILTON

Canada

MIKE LYDON
The Street Plans Collaborative
USA

Drivers to use participatory approach
Architects knew there was an issue but residents were not aware of it. Street Plans Collaborative was brought in to teach participatory skills.

Where did participation process take place?
• Physical space

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

What worked well
Making photomontages – with the help of cut-outs from photos, participants can visualise their ideas in a clear manner.

Models – with simple materials like carton, paper and colour markers, participants were able to communicate their ideas in 3D to other participants and have a better understanding of the space.

Analyse photos of examples in other places – this helped participants to understand different materials, their sources, cost and how to use them.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Guide participants very closely.

What did not work as expected
Facilitator could not recall any of the tools used in this specific project that did not work as expected.

Outcomes
After temporary interventions, and even authorities attempts to remove them, local authorities acknowledged the need for permanent actions to improve pedestrian crossings and undertook necessary works to do so. Since the first intervention at Locke and Herkimer Streets in Hamilton, the City has gone on to improve more than 100+ intersections using a temporary to permanent approach. Moreover, the municipality recently adopted a new policy allowing for citizens to develop urban interventions.

More information on this project:
www.streetplans.org
http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism-hamilton_report_f
NOW HUNTERS POINT
USA
LIZ OGBU
LIZOGBU
USA

Image by: Anne Hamersky

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN FOR PUBLIC URBAN SPACES
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**What is the project?**
NOW_hunters point was created as part of a plan to revitalise the site of a former PG&E power plant in the Bayview Hunters Point neighbourhood of San Francisco.

**Partners**
LIZ OGBU A designer, urbanist, and social innovator, Liz is an expert on sustainable design and spatial innovation in challenged urban environments globally. She is founder and principal of Studio O, an innovation firm that works with communities in need to use the power design to deliver deep social impact.

envelope A+D is an architectural firm based in San Francisco. It is a collaborative design group inclusive of outside disciplines and individuals.

PG&E Pacific Gas and Electric Company, incorporated in California in 1905, is one of the largest combination natural gas and electric utilities in the United States. Based in San Francisco, the company is a subsidiary of PG&E Corporation.

**Target users**
San Francisco’s Bayview Hunters Point neighbourhood is incredibly diverse. It is historically an African-American community and has an active industrial workforce, an artist community, and a growing middle class community among others.
NOW HUNTERS POINT
USA

LIZ OGBU
USA

Drivers to use participatory approach
In 2006, a community initiative led the closure of the power plant and its owner worked with the community to undertake remediation of the site. Following this previous community involvement, PG&E invited LIZOGBU and envelope A+D to collaborate in the conversion of the former power plant site into a public space for the neighbourhood.

Where did participation process take place?
• Physical space on-site

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

What worked well
Listening Booth – recorded interviews were undertaken with key community members on their vision of the neighbourhood and specifically for Hunters Point.

What did not work as expected
Not having frequent follow up communications – when no follow-up communications were done after a community engagement event, the community lost trust in the facilitators and the project.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
The facilitator views empathy as a very important skill, as well as forming partnerships with community members to achieve participation.

Outcomes
24 events, 28 stories recorded and archived, 52 local youth and 8 local residents hired, 6 stories edited and shared back with the community and 12 local vendors hired.

More information on this project:
http://lizogbu.com/portfolio_page/now-hunters-point/
http://nowhunterspoint.org
ASUNCION’S PUBLIC LIFE AND PUBLIC SPACE
Paraguay

ESBEN NEANDER KRISTENSEN
Gehl Architects
Denmark

Image by: Gehl Architects
**ASUNCION’S PUBLIC LIFE AND PUBLIC SPACE**

**ESBEN NEANDER KRISTENSEN**

Gehl Architects  
Denmark

**What is the project?**
The project is a study on public space and the public life of the City of Asuncion; it is about re-examining its public spaces and transportation network. The study analysed the pedestrian, leisure, bicycle, transit and vehicular patterns in several areas of the city, with the aim of designing a pilot intervention that can demonstrate improvements to these patterns, especially in the pedestrian experience. The strategy Gehl Architects followed was to run workshops with volunteers to teach them how to document human activity in public space followed by going on site to document human activity. Gehl Architects then analysed the statistics and produced a report with recommendations to improve public space.

**Partners**
**Gehl Architects** is an urban design practice that is internationally recognised with the headquarters in Denmark.

**Municipalidad de Asuncion** is the local government authority in Asuncion, the capital city of Paraguay.

**Inter-American Development Bank** is the main source of multilateral financing in Latin America. It provides solutions to development challenges and support in the key areas of the region.

**Target users**
City of Asuncion’s residents

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**Timeline**
- Aug 2014: Public Space Public Life study within focus areas
- Sep-Oct 2014: Quantitative analysis on the users in public space and its relation with the current open space conditions
- Nov 2014: Identify key public space issues and development
- Oct 2015: Report and recommendations with pilot projects
ASUNCION’S PUBLIC LIFE AND PUBLIC SPACE

Paraguay

ESBEN NEANDER KRISTENSEN

Gehl Architects
Denmark

Drivers to use participatory approach
Gehl Architects undertook an extensive pedestrian movement and cars counting to understand the space. This process requires involvement from locals.

Where did participation process take place?
• Physical space on-site

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

What worked well
Presenting scenarios - this helps the audience to unlock their minds and creativity

What did not work as expected
The biggest challenge was the changing conditions of the related projects in the downtown area of Asunción, necessitating several changes to study area and methods throughout the process.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Knowing when to be open.

Outcomes
Gehl Architects produced a recommendation report for Asunción’s authorities and the Inter-American Development Bank has allocated funding to undertake streetscapes upgrades to improve public life in the city.

More information on this project:
http://gehlarchitects.com
CHANGE BY DESIGN: MASHIMONI
Kenya

ALEXANDRE APSAN FREDIANI
Architecture Sans Frontières
UK
**What is the project?**
It is an action research workshop for a slum upgrade in Mashimoni, Mathare Valley, Kenya.

**Partners**
- **Architecture Sans Frontières UK** Through exhibitions, talks and events, outreach, international workshops and UK workshops ASF-UK explores and engages in complex issues concerning development. ASF-UK uses ‘participation’ as the primary methodology for achieving a more equitable and fair existence for everybody.

- **Pamoja Trust** is a local NGO that has been working for over 15 years in supporting slum dwellers in Kenya to resist forced evictions and fight for their right to adequate housing.

- **UN-HABITAT** is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements and development and achieve adequate shelter for all.

**Target users**
Mashimoni’s residents, grassroots organisations and NGOs active in the neighbourhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City visit and symposium with over 120 participants including international and local workshop participants, policy makers, academics, UN-Habitat staff and slum dwellers’ organisations.</th>
<th>Jun 2011</th>
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<td>Participants were divided in three groups and assigned a different topic: Institutional, Community and Dwelling; and worked during one week using different tools.</td>
<td>Jun 2011 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the three groups were brought back to work together and developed a game, Portfolio of Options.</td>
<td>Jul 2011</td>
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Drivers to use participatory approach
Mashimoni is a slum in Nairobi. In order to undertake upgrades a series of tensions were found between individual priorities and needs, and those of the collective. Through participatory design undertaken, stakeholders were able to analyse their issues and solutions at three different scales: institutional, neighbourhood and dwelling, and then link them together.

Where did participation process take place?
- Physical space, in designated sites but also walking tours around Mashimoni.

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<th>What did not work as expected</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews by drawing during interviews - residents were asked to draw and comment on their drawings. At the same time, facilitators were taking notes on what was being explained to them.</td>
<td>The limited timeframe and large size of the neighbourhood compromised the possibility of having a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the locality and engaging with its relationship with city wide processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life stories - drawing a timeline stating where residents used to live, and capturing milestones in residents' lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Models - were use to explore a dream dwelling but also at an urban scale to identify issues.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Facilitation of this project was successful because of its multidisciplinary team, comprising architects, social scientists and planners, which brought:
- Visual skills: thinking through a space design,
- Social understanding and skills to engage the community,
- Planning vision of all scales of development: dwelling, neighbourhood and municipal levels.
- Social diversity in the team, and social change was the unifying vision.

Outcomes
This project led to recommendations for changes on planning regulations as well as examples for innovations of participatory practices.

More information on this project:
http://www.asfparticipate.org
CHILD ATTRACTION CENTER

Turkey

NERKIS KURAL
Middle East Technical University
Turkey
What is the project?
It is a project that won a competition hosted by the World Bank. It was presented as an experimental project for demonstrating the role architects can play as stakeholders in shaping urban environments while valuing local experience. The project is an open air centre for children, where they can participate in different activities and interact with their peers, as well as adults in Ankara, Turkey.

Partners
Basic Design Studio, Faculty of Art and Architecture, Bilkent University is the first private university in Turkey

World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world.

Target users
Children, parents, teachers and visitors of Ankara
**CHILD ATTRACTION CENTER**

*Turkey*

NERKIS KURAL  
Middle East Technical University  
Turkey

**Drivers to use participatory approach**
The design team proposed the project as an innovative open and semi-open spaces as a learning environment for underprivileged children in a low-income area. The objective was to help them be integrated to urban living with the support of urbanites of Ankara that have skills in music, drawing, literature, etc. and would be volunteering to share these with the children in an informal environment they would come and go. Novel also because it was planned to be built by recycled and reused materials and objects chosen by the children themselves from a second hand yard of the city.

**Where did participation process take place?**
- Physical space: school library, on site and the city’s junkyard.

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**PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING**

**What worked well**

| Drawing and model making – children were provided with materials for drawing and model making to express their ideas of what needed to happen in the space. |
| Site visits – these allowed children to relate their drawings and models with the real space. |

**What did not work as expected**

Not involving adults in the participatory process – Lack of engagement with parents and other members of the community meant that the project did not reach the endorsement expected to bring the project to life.

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**Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation**

Team members were successful in relating with the children in a clear and sincere manner. They also spent time with children in a friendly social environment by sharing refreshments and picnics with them.

**Outcomes**

Concept design was developed with children’s input and the municipality undertook site cleaning. Unfortunately no construction was undertaken due to two main factors: lack of funding and failure to engage with adults in the participatory process.

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More information on this project:


HUERTAS DEL CURA PARK

Mexico

GISELA MÉNDEZ
Gobierno de Colima
Mexico

EMMA COHLMeyer
Sustainable Cities International
Canada
What is the project?
It is an historical park that had been abandoned. The park was re-designed with a grant from the "Programa de rescate de espacios públicos" (Public space recovery program).

Partners
Instituto de Planeacion para el Municipio de Colima (Planning Institute for the City of Colima)

Sustainable Cities International (SCI) is a registered non-profit based in Vancouver, Canada. With a core team of directors, volunteers and a network of international associates, SCI works with cities around the world to bring about change towards urban sustainability. SCI focuses on building human capacity within cities so that innovation and change can occur.

Target users
Community surrounding the historical park Huertas del Cura.
PARTICIPATORY DESIGN FOR PUBLIC URBAN SPACES

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

 Drivers to use participatory approach
This approach facilitates the development of a sense of ownership and pride in the community, social cohesion and integration as well as highlighting the importance of public participation in municipal planning and politics. Residents, neighbours, community leaders, local youth and children are directly involved in the process, from the outset to project implementation.

Where did participation process take place?
• Physical space, a designated meeting place and on site.

EMMA COHLMYEYER
What worked well
Brainstorming with maps - with the aid of maps, locate issues, dreams, and visions of the site and start imagining solutions.

Site visits and meetings on-site - being on site helps everyone to have a better understanding of the space.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Good listening skills. The facilitator stated that most of the community members did not feel intimidated by her (being a professional) because Spanish is her second language. Community members seemed to feel that they could express themselves more confidently because of this and that they would not be judged.

What did not work as expected
Meetings with large groups or too many meetings - having large groups intimidates some of the participants and does not allow for everyone to express their thoughts. If there are too many meetings, participants cannot commit to all of them and people start losing interest.
PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES AND LEARNING

What worked well
Visionary maps – while on site working on stakeholders, vision and locate them on maps. It is the best data gathering technique as it has a high level of accuracy and understanding of the space, for both facilitators and stakeholders.

Facilitator’s skills that enabled participation
Facilitator identifies the following skills and characteristics that enabled successful participation:
• Empathy
• Capability to express ideas clearly and acknowledging through language used that the community is the expert, for example when presenting the design it is important to say “you propose...” instead of “I propose...”, given that your role as a designer is to interpret communities’ inputs and not implement your own ideas.
• Model the participatory strategies during the process, according to needs as they arise.
• Emotional intelligence

Outcomes
This project was successfully constructed and embraced by the community. It also worked as a model to replicate in other parks within the municipality and the participation methodology has been showcased in diverse forums around Mexico.

What did not work as expected
Presenting the plan in a non-participatory way - it was very important to recognise the plan as being ‘ours’ – developed by the community, not only the technical team. This requires a different thinking for most trained professionals.

More information on this project:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sljmAaAHoFw
WHERE TO FROM HERE?

This extensive research effort has demonstrated that public space and its design complexities represent an opportunity for design participation, both in the design process and its implementation. Implementing participatory approaches in public space projects promotes and ensures community involvement in decision-making and overcomes the commonly experienced disconnect between communities and their representatives in government.

Participation also benefits all parties involved. It guarantees transparency in the community-government dialogue, creates community cohesion, enables voices to be heard, ensures long-lasting projects and develops a strong sense of ownership among communities.

Even though participation is sometimes not an easy process, it improves quality in decisions made and makes decision-making processes more democratic. Participation is also the best way to facilitate a common understanding of objectives, identify issues and solutions and develop implementation strategies.

It is hoped that the practices and learnings from the nine case studies presented in this publication help community members, professionals and governments to better understand design participation and promote its use in their neighbourhoods, cities and countries.
If I was running a toilet, I would open it for longer at night, keep it clean and make it cheaper... Woman

NI NINI NDOTO Yako?
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. BASIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1. What is the name of the project and where is located (Country and city)?

2. Description of the project
   Type (i.e. park, square, plaza, etc.)
   Location in the urban context
   Size in square meters
   Target users

B. PROCESSES / TOOLS

1. What was your role as facilitator during the design process?

2. What participation tools were/are used during design?

3. How did you analyse the inputs from the community?

4. How did you translate your analysis into the final design?

5. From the tools you used/use, which ones do you think gave the best outcome and why?

6. From the tools you used/use, which ones do you think did not work as planned and why?

7. Where did/does participation facilitation takes place?
   Is it a physical space?
   Is it an online platform?

8. What financing model did you use to undertake participation in design?

9. What are the skills you have to make participation happening?
10. How long did/does the entire participation process and final design take to be completed?
   Date when the initiative started
   Dates when workshops and/or other participation tools started and ended
   Time it took you to analyse inputs from the community
   Time is took you to translate your analysis into the final design

C. DRIVERS

1. Who had the initiative for this project?

2. Who was/is involved during design and decision-making process?

3. What kind of institution leads the participation process?

D. OUTCOME

1. What was the outcome of the participatory design process you undertook?

2. How do/did you measure the success of the project?

3. Are there any photos and/or graphic material that you would like to share of the participation process and the final design?
   If so, please sent them to patricia.galan@citiesprogramme.org