Global Public Space Toolkit
From Global Principles to Local Policies and Practice

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Local Policies and Practice

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Foreword

Public spaces contribute to defining the cultural, social, economic and political functions of cities. They continue to be the first element to mark the status of a place from a chaotic and unplanned settlement to a well-established town or city.

The value of public spaces is often overlooked or underestimated by policy makers, leaders and developers. There are a number of reasons for this, such as the lack of resources, understanding or capacity to use the possibilities of public space as a complete, multi-functional urban system. Often the lack of appropriate enabling frameworks, weak political will and the absence of the means for public engagement compound the situation.

In recent years, however, we have observed a remarkable rise in the number of cities, particularly in the Global South, that have managed to use public space as a key lever for urban development. Cities have used public space to improve mobility and access to basic services, making their environment safer and crime-free, stimulating economic activity and investment, preserving historical and cultural assets or facilitating urban renewal and inclusiveness.

We have had similar experiences at UN-Habitat, where we have promoted the use of public space for more than a decade as an implementation and delivery strategy for projects on urban planning, housing and slum upgrading, governance and urban safety, basic services and even post-conflict reconstruction. In 2011, UN-Habitat's Governing Council gave the Programme a clear opportunity and direction through Resolution 23/4 to consolidate our agency-wide work on public space. UN-Habitat's Member States have mandated the agency to develop an approach that promotes the role of public space in meeting the challenges of our rapidly-urbanizing world, to coordinate various global partners and experts on public space and to directly assist cities in their initiatives on public space.

Since then, UN-Habitat has actively promoted public space as an important component for prosperity in cities. We have intensively studied streets – the most common public space – in order to provide evidence showing

that prosperous cities are those that recognize the relevance of public spaces with proper layouts, and that allocate sufficient land to street development. We have also supported the development of the Charter on Public Space (an initiative led by our partner, the Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica, in Italy), which puts forward key principles that define the work in this field. We have also launched a Global Programme on Public Space that is dedicated to delivering normative and operational activities, with special emphasis on technical collaboration with cities.

The partnership with cities is at the core of UN-Habitat's efforts to work with public space in a systematic way across many levels. It is for this reason that this Toolkit on Public Space has been developed together with experts and our institutional partners. This has been produced with a special group of cities in mind – those with multi-faceted mandates but which face the reality of scarce or insufficient resources. The majority of our priority cities are either located in Least Developed or Middle Income countries, or those that have a high percentage of their population living in slums and in unprivileged circumstances. The leaders of these cities have to be accountable to their constituency in delivering solutions to a myriad of practical issues, which are short-, medium and long-term. Public Space is a key tool to fulfill this accountability.

The aim of this toolkit is to guide policies and strategies at city level and to provide examples linking policies to practices. This volume of the Public Space Toolkit is a first step which will be complemented in future with additional material and tools. Using these guidelines, we hope cities will devise solutions that suit their specific conditions.

Dr. Joan Clos
Under-Secretary-General, United Nations
Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Preface

Despite its importance in promoting sustainable urban development, public space has not been given the attention it deserves in literature and, more importantly, in the global policy arena. Yet there is a growing body of principles and sound policies for improving access to good public space in our cities, as well as a growing patrimony of good practices from different urban settings around the world. What was missing up to now was a compendium of some of the most relevant principles, policies and practices. For this reason, and in keeping with the mandate given by its governing body[1], UN-Habitat has decided to put together, in cooperation with the *Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica* (INU) and other partners, a toolkit – a user-friendly guide to provide cities, and particularly those with high rates of demographic growth and limited financial resources, with actionable ideas on how to improve the availability, quality and distribution of good public spaces.

The toolkit will be a practical reference for local governments to frame and implement principles, policy recommendations and development initiatives on public space and for central governments to aid their efforts with material support and enabling legislation. It will also serve the purpose of demonstrating the value of the involvement of the citizenry and civil society in securing, developing and managing public space in the city.

However, the toolkit is not conceived as a set of recommendations prepared by a group of expert individuals and organizations and directed at a global audience. Most policy suggestions are preceded by the subject 'we'. This is to emphasize the fact that there is now a broad 'public space community' comprising international organizations such as UN-Habitat, professional organizations, local governments, central governments, permanent public-space fora, foundations, citizens groups, researchers and dedicated individuals who are all committed to work together to make our cities better places to live in through inclusive, safe and accessible public space. If anything, this toolkit intends to broaden this global partnership further.

As the partnership grows and continues to research and work, new and additional tools, issues and aspects will be highlighted. UN-Habitat remains committed to continue to document and support such developments. The toolkit is conceived as an open series of documents providing different levels of details and applicable options.

UN-Habitat's Mandate to Work with Public Space: For a long time, while UN-Habitat focused on shelter and basic services, public space and urban planning remained a neglected agenda for the agency. Few programmes and activities had focused on the improvement of public spaces as a means of achieving sustainable settlements. However, in 2013 at the 23rd Governing Council of UN-Habitat, Member States mandated and challenged the agency to address the issue of public space and how this can contribute to sustainable urban development and improved quality of life (Resolution 23/4 on Sustainable Urban Development through Access to Public Spaces). Specifically, Member states requested UN-Habitat to:

- Advance the agenda on place-making and public spaces in a way that will consolidate local and international approaches to creating inclusive cities, enhance the knowledge of UN-Habitat partners and local authorities of place-making, public spaces and the quality of urban life.
- Facilitate and implement exchange, cooperation and research between partners working in this field.
- Develop a policy approach on the role that public spaces can play in meeting the challenges of our rapidly-urbanizing world, to disseminate that policy and its results widely, and to develop a plan for ensuring its application internationally.
- Assist in coordinating UN-Habitat partners in disseminating knowledge to existing sustainable urban development processes at all government levels.

Since 2012, UN-Habitat's Urban Planning and Design Branch (UPDB) and Office of External Relations have jointly embarked on the development and implementation of a Global Programme on Public Space, which is organized around three main areas:

1. Partnerships for public space
2. City-wide strategies and pilot/ demonstration projects
3. Knowledge management, tools and advocacy.

UN-Habitat is also mobilizing partners to work with cities around the globe in improving the quality, supply and reach of public spaces. A special focus is on cities in developing countries, and cities with high percentages of their population living in slums and in underprivileged circumstances. Public Space is often referred to as 'the poor man's living room' which hints at its particular importance for the recreation, social and economic development of vulnerable groups.[2] A good city should be an inclusive city, one that provides spaces for social engagement and fosters social cohesion, tackling poverty and inequality through the provision of inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces, especially for marginalized groups.

Cooperation with the Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica (INU), Rome: The National Planning Institute (INU), is a longstanding cultural and research association created to nurture and disseminate the culture of urbanism and the practice of city planning. INU carries out research in various fields of urbanism, updating and renewing urban planning techniques, while creating a shared culture of concern for the physical environment, cultural heritage and the city. In 2008, under INU's aegis, the initiative of holding a Biennial on Public Space was born.

UN-Habitat was a co-organizer and sponsor of the 2013 Biennale, activated two international workshops and actively participated in the drafting, review and adoption of the Charter of Public Space. INU and UN-Habitat made their partnership official, which developed into the preparation of this toolkit. In view of the need to define public space and identify universal principles for its enhancement and enjoyment, the 2013 Biennial adopted a Charter of Public Space which is a useful reference for many involved in public space development. In July 2013, the Municipal Council of the City of Naples, host of the 6th World Urban Forum, officially adopted the Charter.

Glossary

Gentrification – The process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces poorer residents.

Place – A portion of an area or location designated or available for or being used by someone. Place comes to existence when people give meaning to a part of a larger space. Places that have a strong sense of place have an identity and character felt by local inhabitants (see Annex 3: What Makes a Great Place).

Placemaking – Placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, Placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

Public goods – Public goods are defined as goods and services that are "non-rival" and "non-excludable". In other words, no one can be excluded from their benefits and their consumption by one person does not diminish consumption by another. They range from street signs to a clean environment and they are provided by non-market mechanisms, such as the state or, sometimes, voluntary organizations. Because the benefits of a public good are available to everyone (no one can be excluded), there are diminishing incentives for private sector provision. Consumption by one individual or group does not reduce availability for others, so a price is difficult to set in a market context (non-rivalry).

Urban commons – Commons were traditionally defined as the elements of the environment – forests, atmosphere, rivers, fisheries or grazing land – that were shared, used and enjoyed by all. Today, the commons can also include public goods, such as public space, public education, health and the infrastructure that allows our society to function.

Urban Stewardship – Urban stewardship embodies the responsible planning and management of urban resources. Caring for the urban commons is an act of individual stewardship (long-term care of the public space/urban commons for the benefit of oneself and others including the resource itself) and collective trusteeship.

Civic stewardship – The activity or job of overseeing, protecting and being responsible for something considered worth caring for and preserving.

Fuente Osmeña circle in Cebu, Philippines is a center for cultural, social, and political happenings © joyfull/Shutterstock.com

Traditional Taichi Wushu Festival at Dalian, China © Maxim Tupikov/Shutterstock.com

Introduction

This introductory section highlights the importance of public space for the improved quality of life for all and as a vital ingredient of successful cities. It outlines the five principles of sustainable urban neighbourhoods and their importance in promoting a vibrant street life, walkability and affordability of services and housing. It promotes the transformative power of urbanization and identifies key resources which emphasize the role of public space as "commons". This section also outlines the methodology used and structure of the toolkit.

Quality of Urban Life through Public Space

Quality of urban life is essential for cities to prosper. Cities that improve the quality of life for their citizens experience higher levels of prosperity; they are also likely to find themselves more advanced in terms of sustainability. Such cities strive towards social equity by increasing access to the urban commons and public goods, preventing private appropriation and expanding the scope for improved quality of life for all. Cities that have a strong notion of the 'public' demonstrate a commitment to an improved quality of life for their citizens by providing adequate street space, green areas, parks, recreation facilities and other public spaces.

Public spaces are a vital ingredient of successful cities. They help build a sense of community, civic identity and culture. Public spaces facilitate social capital, economic development and community revitalisation. Having access to public spaces does not only improve the quality of life but is also a first step toward civic empowerment and greater access to institutional and political spaces. The liveliness and continuous use of public space as a public good leads to urban environments that are well maintained, healthy and safe, making the city an attractive place in which to live and work.

Using Urban Planning and Design to Deliver Public Space

Cities can and must reassert control over their destinies with reinvigorated urban planning and design for the sake of shared prosperity and harmonious development. Urban planning is not about images but is a way to make a difference; it is a framework that transforms a vision into reality using space as a key resource for development and for engaging the people along the way. UN-Habitat promotes a reinvigorated notion of urban planning that involves sustainable use and equitable access to the 'commons' through appropriate policies and legislation. UN-Habitat supports countries to develop urban planning methods and systems to address current urbanization challenges such as population growth, urban sprawl, poverty, inequality, pollution, congestion, as well as urban biodiversity, urban mobility and energy.

Public spaces – including streets – are, and must be seen as, multi-functional areas for social interaction, economic exchange and cultural expression among a wide diversity of people. It is for urban planning to establish and organize these public spaces, and for urban design to facilitate and encourage their use, in the process enhancing a sense of identity and belonging. Safety and security are important dimensions to be considered in any such design, together with vital infrastructure (water, energy and communications). Important conditions for such planning to be successful are the contextual existence of good governance and management arrangements, as well as viable mechanisms to redirect part of the value gains into the nurturing of better quality public space.

The Five Principles of Sustainable Urban Neighbourhoods

1. Adequate space for streets and an efficient street network. The street network should occupy at least 30 per cent of the land and at least 18 km of street length per km².

2. High density. There should be at least 15,000 people per km², that is 150 people/ha or 61 people/acre.

3. Mixed land-use. At least 40 per cent of floor space should be allocated for economic use in any neighbourhood.

4. Social mix. The availability of houses in different price ranges and tenures in any given neighbourhood to accommodate different incomes; 20 to 50 per cent of the residential floor area should be for low cost housing and each tenure type should be not more than 50 per cent of the total.

5. Limited land-use specialization. This is to limit single function blocks or neighbourhoods; single function blocks should cover less than 10 per cent of any neighbourhood.

Source: UN-Habitat (2014). A New Strategy of Sustainable Neighbourhood Planning: Five Principles. Urban Planning Discussion Note 3

The Five Principles promoted by UN-Habitat foster sustainable urban development and are supported by three key features: a vibrant streetlife, walkability and affordability.

A vibrant street life: Supporting and promoting street life by enabling a variety of activities, conducive frontage and street width, and reducing the presence and role of private transport. The Five Principles encourage high density and mixed land use which boost a lively street life. A high population density generates sufficient industrial and commercial service demand while mixed land use provides adequate manufacturing and service space. Cities consistent with the Five Principles are able to link demand with supply and thus stimulate a prosperous city street life which satisfies people's material and spiritual needs and creates a safe and vibrant city life, a key feature of sustainable cities.

Walkability: Promoting walkability as a key measure to bring people into the public space, reduce congestion and boost local economy and interactions. A vibrant street life encourages people to walk or cycle around, while a rational street network enables necessary city services to be offered within walking or cycling distance and ensures security. High density, mixed land use and a social mix make proximity to work, home and services possible. Walkability helps to reduce automobile reliance and thus alleviates congestion, air pollution and resource depletion issues. Pedestrians add an incredible amount of vibrancy to city life.

Affordability: Supporting affordability of transactions and economic activities, as well as services and housing, by promoting proximity and reducing costs for a diverse group of users. Proximity, brought about by applying the Five Principles, helps to reduce wastage of time and resources and thus brings down general service costs. Furthermore, the social mix principle tries to promote a rational distribution of urban public resources and provides adequate housing for different revenue groups through city planning regulations - ensuring social equity and promoting economic efficiency. An affordable and accommodating city is a core feature of a sustainable city.

The Transformative Power of Urbanization: The New Urban Agenda

A new paradigm is evolving, enabling components of the New Urban Agenda which are mutually reinforcing and vital in ensuring prosperous cities. The New Urban Agenda focuses on policies and strategies that can result in effectively harnessing the power and forces of urbanization. Rules and legislation protect access to public spaces, urban planning and design provide adequate quantity and good quality public space, and urban finance and economy share values, promote income, investment, wealth creation and provide employment.[3]

Promoting socially inclusive, integrated, connected, accessible, environmentally sustainable and safe public spaces is key in achieving the new urban agenda. Good quality public space provides connectivity and access, protection from crime, shelter from climate, seclusion from traffic and the opportunity to rest, work and meet. Through its multi-functional and multi-disciplinary nature, public space offers a holistic view of the city, such as social inclusion, governance, health, safety, education, environment, transport, energy and the local urban economy. Therefore, in the spirit of the New Urban Agenda, cities and local governments should take a trans-disciplinary approach by working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and organizations, which should include civil society, academia and the private sector to ensure inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces.

Policy Directions and Main References on Public Space

The Right to the City. By recognizing and developing the positive potential of their public spaces, cities can enhance safety and security, create economic opportunity, improve public health, create diverse public environments and public democracy. In a century where the right to the city movement is increasingly being recognized, the development of cities where people of all income groups, social classes and ages can live safely, happily and in economic security is being pursued.

The Charter of Public Space. A useful working definition and description of public space is the one adopted by the *Charter of Public Space*:

'Public spaces are all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive. Public spaces are a key element of individual and social well-being, the places of a community's collective life, expressions of the diversity of their common, natural and cultural richness and a foundation of their identity. […] The community recognizes itself in its public places and pursues the improvement of their spatial quality.'

The charter is used as key policy reference in this toolkit and its text is presented in Annex 1.

The Report on the State of the World's Cities. An important emphasis on the role of public space as 'commons' is found in UN-Habitat's *2012/2013 Report on the State of the World's Cities*[4]:

'UN-Habitat's notion of urban planning involves sustainable use of, and equitable access to, the 'commons' through appropriate policies and schemes. It also gives any city tighter public control over the use of land, and contributes to the change in form and function of cities based on sustainable development principles. Urban planning can identify strategies and plans for optimal production of public goods, in the process contributing to social capital, enhancing sense of place, safety and security, integrating social groups (e.g., youth), and increasing the economic value of the areas where these goods are provided. It is in any city's best interest to promote public goods such as public transport, green areas, public spaces and 'urban commons' such as safety, security and political participation, in order to enhance quality of life and shared prosperity.'

'Commons' reinforce the social function of property and that of the city as a whole, while recognizing the dynamism of private assets. Laws, regulations and institutions as factors of restraint, opportunity and action act as the levers that can optimize the social function of property and balance it out with private rights and assets. It must be stressed here that this social function is not about ownership rights or their transactional implications. Rather, it is essentially about user rights for enhanced human value.

Urban Planning for City Leaders (UPCL). UN-Habitat has put forward a list of recommended steps to be followed in securing better public spaces in cities. These are contained in the UN-Habitat publication *Urban Planning for City Leaders* (2013)[5] under the chapter 'Define and Enhance Public Space', in which four broad categories of intervention are presented:

- Secure sufficient public space in advance
- Plan a system of public spaces
- Reap the benefits of well-designed streets
- Plan green public spaces

The Street as Public Spaces – Drivers of Prosperity. Furthermore, the issue of the street as an important public space has been explored in depth in a technical report entitled *Streets as Public Spaces – Drivers of Prosperity* (2013)[6]. The research looked at 30 cities spread globally, and found evidence to prove that prosperous cities are those that have allocated sufficient land to street development (with proper layout) including sufficient crossings along an appropriate, lengthy network. Cities that have failed to integrate the multi-functionality of streets tend to have less infrastructure development, lower productivity and a poorer quality of life. The report also shows that the lack of street connectivity increases social exclusion and generates inequalities in various spheres of life, especially access to basic services.

In addition, UN-Habitat has produced several tools related to public space such as:
- A practical placemaking guidebook entitled *Turning Spaces into Places*[7] as part of its Municipal Spatial Planning Support Program in Kosovo. The book was intended to increase awareness of the quality and importance of public spaces for mayors, urban planners, developers and all those concerned with the development of towns and cities. While the book explored the concept of placemaking as a way to enhance the quality of life in Kosovo's towns and cities, many of the principles are generally applicable to the contexts of other cities, particularly in developing countries.
- A study[8] exploring the development of streets as an effective entry point for slum upgrading, analyzing the impact of opening and improving a street in the slum

of Korogocho in Nairobi. This approach of street-driven slum upgrading has already been widely discussed through training and pilot initiatives in Haiti as well as in other contexts.

- A practical guide and checklist on conducting women's safety audits, a tool that enables a critical assessment of public spaces from a safety perspective to identify possible actions for change as well as building public awareness, ownership and commitment to implementing these actions at local and policy level.[9]

During the series of International Conferences on the *Future of Places* over 500 practitioners from 70 countries contributed to a set of key messages in advancing the public space agenda on the global level.

Public space features also predominantly in strategies of urban planning being promoted by UN-Habitat for sustainable neighbourhoods and planned cities extensions[10], where adequate space for streets is highlighted as a key precondition for sustainable and lively urban neighbourhoods.

Public space and other intergovernmental bodies. It is also important to note that other intergovernmental bodies, in addition to UN-Habitat's Governing Council, have stressed the importance of public space for sustainable urban development. As early as 2007, the Ministers responsible for urban development of the European Union adopted the *Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities*. The charter contains a strong and explicit statement in support of public space:

The quality of public spaces, urban man-made landscapes and architecture and urban development play an important role in the living conditions of urban populations. As soft locational factors, they
are important for attracting knowledge industry businesses, a qualified and creative workforce and for tourism. Therefore, the interaction of architecture, infrastructure planning and urban planning must be increased in order to create attractive, user-oriented public spaces and achieve a high standard in terms of the living environment, a "Baukultur". Baukultur is to be understood in the broadest sense of the word, as the sum of all the cultural, economic, technological, social and ecological aspects influencing the quality and process of planning and construction. However, this approach should not be limited to public spaces. Such a "Baukultur" is needed for the city as a whole and its surroundings. Both cities and government must make their influence felt. This is particularly important for the preservation of architectural heritage. Historical buildings, public spaces and their urban and architectural value must be preserved. Creating and safeguarding functional and well-designed urban spaces, infrastructures and services is a task which must be tackled jointly by the state, regional and the local authorities, as well as by citizens and businesses.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/themes/urban/leipzig_charter.pdf

The United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) established a Urban Strategic Planning Committee which has taken the opportunity to network, learn and develop a body of knowledge on public space. The goal was to influence global policy debates on the Post-2015 Agenda.

The committee supports the development of this toolkit as well as the related policy guidance on public spaces. UCLG also welcomes the involvement of urban planners and architects in advocating for public space and rethinking the methodologies

of the design response. UCLG believes that public space policies can be a means to both reshape cities and to improve the quality of life of citizens. Public space can make urban areas more attractive and create employment, such as through public markets; they can be a tool for inclusions, for example well-lit streets can contribute to women's sense of safety and freedom to move around the city and they can be a space for organizing communities, as well as cultural expression and diversity.

UCLG recalls and subscribes to the fact that:
• Public spaces are a public service and must be accessible and affordable to all citizens
• The public space debate needs to include a strong participatory approach
• The public space debate must be included in the global urban agenda and the processes towards Habitat III
• Public space can be a springboard for innovative and creative initiatives by communities and governments."[11]

Public Space and the Sustainable Development Goals[12]. The UN's Open Working Group charged with drafting the 2016-2030 Sustainable Development Goals proposed Goal 11 'Build cities and human settlements that are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.' One of the targets set out in the 2030 goal, is "by 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities". The importance of this work cannot be overestimated, as the Sustainable Development Goals are the new global agenda for international development cooperation.

Methodology

This toolkit is the result of a broad consultative process. UN-Habitat, in partnership with INU, organised an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Public Space in Rome in January 12-14, 2014. Approximately 30 public space experts, representing the different regions and disciplines, gathered to review the policy approach and this toolkit on public space.

During the Expert Group Meeting a selection of good practices was considered and compiled and has been included in the toolkit to inspire cities and local governments in developing, managing and enjoying good quality public spaces.

A reference group of experts on public space was established to assist in the development of the toolkit and a survey was conducted to gather inputs and comments on the draft toolkit.

Structure. The structure chosen for this work rests on three elements: Why, What, and How. These elements correspond to the toolkit's four main parts.

The first part *The Case for Public Space (*the "Why*)*, is organized around eleven headings. Each of them demonstrates, from a different perspective, the importance of public space for the quality of life and urban sustainability. This part is meant to help articulate a strong case for public space planning, investment and development.

The second part*, Goals, and Constraints,* and third part *Principles and Policies*, (the "What"), aims at defining the object and the goal (what we mean by public space, what we want to achieve), what constraints we should be aware of in reaching this goal and what principles and policies could guide our action.

The fourth part, *Turning Good Principles into Actions*, (the "How"), aims at showing, through real-life examples, how the same principles and policies can be translated into sustainable practices in different contexts, offering practical examples and references across cities and continents.

Format. Just like public space, this toolkit has been designed to be available to all and easily accessible. Therefore, its language is simple and clear and its text is illustrated by brief quotes and practical examples of cases on past or ongoing public space initiatives. A web-based version, which is intended to grow and be enriched with contributions from local and global actors, can be found at:
www.unhabitat.org
www.urbangateway.org/publicspace

Primary Sources. Three main sources have been used in preparing the Toolkit:

• Internal consultations within UN-Habitat and the review of several UN-Habitat toolkits of particular relevance to the subject of public space have provided an initial base of information. Lessons learned by UN-Habitat in field projects devoted to public space have proven particularly valuable.

• A second important source and point of reference has been the Charter of Public Space adopted by the Biennial of Public Space, containing simple and actionable principles for the creation, management and enjoyment of public spaces in cities.

• A third set of sources has been the contributions offered by a team of international experts, both during and immediately following the Expert Group Meeting on Public Space held in Rome in 12-14 January 2014.

Street market in Sorsogon, Philippines © UN-Habitat/Bernhard Barth

Vegetable market in Bangkok street, Thailand © Rasti Sedlak/Shutterstock.com

The case for public space

This Section makes a case for public space – it highlights the benefits of investing in public space and strengthens the arguments to improve the quality, quantity and distribution of public space in cities. It provides a clear definition of public spaces and lists some of the main obstacles that can constrain efforts to achieve more, better and more evenly-distributed public spaces in our cities, with particular regards to rapidly-growing and resource poor cities.

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"As we look forward to the future, we should carry with us four historical lessons of successful planned urbanization. Firstly, there should be effective urban rules to guarantee adequate social integration and avoid segregation. Secondly, about 50 per cent of urban land should be allocated to common goods, including streets, squares, markets and parks. Thirdly, it is important to have a well-designed network of public spaces, including streets, for efficient connectivity. Finally, it is also important to have well-designed urban density and mixed land uses, in order to ensure adequate proximity of the factors of production, i.e. labour, goods and services."

Dr. Joan Clos, UN-Habitat Executive Director

Making The Case for Public Space is a good way to offer advocates of public space at the international, national, local/city and community levels sound arguments to strengthen their efforts in seeking the improvement of the quantity,

quality and distribution of public spaces in cities.

The Case for Public Space is built on the following arguments:

- Public Space as the banner of urban civility
- Public Spaces are our urban commons
- Public Spaces promote income, investment and wealth creation.
- Public Spaces enhance environmental sustainability
- Public Space increases transportation efficiency
- Public Space improves public health
- Public Space enhances urban safety
- Public Spaces promote equity and social inclusion
- Public Spaces are tools for gender and age-friendly cities
- Public Spaces offer ideal opportunities to generate citizen involvement
- Public Spaces make for great cities

Public Space as the Banner of Urban Civility

Public Space is where people perform a number of functions that are shared with all: moving from place to place; enjoying public recreational and cultural opportunities; visiting other parts of the city or other private locations; shopping; meeting others or simply strolling.

Civitas is a Latin term that defines the community that lives in a shared environment and *Cives* is 'the citizen'. Civility[13] is a derived term that qualifies both attributes: the citizen's behaviour as well as the collective behaviour of a community. However, civility does not take place in a vacuum; it traditionally occurred in the *Urbs*, the citizens' living environment. Quality public spaces can lead to civilized behaviour, and civilized behaviour can lead to quality public spaces. Nowhere more than in public spaces is a city's civility displayed. Therefore, public space is the banner of urban civility.

Sheffield peace garden, London, UK
@ Flickr/johnthescone

Public Spaces as our Urban Commons

A prosperous city offers a profusion of public goods and develops policies and actions for a sustainable use of, and equitable access to, 'the commons', such as public space. It is in any city's best interest to promote public goods such as transport, green areas, spaces and 'urban commons' such as safety, security and political participation to enhance quality of life and shared prosperity. The size and quality of a city's overall public space acts as a good indicator of shared prosperity.

UN-Habitat's 2012 *State of the World Cities Report*[14] advocates for:

> *…the need of cities to enhance the public realm, expand public goods and consolidate rights to the 'commons' for all as a way to expand prosperity. This comes in response to the observed trend of enclosing or restricting these goods and commons in enclaves of prosperity, or depleting them through unsustainable use.*

Thus, public spaces in our cities deserve priority attention. Public space should serve all urban residents, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Furthermore, the quantity and quality of public space is not a given – it requires attention and care. Unlike private property, public spaces belong to us all. Every investment in public space, public or private, increases our shared urban capital. Public space is public capital that we can use, transform, augment and pass on to future collective owners.

However, the *State of the World Cities Report*[15] suggests that the consumption of peri-urban space by massive low-density development and massive commercial outlets and the encroachment on ecologically fragile areas are examples of how land, environmental and landscape assets are being eroded in an irreversible way. Even long-established public spaces such as city parks are threatened by development. Fortunately, public reaction to these threats testify to citizens' perception of public space as a common good to be enjoyed as a basic need and to be transmitted to the next generations. Few other instances are equally powerful testimonials to the spirit of the original definition of sustainable development.

Public Spaces as Generators of Income, Investment and Wealth Creation

Ultimately, public space systems can only be sustainable if adequate resources are available for their creation, expansion, management and care. A sustained flow of such resources can only, in the final analysis, come from a city's own income. In turn, such income, generally in the form of taxes, derives from economic expansion and increased property values. Economic expansion comes from investment and investment depends on such factors as mobility, safety and attractiveness. This is the virtuous public space cycle.

Public space provides important but often underestimated benefits to all forms of entrepreneurship and business, both formal and informal. In particular, public spaces can be places where informal business can be carried out in an orderly and legitimate way, thus providing poorer urban dwellers with precious livelihood opportunities. Informal trading can be regularized and legitimized, taking place in recycled public spaces and more traditional municipal markets.

Street market in Ngara, Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat/Cecilia Andersson

Public Spaces as Producers of Environmental Sustainability

The negative consequences of excessive paved surfaces in cities are well known. Parks, gardens and playgrounds, particularly when well distributed in an urban area, are essential antidotes to this problem and open and green spaces perform vital ecological functions.

A well-planned city-wide public space system can create green networks to regenerate ecological systems and restore environmental connectivity (wildlife, sanctuaries and water courses) and support biodiversity in urban areas. This can, in turn, create ample benefits for the citizenry at large and attract visitors. The role that public spaces can play in the provision of ecological services is extremely important in the mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate change. A city with a strong web of productive and natural green areas that are linked to forms of active urban stewardship is better suited to tackle some of the challenges posed by climate change.

In many cities we are already well beyond the nineteenth-century model of an industrialist concept of open public spaces: through the spread of urban agriculture, localized resource circuits involving water, food and waste have been established and been emphasized and exposed to urban residents. City residents have also been able to rebuild the renaturalized urban spaces bringing the knowledge, experience and practice of ecosystem management back to their daily lives.

Public Space Increases Transportation Efficiency

Public space can reduce congestion, travel time and road accidents through designing and managing appropriate and distinct transport modes and prioritizing routes for walking and cycling. One of the fundamental functions of public space is that it allows people to move around and to gain access to areas on foot, by bicycle, by car, motorbike or public transport. A key objective of urban design and management is, therefore, to reconcile the needs of these often conflicting modes of transport. Well-designed streets and public spaces encourage walking and cycling and have the power to create a safe environment by reducing vehicle speeds and use. Concepts such as shared space or home zones are demonstrating the benefits of redesigning streets for shared use for all modes of transportation.[16]

Well-designed streets and public spaces encourage walking and cycling, London, UK © UN-Habitat/Jose Chong

Public Space Improves Public Health

Quality public spaces improve people's health by providing opportunities for physical activity and play, making walking more attractive, reducing stress and providing a calming environment. Access to a good-quality, well-maintained network of public spaces can help to improve physical and mental health by encouraging people to walk more, to play, or simply enjoy the environment. In other words, open spaces are powerful weapons in the fight against many forms of ill-health. For example, play is crucial for many aspects of children's development; from the acquisition of social skills, experimentation and the confrontation and resolution of emotional crises, to moral understanding, cognitive skills such as language and comprehension, and of course physical skills. Green public space provides an opportunity for people to be close to nature, with the associated positive impact that this can bring in terms of mental health and the simple pleasure of experiencing nature in an urban situation.[17]

Public Space Enhances Safety

A mixed and diverse public space provides a place that is vibrant and busy and automatically reduces insecurity. Fear of crime, and to a lesser extent, crime itself can deter people, not just vulnerable groups, from using good-quality public spaces. Children, youth and the elderly, for example, are often prevented from using parks, squares and streets because of fear of crime and violence. In addition, women often face particular concerns and, due to fear of crime and violence, are often restricted when it comes to entering public space in some areas. Physical changes to, and the better management of, public space can help to allay these fears. In particular, public space can reduce perceptions of insecurity by attracting a large cross section of people at all times of day.

Good public space encourages people to be more physically active, Japan © Flickr/Adamina

A busy park alleviates feelings of insecurity. Pretoria, South Africa © UN-Habitat/Jose Chong

Public Spaces as Promoters of Equity and Social Inclusion

Equity involves systematic (re)distribution of the benefits of growth or development, with legal frameworks ensuring a 'level playing field' and institutions protecting the rights of the poor, minorities and vulnerable groups. The promotion of equity also involves enhancing socioeconomic equality and providing for civic participation by all. Equity reduces alienation and exclusion, paving the way for empowerment and engagement of all social groups and for the realization of the full potential of the entire population.

The social process that comes with the opportunities made available to all through public goods, such as public space, enables the population to remain engaged and to stake a claim on the city. So the way a city shapes, and is shaped by its population, will largely depend on whether urban systems provide all residents with equal opportunities for development.

The social relations in public space and how a diversity of groups use streets and public spaces of the city reflect class, gender, age, race and ethnic differences.

At the city level, social inclusion provides an environment where individuals and social groups feel they belong to the larger whole, have access to 'commons' and are free to fully engage in collective affairs. As cities grow and densify, access to well-designed and pleasant public spaces is becoming an increasingly important asset. This is particularly true for those residents whose individual living circumstances, such as the home and its immediate surroundings, are lacking in quality and comfort, or who are in special need of decent infrastructure and communal spaces for health, recreation and socialization. Improving access to good public spaces for the most vulnerable urban residents is a powerful tool to improve equity, promote inclusion and combat discrimination in the city. Difficulties in securing access to adequate and affordable housing for all should be compensated by generous provision of good quality public space and public services.

A road island serving as a mini market in Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat

Women at a market, Dire Dawa, Ethiopia
© Flickr/A. Davey

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Public Spaces as Tools for Women and Age-Friendly Cities

Grounds gained for women under the rubric of equality can be multiplied by the affirmation of the right to the city. Public space can act as the vehicle for women and girls and their right to the city. Streets and public spaces are excellent tools for achieving women- and age-friendly cities. Women, for example, use the streets and public spaces more frequently and for a much greater variety of purposes than men. Women are more likely to split their time between work and family and are, therefore, more likely to use the city's network of public spaces, sidewalks, bus routes, subway lines and trams than men. For this, they require efficient and secure public transport as well as safe streets and public spaces. Thus, a women-friendly city is one that is especially attentive to women's needs but it is also, of course, a city with better services and with better and safer public spaces.

Women-friendly initiatives reveal how imaginative and caring a city can be if specific attention is given to the intersection of public space and understanding women's needs. Approaches may vary from the obvious, such as better street lighting, to specific initiatives and campaigns focusing on promoting women friendly streets and public spaces. Cities as diverse as Vienna and Seoul have received awards for their work on women-friendly public-space design and improving women's accessibility of public space and mobility.

Public spaces have always attracted young people. Most young people use public space

actively and frequently and it is one of the few havens where young people can 'hang out' without parental control. For children and young people, the barriers and restrictions on access to public spaces are complex and numerous. They include planning and design as well as social elements, which have impacted upon young people's access to or desire for activity in public spaces. Depending upon their age, factors affecting young people's use of public space include the traffic density on residential streets; fear of crime or violence; lack of spaces in residential areas designed for children or teenagers' use; the commercialisation of children and young people's recreation, leisure and play outlets.

Life in the city can be difficult for older people due to limited or restricted mobility. Existing public spaces may not adequately accommodate activities related with the physical needs of the elderly. It is important to address and understand the needs of senior citizens with regards to leisure, social interaction and mobility, for example, they may need more public bathrooms, brighter lighting, more time to cross the street and more places to sit and rest.

Elderly men relax in a park in Faro, Portugal
© Flickr/Pedro Ribeiro Simões

Public Spaces as Opportunities for Generating Citizen Involvement

Participation in city plans and city planning has long been advocated as an essential tool to make planning and urban governance responsive, transparent and accountable - in one word, 'sustainable'. Participation by civil society has the potential to empower communities, build social capital, lead to better design of urban projects and allow for citizens' concerns to be incorporated into development strategies. While participation is more difficult in the case of urban transformations entirely conducted by the private sector – for example, a new office building or a housing complex – it is much more feasible, relevant and effective in all cases where urban transformations have to do with public spaces. Often, citizens mobilize over a public space they want to create or maintain.

Conversely, public space creation, management and enjoyment are ideal opportunities for the involvement of citizens, both at the city-wide and at the community level. One important example of the unique potential of public space for generating involvement is given by the practice of 'urban stewardship'. Stewardship occurs across the entire landscape and is conducted on both public and private lands. Civic urban stewardship is conducted by citizens on public or semi-public land within higher density urban areas. Citizens of all ages volunteer for projects and work on spaces they do not personally own and this includes park management, open space restoration, street tree planting and the development of community gardens.

Public Spaces as Generators of Great Cities

When we think of great cities, we invariably think of their public spaces: avenues, boulevards, streets, bridges, rivers, squares, parks, gardens, playgrounds and public buildings. Aside from notable visual landmarks, the quality of spaces surrounding a city's less-celebrated built environment can make the difference between drudgery and attractiveness.

Cities become great when they develop a great public space system. In addition, the personality of all great cities is not solely determined by their buildings. Beauty, for example, is the result not only of great features but also of harmony and order. These qualities, in cities, often correspond to the patterns according to which streets, the public spaces *par excellence*, have been planned. Aside from scenic perspectives, regular street patterns (particularly when they are based on more minute and predictable grids) are great generators of physical development and also allow both citizens and visitors to orient themselves, to feel at ease in the city and to be more inclined to explore and walk.

The American Planning Association Celebrates Great Public Spaces

Every year, the American Planning Association (APA) holds an award competition for Great Places in America — streets, neighbourhoods and public spaces. Here is how the Association describes it: *"APA's flagship program celebrates places of exemplary character, quality, and planning. Places are selected annually and represent the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, community involvement, and a vision for tomorrow"*. APA Great Places offer better choices for where and how people work and live. They are enjoyable, safe, and desirable. They are places where people want to be — not only to visit, but to live and work every day. America's great streets, neighbourhoods and public spaces are defined by many criteria, including architectural features, accessibility, functionality, and community involvement.

Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia is one of the award-winning Great Public Spaces awarded by APA in 2014. The market is situated in a complex of buildings known as the Terminal Train Station and is easily accessible via public transit and is home to more than 76 small merchants. More than 6 million people visit the market each year and revenues are reinvested within the region.

Reading Terminal Market center court
© Wikipedia/Bruce Andersen

Ibirapuera Park, São Paulo, Brazil © Filipe Frazao/Shutterstock.com

Goals and constraints

The previous section illustrated the importance of public space in promoting civility, equity, public capital, great cities, citizen involvement, environmental sustainability, safety, inclusiveness, health and wealth creation.

This section aims at suggesting the goal public space advocates should pursue, the principles that could guide their action, the constraints that might have to be faced, and the policies that could originate from such goals and principles.

The principles are based largely, but not exclusively, on the Charter of Public Space.
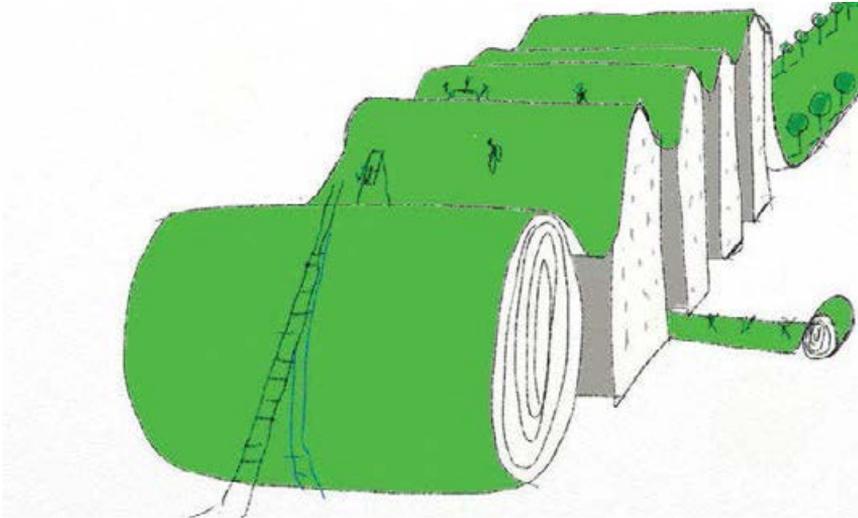
Greening the city © Pietro Garau

Definitions Come First

It is difficult to establish a goal, even less a set of useful policies, if you cannot define what your aim is. Authors, researchers and professionals have produced a variety of definitions for public space. Most of them reflect a particular outlook. Some, for example, emphasize the role of design in producing good public spaces. Others tend to adopt a broad definition, alluding to public space as all those urban places that are capable of attracting urban residents. Still more will refuse a universal definition, stressing that the concept of public space varies according to different historic and cultural circumstances.

At this juncture, for a definition of public space, it is helpful to refer to one of the most recent international definitions in this area offered by The Charter of Public Space:

"Public spaces are all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive".

The above definition captures the spirit and essence of public space and is consistent with the 11 features of public space illustrated in the preceding section ("The Case for Public Space"). The notion of public space as a common good implies its accessibility by all with no direct cost to the user, and also its spirit of public service without any purpose other than contributing to the overall quality of urban life.

The term 'place' is used to allude to the quality all good public spaces should possess. Some, such as public libraries, cannot be properly defined as spaces. Both publicly-and privately-owned public spaces have been considered in arriving at this definition, with the conclusion that public ownership guarantees more stable access and enjoyment over time – many privately-operated open spaces and facilities are subject to restrictions not governed by the community – and that public ownership is a better guarantee of the "public good"nature of public spaces. The absence of a profit motive is an integral part of the definition because many private spaces open to the public are created to attract consumers, rather than for the benefit and enjoyment of all citizens.

Types of Public Spaces

Under this definition we can distinguish a variety of different types of public space, which can be regrouped into six main categories, starting from those that guarantee maximum access and versatility.

Of course, this classification is open to scrutiny. We must always remember, for example, that public space attributions can vary across regions and cultures.

Streets as Public Spaces. A first category includes the public spaces that are, thanks to their versatility, often used most intensely in our daily lives. They are:
* Streets, avenues and boulevards
* Squares and plazas
* Pavements
* Passages and galleries
* Bicycle paths

These are public spaces in the fullest sense of the word because they are publicly owned and maintained, accessible and enjoyable by all without charge and at all hours, day and night. Public spaces in this category are also the most versatile in terms of public enjoyment: they can host open-air markets, performances, events, political rallies, demonstrations and informal sector activities. They also allow for an essential urban function – mobility. Thus, they can be defined as multi-use public spaces. One critical feature of these kinds of spaces is that they are the ones most vulnerable to one use dominating others such as motor vehicles prevailing over pedestrian use and endangering non-motorized mobility.

Public Open Spaces. A second category comprises open public spaces – the urban features that instinctively come to mind when we think of public spaces and that we also use on a daily basis. They include:
* Parks
* Gardens
* Playgrounds
* Public beaches
* Riverbanks and waterfronts

These spaces are also available to all without charge and are normally publicly owned and maintained. In many cases, however, they are accessible during daylight hours only.

Public Urban Facilities. A third category of conventional public spaces comprises high-maintenance public facilities that are publicly-owned and maintained and are accessible to users without any charge, such as:
* Public libraries
* Civic/community centres
* Municipal markets
* Public sports facilities

In many cases, these facilities are only accessible during daylight hours or operating hours.

This list should be completed with at least three other 'non-physical categories' of public space.

The 'Space of the Public'. The first one is public space as the *space of the public*. Here, the term 'public' is not intended to refer to 'the general public' but, rather, as the *public sector realm*. In this sense, the commons are not simply goods and places but also the social pact by which citizens delegate authority, contribute resources for the common good and entrust their management to locally-elected officials. Whenever this social pact is broken or compromised, this particular public space is threatened as is democracy itself.

The City itself. The second category is the *city as public space.* This holistic view is important because it supports a comprehensive approach to public space and the idea of the city as a public good. This view is also germane to the arguments in favour of 'the right to the city', where the city is viewed as the arena and expression of a physical and symbolic space devoted to all, shared by all and entrusted to all.

Cyberspace. The third 'non-physical category' of public space is cyberspace. Public space has always been the locus of encounter, interaction and communication. Cyberspace, through the internet and social networks, offers new opportunities for virtual encounter and interaction that can lead to the multiplication of 'real' interactions in 'real' space. It is argued, for example, that political engagement, the fundamental basis of democracy, is greatly enhanced by the use of web-related technology. On the other hand, there is a risk that cyber communication may replace, or at least limit, physical interaction. This contradiction is also reflected in the Charter. Para 31(k): the conviction that the Web and social networks have become the new public spaces, to the extent that the traditional ones are regarded as irrelevant or, at the very least, outmoded. Cf. para 20: 'Designing public spaces also means taking into account alternative and creative practices based on new techniques of communication and urban usage.'

This toolkit is focused on the physical public space, but will also dwell on the intersection between physical and non-planned public spaces and how they can support each other.

Are parliaments public spaces?

It has been argued that the highest expression of democratic life – parliaments and city council chambers – should also be considered as public spaces not solely because their sessions are open to the public without any charge, but because of their high civic significance as the public spaces of democracy. In this sense, parliaments and all open arenas of political debate, however defined in different cultures, should be considered both highly symbolic and tangible examples of "public space".

Inside the parliament building, New Delhi, India
© The White House/Flickr

Public spaces

- Are the physical web and support for the movement and the stationing of people and means of transport, from which the vitality of the city depends.
- Host market and accessible commercial activities in fixed premises, public venues and other services (collective and not, public and private), in which the socio-economic dimension of the city is always expressed.
- Offer precious opportunities for recreation, physical exercise and regeneration for all such as parks, gardens, public sports facilities.
- Help promote education and culture such as museums, public libraries.
- Are places of individual and collective memory, in which the identity of the people is mirrored and finds sustenance, growing in the knowledge that they are a community.
- Promote conviviality, encounter and freedom of expression.
- Are an integral and meaningful part of the urban architecture and landscape, with a determinant role in the overall image of the city.

The above characteristics represent the principles available to public administrations on which to build integrated policies. They contribute to a broad range of urban planning, morphological and functional upgrading of the urban fabric and of social and economic regeneration.

Source: Charter of Public Space, para. 14-15

The Web-enabled Public Space of Scientific Information

One exciting opportunity offered by the Web is access to the public space of scientific knowledge. This has always been a great barrier for researchers and scientists in the developing world with limited access to expensive scientific publications and periodicals. It was this problem that led the Pakistani Nobel laureate for Physics, the late Abdu Salam, to found the Trieste International Centre for Theoretical Physics.

Salam would be pleased to know that today free access to scientific information and research is made much easier thanks to the web. The Spring Open portal, for example, provides free access and opportunities to contribute to at least 185 scientific journals covering a wide spectrum of disciplines.

This is a sterling example of 'non-physical public space': space for the mind that is free, not-for-profit and accessible to all.

The Goal: Improving Public Space Supply, Quality and Distribution

The overall goal is to support local governments in creating/promoting socially inclusive, integrated, connected, environmentally-sustainable and safe streets and public spaces, especially for the most vulnerable.

Solid knowledge about the condition and availability of public spaces in our cities is scarce. This is why Policy Tool 2 in this toolkit is devoted to public space assessment, particularly in terms of surveys and appropriate indicators.

At the same time, we all know that both the supply and quality of public spaces in our cities need to be enhanced. In addition, in virtually all cities both the supply and quality of public spaces tend to decrease as one leaves the city centre, and they are inversely proportional to the income levels of residents.

Therefore, while the goal of improving the supply and quality of public spaces appears obvious, what qualifies this proposed goal is its emphasis, through the added term *distribution*, on having public spaces perform the role, stated in the first part of this toolkit, of promoters of equity and social inclusion.

Obviously, in this context quality refers not only to design but also to maintenance and enjoyment.

Constraints to the Creation, Management and Enjoyment of Good Public Spaces

While developing countries may face more difficult and immediate problems in terms of public space quantity, quality and distribution, there are basic constraints that can imperil success in the creation, management and enjoyment of public space initiatives in all cities and that apply generally to all urban situations.

The following constraints have been identified in the Charter of Public Space and subsequent policy findings, which confirm some of the considerations made in the previous section:
- Commoditisation of public space, such as the proliferation of specialized facilities for shopping and leisure and private sports facilities;
- Decreasing resources for the creation and maintenance of public spaces due to weakened fiscal revenues and the frequent inefficiency of public spending;
- Declining inclination of citizens to affirm their rights;
- Weakening of social cohesion, little regard for public goods on the part of large portions of the citizenry and increasing frequency of acts of vandalism;
- Pressures exercised by speculative real estate interests ;
- Design choices that ignore multifunctional criteria and structural connections;

- Difficulties encountered by many local authorities in exercising a role of effective public leadership;
- Sectoralization of administrative structures and the frequent lack of communication between various departments of government;
- Vulnerability of many public spaces to improper uses, such as the transformation of public squares into parking lots; the vehicular occupation of spaces reserved for pedestrians; the encroachment on public spaces by restaurant and commercial activities outside permitted areas;
- Perceived or real insecurity in public spaces, with consequent effects of limited use, abandonment and decline;
- The conviction that the internet and social networks have become the new public spaces to the extent that the traditional ones are regarded as irrelevant or, at the very least, outmoded;
- Absence of directions and references, which may cause a condition of deep disorientation in users of urban space;
- Competition for space by different uses and users, resulting in the privatization of public space;
- The weakness of the public actors and lack of planning and policy direction on public space;
- Weak regulatory and legislative frameworks for public-space creation and preservation, such as legal frameworks that give priority to private interests or private property;
- Lack of mechanisms for conflict resolution over use and realisation of public space;
- Modern urban design/planning has created artificial public or open spaces, which are not easy to use and maintain because of their scale and poor functionality.

Public Space in Different Urban Contexts

This toolkit takes the view that public space role and problems are universal rather than context specific. However, it is important to keep in mind that this toolkit is mainly developed to assist fast-growing and resource-poor cities in developing countries. In such cities, public space needs to be addressed not only as a standalone issue but also as part of the urban development priorities.

Also, no city is entirely like any other. Each has its own characteristics that respond to the particularities of the territory and dwellers. In this regard, public spaces have specific features that relate to the construction of the city. Geographic conditions, cultural behaviours, legal framework, economic development and existent urban fabric all influence the creation and usage of public spaces.

UN-Habitat studies have demonstrated that the amount of land allocated to public spaces in developing countries is limited. There are no proper mechanisms to ensure their creation, protection and maintenance. Moreover, encroachment on existing ones aggravates the problem of public space availability. However, the privatization of public spaces is a common trend in many cities and towns, mainly as an attempt to prevent crime. This creates a segregated and fragmented city.

Existing public spaces will often need to be enhanced and revitalized or modified; others will have to be planned and designed with new urban extension plans. Three broad categories can be distinguished: Urban Extension, Slum Upgrading, Urban Transformation and Densification and City-wide Strategies.

Urban Extension: Definition and Protection of Public Space. Rapidly-urbanizing countries need to increase the supply of urban land in order to accommodate expected population growth. Many countries need to plan in advance to extend serviced urban land. A well-planned city extension can guarantee space to house the new urban population and prevent slum formation. At the conception of the plan, public spaces for streets and open spaces need to be allocated. Adequate quantity and efficient layout of public spaces support efficient urban systems, access to public services and enhance social capital.

Based on comparative research across cities globally, it is recommended that around 50 per cent of the land is allocated to public use, where 25-30 per cent is allocated to streets and 15-20 per cent to other public open spaces. The percentage will vary depending on each particular context. Also, public space quality evolves with the development and consolidation of the city. Public space is often the first element defined in a new urban expansion but its development and improvement is rarely much advanced before private spaces are completed. In many contexts, they are never improved, paved or organised and they are often grabbed and privatised before they are developed. In many cities, particularly in the developing world, urban expansions are implemented without a clear public space plan and it is hard to extract public space from private landowners when legal frameworks and the enforcement of plans are weak.

Slum Upgrading, Urban Transformation & Densification. When cities undertake urban transformation and densification projects, it is important to assess the quantity and quality of public space that can support such processes. Studies show the importance of public spaces to life in dense environments. They perform as an extension of the house, allowing for informal and arranged encounters. Urban transformation and intensification processes need to incorporate urban design to maximize the benefits of public spaces. Well-designed public spaces can facilitate the enjoyment of neighbourhood life and better support density of activities, uses and users.

In general, slums are characterised by a very limited amount of public space, since land is occupied for residential and private uses, with weak or no provision for public uses and services. Public space is crowded and supports many different activities and functions.

In such contexts, public spaces can become a highly symbolic element of civic engagement and citizenship, as well as an important anchor of upgrading interventions.

Boys play table hockey game on a street in Debark, Ethiopia
© Vlad Karavaev/Shutterstock.com

In more consolidated parts of the city, urban transformation plans can be developed to increase residential and economic densities and promote more compact communities. Some cities have utilized public spaces as an entry point for densification operations. In such cases, urban transformation and densification strategies stimulate an urban structure that minimizes transport and service delivery costs, optimizes the use of land and supports the protection and organization of urban open spaces.

City-wide Strategies. Many cities have realized the importance of well-designed and maintained public spaces in order to improve living conditions. However, public spaces need to be connected in a network which guarantees availability and accessibility. A holistic view of the city and its public space network is fundamental to maximize the potential of the existing infrastructure. The urban tissue is generated by the public spaces network, which contributes to construct the distinctive urban image of the city.

Cities need to prioritize public space strategies and plans, in order to guarantee accessibility for all. Local government, in partnership with the different stakeholders, need to increase public space awareness and coordinate within their different departments. In many cases, there is no clear understanding of the role of different departments nor coordination between them. For instance, pavements are the responsibility of the Road Department, safety of the Emergency Services Department, trees of the Environment Department, cleaning and safety of the Health Department, licensing of the Local Business Department etc. In such cases, clear coordination mechanisms need to be developed to improve communication between the different departments. It is comforting to note that some local governments have created unified public space agencies.

Amagertorv square, dating from the middle ages, is the central junction in Copenhagen, Denmark © Wikipedia/Furya

Car, bicycle and pedestrian lanes in Amsterdam, Netherlands © kavalenkava volha/Shutterstock.com

Principles and policies

This section highlights a selection of principles and policy tools that can help address constraints and achieve better public spaces effectively.

The answer to the dilemma between goals and constraints is good policy tools. Here are some suggestions that could help address constraints and enable the achievement of more, better and more evenly-distributed good public spaces in our cities in an effective way.

Policy-making processes can be very time-consuming, and effective planning is essential. When legislation is required to implement a policy, this can take considerable time from initial idea to implementation of the policy. The figure below shows the policy process.

Figure 1: The Policy Process

This selection of policy tools is divided in two categories. The first one includes policy tools of a general nature, pretty much applicable to all urban contexts. The second one contains policy considerations tailored to different combinations of demographic and economic growth.

General Policies

POLICY TOOL 1: Knowing Where We Are to Know Where to Go – City-wide Public Space Surveys

The enjoyment of public spaces is a fundamental ingredient for determining and applying indicators of their quality, to be employed throughout the entire creation-management-enjoyment cycle[18].

The goal is to inform on how to improve a city's supply, quality and distribution of public spaces. This is 'where we want to go'. But we cannot chart a course unless we know where we are now. Very few cities possess reliable and updated methods to determine the amount of public space available per inhabitant according to the different types of public spaces introduced previously and, even more important, on the distribution of public spaces in different sectors, districts and types of settlements.

The potential of public space to fulfil its role of promoter of equity can be best fulfilled by correcting imbalances in the supply, quality and distribution of public spaces in different sections, neighbourhoods and settlements of the city. This is why public space surveys have to cover the whole urban area.

In a general survey, it might be advisable to start by identifying areas already used as public spaces and those possessing the potential for becoming good public spaces. These areas can be identified on a city map. Existing public spaces can be identified according to the typology offered in this toolkit: streets, avenues, squares, parks, gardens, public libraries etc. Potential public spaces are undeveloped or derelict sites, particularly those zoned for public use.

These maps can be produced relatively easily and can be powerful tools for assessing both the quantity, quality and distribution of public spaces in different areas of the city. Public-space surveys and maps can also be used to mobilize interest and participation at the neighbourhood level. *Map Your Public Spaces campaigns* could be conducted by schools to sensitize the youngest members of the community to the value and quality of their own public spaces. Similarly, public space surveys should be a must for schools of planning and architecture as well as for other disciplines such as urban geography, urban economics, environmental studies, urban anthropology and sociology.

In 2010, Gehl Architects and EMBARQ conducted a public space survey in Istanbul, Turkey. The survey focused on three areas: city qualities, walkability and recreation. The recommendations which emanated from the public space survey included:

- improve accessibility
- reduce traffic
- promote walking
- promote public transport
- promote waterfront
- promote attractive public spaces
- promote historical value
- promote multi-functionality
- promote variety of activities.

Source: EMBARQ and Gehl architects (2010). Istanbul: An accessible city – a city for people.

As part of the survey, an analysis of urban legislation, by-laws and plans is needed to identify counterproductive provisions and their impact. Among them are the rules on setbacks, street sections and the use of public space by different users.

POLICY TOOL 2: Measuring the Quality of Public Space.

Even more difficult for a satisfying survey of public space ('knowing where we are') is to determine the quality of public space. In most cases, a thorough city-wide survey will reveal that both the quality and supply of public spaces decreases in connection to two parameters: average income of residents and distance from the city centre.

While surveys and maps can offer a general picture of the position and type of public spaces in a city, indicators are numeric expressions that can offer useful information on the availability and quality of public spaces and help identify performance targets for the future.

Different categories and types of public spaces will lend themselves to different kinds of measurement. At the same time, the same indicators will have to measure our public space goal: supply, quality, distribution, connectivity and accessibility.

In evaluating thousands of public spaces around the world, the Project for Public Spaces found that successful ones have four key qualities: they are **accessible**; people are engaged in **activities**; the space is **comfortable** and has a good image; and it is a **sociable** place, one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit[19].

Table 1. Public Space Indicators

Indicators	Supply	Quality	Distribution
Avenues	Length per square kilometre, citywide	Noise levels	Length per selected city quadrant
Boulevards		Aesthetic impact	City quadrant/total city area ratio
Streets	Length per square kilometre, citywide	Percentage of paved over unpaved surface, total city area	Length per square kilometre, selected city quadrants over city-wide Indicator
	Percentage of land allocated to streets	Proportion of adequately-lit streets, city wide	Percentage of paved over unpaved surface, selected city quadrant /total city area ratio
		Proportion of shop-lined street fronts, city wide	Proportion of adequately-lit streets, selected city quadrants
		Proportion of blind street fronts, city wide	Adequately-lit streets ratio, selected city quadrant/city- wide
			Proportion of shop-lined street fronts, selected city quadrants
			Proportion of blind street fronts, selected city quadrants
Bicycle Paths	Kilometres per 1000 inhabitants, city-wide	Proportion of reserved and protected paths over total supply	Kilometres per 1000 inhabitants, selected city quadrants
			Proportion of reserved and protected paths over total supply, selected city quadrants
			City/quadrant supply ratio
Public Transport	Kilometres of tram lines/subway lines per 10,000 inhabitants, city-wide	Frequency	Kilometres of tram lines/subway lines per 10,000 inhabitants, selected city quadrant; Total City/City Quadrant Ratio
	Kilometres of BRT lanes per 10,000 inhabitants, city-wide		Kilometres of BRT lanes per 10,000 inhabitants, selected city quadrants Total City/City Quadrant Ratio
Squares	Surface per square kilometre, city-wide	Non-prevalence of traffic functions	Surface per square kilometre, selected city quadrants
Sidewalks	Median width, city-wide	Percentage of paved over unpaved surface, total city area	Median width, selected city quadrants
	Sidewalk/street area ratio, city-wide	Lighting	Sidewalk/street area ratio, selected city quadrants
	% of obstacle-free sidewalk		

Table 1. Public Space Indicators continued

Indicators	Supply	Quality	Distribution
Street Crossings	Street connectivity is between 80-120 intersections per square kilometre	Number of intersections per square kilometre Crossing/wheelchair accesses, number over total city area Streetlight sound alerts, number over total city area	Crossing/wheelchair accesses, number per square kilometre over city area indicator
Trees	Numbers of trees per kilometre of road/ street		Number of trees per km. of road/street, selected city quadrant and quadrant/city ratio
Parks and Gardens	Surface over total city population Proportion of population farther away than 200 - 300 metres from an open green area or a city park	Park maintenance budget per inhabitant	Surface over population of selected city quadrants City quadrant/total city ratio Proportion of population farther away than 200 - 300 metres from a city park, selected city quadrants, and as city quadrant/total city ratio
Playgrounds	Total number per 1000 inhabitants		Total number per 1000 inhabitants, selected city quadrants City quadrant/total city ratio
Public Sports Facilities	Total number per 1000 inhabitants, city-wide	Free access, availability and status of maintenance	Total number per 1000 inhabitants, selected city quadrants
Free Beaches	Total length per 1000 inhabitants, city-wide	Swimmable waters, unimpeded access	Average time by public transport to nearest water/ lakefront, by selected city quadrant

A set of Indicators on Street Patterns and Public Space

Detailed indicators have been developed to measure the relationship between urban quality and street networks. One example is the April 2013 UN-Habitat working paper *The Relevance of Street Patterns and Public Space in Urban Areas*, which assessed 30 cities according to the following indicators: total land area; total streets area; proportion of streets area; total streets length; streets density; average streets width; total intersections and intersection density.

Source: http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/StreetPatterns.pdf

Public Space Quality Criteria

Jan Gehl has developed criteria for assessing public space qualities in cities. The criteria are divided into three groups: protection, comfort and enjoyment. Protection focuses on how to minimize unpleasant experiences. Comfort deals with the quality of walking and staying in a place. Enjoyment covers the human scale, enjoying the positive aspect of the climate and the sensory experience of the place.

Protection:
1. Protection against traffic and accidents - feeling safe
2. Protection against crime and violence - feeling secure
3. Protection against unpleasant sensory experience

Comfort:
4. Opportunities to walk
5. Opportunities to stand/stay
6. Opportunities to sit
7. Opportunities to see
8. Opportunities to talk and listen
9. Opportunities to play and exercise

Enjoyment:
10. Human scale
11. Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate
12. Aesthetic quality and positive sensory experience

Source: Gehl, Jan (2010) Cities for People. Island Press.

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) Space Shapers Guide

Measuring quality means involving a variety of interested people to define how well a space works. Through this process you can learn about the requirements of different groups of people to understand if their needs are being met. It will identify both good and bad characteristics and stimulate new ideas for improvements and how it could be managed.

This process will help to develop good relations between the users and the people who run the space and will help prioritise improvement. By measuring quality you are basing such decisions on good evidence.

A site visit is an integral part of the process. The visit prepares the participants to fill out a questionnaire which records individual perceptions of the space. These are captured by rating the site against 41 characteristics, grouped into the eight sections:

*   access: finding your way and getting about
*   use: what activities and opportunities the space has to offer
*   other people: how the space caters for different needs
*   maintenance: how clean and cared for the space is
*   environment: how safe and comfortable the space is
*   design and appearance: what the space looks like and what it's made from
*   community: how important the space is to local people
*   you: how the space makes you feel

Source: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2007). Spaceshaper: A user's guide. London, CABE.

POLICY TOOL 3: Securing Political Commitment

The provision of public space must be supported and entrenched by some fundamental anchors. One such anchor is the political commitment of public administration authorities to public space. This involves building an understanding for, and an appreciation of, the social, cultural, economic and environmental value of public space. This would require training of local authorities, documenting experiences and the adoption of the Charter of Public Space.

A country's national vision for public space can secure political commitment and be represented in a national urban policy and local government planning policy. National and local building codes, development provisions and housing frameworks can have specific provisions in them that set important enforceable guidelines around public space. Building codes for example, can encourage mixed use streets and neighbourhoods that create vibrant and functional streets.

UN-Habitat Excecutive Director Dr J. Clos, and Nairobi Governor, Dr E. Kidero launch the Nairobi 60 Public Spaces Programme © UN-Habitat

POLICY TOOL 4: Legislation and Public Space

The definition, delimitation and protection of public space is the first and most important step of any planning exercise. The status of public space needs to be clearly defined in urban legislation and mechanisms for its protection to be enforced. (UN-Habitat)

The role of legislation, regulation and enforcement is a key mechanism to secure the provision, vitality and utility of public space for the long term. The capacity to enforce a law and regulation is vital for making public space well managed and lively.

In summary, three legal mechanisms are considered in order to strengthen and protect public space.

Secure public space: Ideally, urban planning systems should have the requirement of adequate public space as part of important guiding documents such as local and municipal plans. UN-Habitat encourages an approach that focuses on acquiring land for public space in the planning process, which is contributed by land owners in exchange for the increase in their land value. Thus, in the process of planning for an expansion, the minimum requirement for public space is in place and owners already know that they will be required to contribute land and/or develop part of the required public space infrastructure.

Regulate the use of the public space: The rules around the uses and activities that can be undertaken in public space need to be given careful consideration, in order to avoid having negative impacts on the potential benefits of public space such as vibrant street life, spaces for cultural expression and economic activity. Such regulations need to be given particular

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attention in terms of how they might impact on vulnerable groups such as informal street vendors and the homeless and thus how they might contribute to the negative aspects of spatially-segregated urban environments. In many countries, restrictions on street use, bicycles etc are in place.

Protect and maintain the public space from misuse: Public space should always remain public. There is an increasing proportion of privatization of public space in towns and cities, for example, from exclusive shopping malls and waterfront developments to suburban gated communities. Furthermore, in many towns and cities some public spaces are not maintained and become derelict, their vibrancy and potential lost. The legal framework for the protection of public space can play an important role. The institutional framework around the maintenance of public space should also be clear so that this important public asset is more likely to contribute in a positive way to urban development. In particular, ways to channel resources and coordinate roles need to be set out clearly to enable timely maintenance and the contribution of all actors.

Privatization of a public street in Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat/Laura Petrella

Producing Public Space: Implementing Urban Development Plans in Kisumu, Kenya

In the coming two decades, Kisumu will need to deal with the critical challenge posed by the expected doubling of the population from roughly 1 to 2 million. Land readjustment and land value capture are viable means for future growth in the city. The city needs to undertake a physical planning exercise where more space would be allocated to streets and public spaces.

In the case of redevelopment or urban expansion in Kisumu, three main legal provisions for the creation of public space have been identified:

1. Compulsory acquisition: national, county and city authorities are statutorily vested with the right to acquire land compulsorily.

2. Alternative mechanisms where private owners are willing to participate in a project: For instance, establishing a State Corporation/Development Corporation via a Special Purpose Vehicle to manage and own the land. This implies that the present landowners can become minority shareholders.

3. Acquisition of land in lieu of rates.

POLICY TOOL 5: Anchoring Public Space in National Urban Policies and Seeking Synergies Within Government

The difficulties encountered by many local authorities in exercising a role of effective public leadership and the sectorialization of administrative structures, together with the frequent lack of communication between various departments, are two key constraints to the improvement of public space in our cities. This problem affects public space in a particularly severe way precisely because of the variety of types of public space required in a city. In many cases, there is no clear understanding of the role of different departments or coordination between them. Thus, sidewalks are typically a responsibility of the roads department, trees and parks of the environment and/or parks department, street cleaning and waste removal of the health department, licensing of the local business department and so on. These situations clearly call for coordination mechanisms between the different departments.

While the ideal solution might be establishing a unified local public space agency, in all cases where this might not prove feasible some strong leadership will be necessary to facilitate cooperation and coordination between departments. As in other cases, public space 'problems' such as this can be addressed by other public space policy tools even if they might not necessarily have coordination as their main aim. The Surveying and Indicators policy tool, for example, can provide an excellent opportunity for bringing together various departments and local actors. Another tool is Integrated Planning which, by definition, encourages a dialogue between all departmental actors with a stake in urban development. Interdepartmental

cooperation, of course, is better achieved when it is internalized as an operational philosophy rather than a dictated procedure. Interdepartmental coordination may lead to better response to public space challenges such as traffic congestion, commercial activities and design and maintenance of the space. The capital city in Colombia, Bogotá, has established a specialized agency with the mandate to manage and maintain public properties (See case study 19).

Equally important are synergies between central and local governments. As UN-Habitat points out, "a national urban policy is the key step for reasserting urban space and territoriality. It is also vital in providing the needed direction and course of action to support urban development. The Policy provides an overarching coordinating framework to deal with the most pressing issues related to rapid urban development, including slum prevention and regularization, access to land, basic services and infrastructure, urban legislation, delegation of authority to sub-national and local governments, financial flows, urban planning regulations, urban mobility and urban energy requirements as well as job creation".[20]

Fortunately, public space can be an important element in reasserting the most important partnership of all – that between the central and local spheres of government, each with regard to the latitude and powers conferred by national constitutional arrangements. One example of enabling action at the national level can be the establishment of public-space standards, accompanied by viable incentives and technical guidelines for their implementation. The experience of the Government of Mexico in the rescue of public space is paramount in this regard (See case study 42).

POLICY TOOL 6: Street-led Approach to City-wide Slum Upgrading

A new slum upgrading approach is moving from thinking of slums as islands of poverty and informality to considering them deprived neighbourhoods that are an integral part of the overall city system but spatially segregated and disconnected due to an absence of streets and public open spaces. Taking advantage of streets as the natural conduits that connect slums to the city, a fundamental shift towards opening of streets and public spaces as the driving force for city-wide slum upgrading is being proposed. Streets and public spaces are vital elements in the improvement of quality of life in slums, particularly in densely-occupied settlements where their absence is the source of multiple problems faced by slum dwellers and the city as a whole. Opening streets and public spaces is a way to integrate slums into the overall city planning and management and foster urban regeneration.

Focusing on streets and public spaces as a business case for all urban regeneration can help cities play their role as engines of economic and social development. The street-led approach to city-wide slum upgrading is a simple, cost-effective and an inclusive way of initiating change that is well within existing technical knowledge and experience.

The implementation strategy builds on the practical and symbolic role of streets and public spaces as the key to linking neighbourhoods, businesses and economic activities situated adjacent to each other and sharing the common public space provided by the streets. This strategy is well suited for incremental development through strong participatory planning, rather than pursuing the complex implementation of a full-fledged upgrading and urban layout plan.

The incremental approach based on the prioritization of streets will ensure that strategic choices are made and that the streets selected for improvement are the ones that are most likely to bring the best outcome in terms of development opportunities, poverty reduction, optimization of land use and generation of wealth as a result of increased property values. The approach will also ensure that city level concerns for connectivity and mobility are considered.

The introduction of street lighting and mixed-use is likely to bring more usage and social interactions amongst residents with positive impacts on the sense of safety.[21]

A street in Mathare slum, Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat/Cecilia Andersson

POLICY TOOL 7: Planning Public Space as a System

The benefit of preparing a strategy/policy is the protection and creation of a network of high-quality public spaces that can:
- reinforce local identity and civic pride.
- enhance the physical character of an area, shaping existing and future development.
- improve physical and social inclusion, including accessibility.
- provide connected routes between places for wildlife, recreation, walking and cycling and safer routes to schools.
- protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological habitats.
- provide green infrastructure and ecosystem services.
- provide for children and young people's play and recreation.
- raise property values and aid urban regeneration.
- boost the economic potential of tourism, leisure and cultural activities.
- provide cultural, social, recreational, sporting and community facilities.
- protect and promote understanding of the historical, cultural and archaeological value of places.
- contribute to the creation of healthy places, including quiet areas.
- provide popular outdoor educational facilities.
- promote the opportunities for local food production.
- help mitigate and adapt to climate change
- improve opportunities to enjoy contact with the natural world.

Without a clear strategy/policy, it is difficult to prioritise, spend and plan resources and, crucially, to show how much public space is valued and make the case for increased resources. Local authorities should be able to design the network of public space together with their development plans.

Infrastructural public space elements such as pavements, streets, avenues, underground transport lines – not to mention water and sewerage networks – already work as individual systems and this could not be otherwise. No matter how inefficient or tortuous the itinerary might be, it is obviously necessary to be able to reach any point or location from any other point or location in a given city. Streets, in particular, are commonly defined as the arteries of the city: a fitting image illustrating the fact that not only vehicle circulation, but the whole life cycle of sustenance of cities flows through or under them – connections, communications, goods, water, energy and waste. Unsurprisingly, deprived urban neighbourhoods without a street system also lack those vital elements of urban sustenance.

"The urban public-space system requires a unitary view. […] It is therefore advisable for local governments to adopt a specific strategy for public-space networks". (Charter of Public Space, Para. 21)

The Public Space System concept represents, in turn, a system of systems, where layers of functional networks – infrastructural, cultural, economic, and environmental – intersect and complement each other in a mutually-reinforcing and beneficial way.

Of special interest is the city-wide public space system mentioned previously with regard to green networks to regenerate ecological systems and restore environmental connectivity (wildlife, sanctuaries and water courses). This ecological network system can create synergies with other public space systems: transport; parks and gardens; walks; cycling paths and so on.

## POLICY TOOL 8: Using Public Space to Lead Development Strategies

Public spaces are not just individual elements of an urban public-space endowment. Streets, the most pervasive public spaces in our cities, should normally be planned and built before buildings and all other urban facilities. They can be traced and built in a casual way, as in most informal settlements. But they can also be conceived as networks and, as such, they can lead urban development in a positive and orderly way.

Map 1 represents a north-eastern portion of the city of Rome. The thick reticulated pattern on the left (1) belongs to a mix of public and private housing developments initiated at the beginning of the 19th century and completed before the end of the 20th century. Street patterns are clearly identifiable, as well as the circulation hierarchy and its connections to the rest of the city. This neighbourhood is definitely a part of the city.

The portion at the bottom right (2) characterized by linear and curvilinear slabs, is a much more recent public and co-operative housing estate. Here, public space, albeit abundant, is simply a void between built fragments; it has no clear boundaries and it leads nowhere. The free, almost capricious, design of the constructive elements does not seem to respond to any criterion and it certainly cannot serve as a guide or template for contiguous urban development. The project is a statement, perhaps, but an isolated one. This sense of isolation is also reflected in the development itself. What is missing is the one connecting element that gives vitality and purpose to cities – the street.

The third portion (3) presents a more organic pattern. Developed more spontaneously and through speculative processes, this area offers variety but also has a series of constraints to service delivery and accessibility, with little prospects for densification and improvement unless through large urban transformation projects.

Map 1: Public Space/Street Patterns in Rome
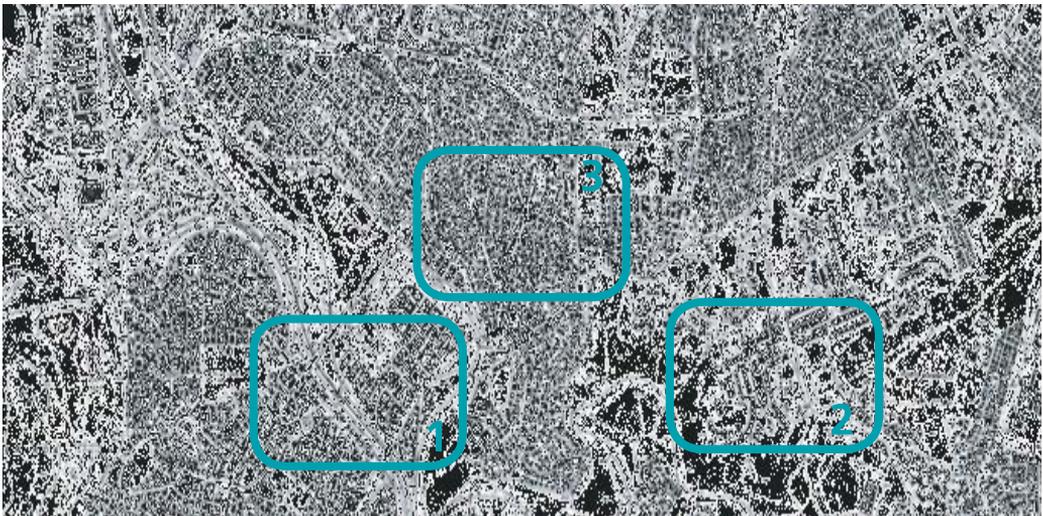
Cities across the world present variations of these three patterns and each of them has a distinct impact on quality of street life and connectivity.

This toolkit advocates for streets and public spaces being planned first and with a view to supporting adequate urban density and connectivity. When planning focuses on providing an adequate public space structure in terms of supply and connectivity, it is possible to move forward with infrastructure, land subdivision and development in a much more efficient and sustainable way.

Furthermore, public space can lead implementation and urban growth when its development is linked to that of building and facilities. In many contexts, buildings will be permitted only if public space has been developed and organized. This link between public space and urban development is critical and needs to be understood in each context and legal framework in order to prevent the creation of unmanaged and unimproved open spaces and/or public space deficiencies common to many cities.

Streets and public spaces should be planned and built before buildings. Back Bay, Boston, USA © Flickr/Eye Tunes

POLICY TOOL 9: Participation as if it were a Public Space – Openness, Access, Sharing

Successful participation, especially by civil society actors, requires certain preconditions which include: a political system and a management environment that encourages active citizenship and are committed to accepting citizens and their organizations as real partners in development; a legal basis for participation; and administrators and professionals committed to participation and well trained in the skills effective participatory processes demand.

As mentioned in the section on The Case for Public Space, public space lends itself beautifully to successful participatory practices because it is an ideal ground for eliciting interest, concern and involvement. It also happens that the very nature of viable public space – openness, accessibility and sharing – are ideal features for meaningful and successful participation. Once again, public space suggests a good way forward. Since public space requires being accessible, open and transparent, participatory processes should be, too.

There is an additional aspect that this analogy applies to, and it is the concept of civic stewardship. We have civic stewardship every time a group of citizens (be they residents of the same neighbourhood or not) take a collective initiative to upgrade or give new life to a site, independently of impulses from government entities. Typically, such initiatives have to do with public spaces: a pavement-cleaning campaign, a collective action to protect an endangered ecological or historic site, the reorganization of a derelict public space, the appropriation of an abandoned site for communal purposes, the installation of community gardens.

POLICY TOOL 10: Leveraging Public Space as Resource Multiplier

The question of how to fund the creation, upgrading and improvement of physical public spaces and ensure their maintenance and enhancement, thus guaranteeing the full satisfaction of users, is of paramount importance.

This will include the earmarking of land-based municipal revenue such as property tax and shared value contributions; forms of taxation including cross-subsidization; revenue accrual from business and commercial activities benefiting from public physical improvements; public-private partnerships; leasing to non-profit activities in exchange for maintenance and guardianship; community-based operation and management; use of publicly-owned land; building rights transfers; revenue from occupation of public space and the licensing of small informal commercial activities.

The investment of these resources in public space development is likely to have multiplier effects and generate more resources. For example, investments in green spaces and infrastructure produce higher real estate values and this, in turn, leads to higher tax revenue. The same applies to the expansion of commercial activities due to a variety of public space improvements.

Tools for creating endogenous resources for public space include:
- Public Land. A census of publicly-owned land can be made cheaply and quickly thanks to the good technology available today. This land can be traded off strategically to acquire space where it is most needed for infrastructure and new public-led development. Or it can be leased right where it is, thus mobilizing cash resources without alienating land owners.
- Update land cadastres and property tax assessments. This is often the most important source of municipal revenue. It is widely known that inefficiencies in this sector are almost invariably the result of political inaction rather than technical difficulties.
- Use building rights transfers. By negotiating transfers and/or premiums on building rights thanks to enabling legislation, municipalities can obtain land or infrastructure at no direct cost. Moreover, building rights can be transferred to areas of strategic importance for sustainable urban development such as those designated for higher density.
- Value sharing. 'Capturing unearned land value' is a strategy dating as far back as the first Habitat Conference in 1976, and is used to great advantage by many countries, including, recently, Switzerland. Switzerland did not do it because it is a rich country. It did it because value sharing is fair, makes good sense, and can be a decisive resource in the hands of a well-run municipality or local authority.

Analyses of cost-benefits of investment in public space are also needed. They can show that public spaces not only have a value in themselves, but can also have a positive environmental, social, cultural and political effect as well as generate substantial economic value.

Context-Specific Policies

Public Spaces for Rapidly Growing and Resource-Poor Cities

The vast majority of cities all over the world share similar problems in pursuing more, better and better-distributed public spaces. However, most cities in the so-called developing world face the same problems more severely. The pace of urban growth, the persistence of vast pockets of informal settlements and the strain on scarce financial and human resources are only some examples of this predicament. Can resource-poor, fast-growing cities afford to have an efficient public space system? And if not, what can be done about it?

This section starts from the premise that it is in the cities of the Global South where the most pronounced inequities can be found in terms of quantity and quality of public spaces. In these cities, we often find an oversupply of private open space and space-related amenities in the wealthiest neighbourhoods and a total lack of public space and poor quality, starting from the most basic road infrastructure, in the informal settlements where the majority of the urban population often lives. Therefore, a priority for public space strategies in fast-growing and resource-poor cities is to pursue the inequity-abatement potential of public space by focusing on the least-equipped neighbourhoods of the city.

An equally important public space-related issue is the need for robust slum prevention policies to accommodate new urban dwellers, the majority of whom will be poor and totally unable to secure shelter and related public space access at current market prices. This imperative is also the result of inter-disciplinary,

inter-agency policy studies. Adequate approaches have been illustrated.

Public Space as a Resource for Resource-Poor Cities. Public space can be considered a resource for resource-poor cities. Let us assume that a mayor from a resource-poor, rapidly-expanding city might develop an interest in taking up the winning features of public space. Despite this, we might anticipate a reasonable objection: 'Yes, I agree, these are all great arguments, but I need to sort out my city's urgent problems first.'

This concern is all too common, postponing the important in favour of the urgent. First of all, a little investment in public spaces can go a long way to (1) improve, (2) create and (3) revitalize the spaces. A small investment in quality public space delivers a manifold return to the cities. By strengthening the social fabric, providing economic opportunity, and boosting the well-being of citizens, public space can make limited resources go further and enrich the community both socially and monetarily.

Below is a list of quick-win actions that can be implemented using public space as a resource.
- Charge fees for parking in the city. This simple measure does not necessarily require expensive infrastructure, it can generate substantial municipal revenue and can also encourage the use of public transport. Also, payments can be made easily thanks to the broad availability of cellphone payment methods that have become broadly available in a majority of the developing countries.
- Generate revenue from informal-sector commercial activities on public space. These activities generate income for high numbers of poor citizens. Fair systems can be put in place for licensing temporary occupation of public space for small traders, as well as artisans. Experience shows that street vendors are willing to exchange reasonable

Prevention is Cheaper than Cure

The literature on slum upgrading is vast but relatively little attention has been given to the issue of preventing slum formation. This question became an important one for the Task Force charged in 2002 with identifying policies for implementing the Millennium Development Target of improving significantly the living conditions of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020. It became apparent that it would be meaningless to improve the lives of existing slum dwellers without a parallel attempt to find ways to avoid the recurrence of the phenomenon over the Goals' implementation period.

The "A Home in the City Task Force" Report's recommendation was that a realistic alternative to new slum formation was assisted self-help housing programmes in all cities with high poverty rates and consistent demographic growth. Evidence collected by the Task Force, which included representatives from UN-Habitat, the World Bank, other major agencies, local authorities, professionals, researchers and slum dwellers' organizations, showed that prevention (self-assisted new housing) was significantly cheaper than cure (slum upgrading). These conclusions remain unchallenged. Currently, UN-Habitat argues that the best way to achieve this objective is to produce a supply of building plots in a quantity sufficient to lower land prices and satisfy the perceived demand.

What is interesting about this solution is that it rests on the production of new public space through adequately planned street grids and related infrastructure. Streets provide access, economic vibrancy, mobility, identity: all factors that are typically missing in a traditional slum settlement.

Source: Garau, P., Sclar E. Carolini, G., lead authors, Task Force Report on Improving the lives of slum dwellers- A home in the city (2005), Millennium Project http://www. unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Slumdwellers-complete.pdf

fee disbursements in exchange for legality and security.
- Make use of vacant public land. Vacant/ derelict land properties owned by a public body and not reserved for important environmental purposes can generate indirect income by being developed into public space or direct municipal income by being let for a variety of compatible uses, including parking.
- Mobilize citizen involvement. Citizens in the Global South still possess a capacity for engaging in worthwhile projects that can benefit their community which has waned in the affluent North. This is a precious resource because it can stimulate mutual trust and lead to quick results.

Also it is critical to start with urgency on the issues that require time. An obvious one is planting trees; a less obvious one is urban planning. Updating and improving city plans can be the best resource-generation strategy cities can devise, particularly those which are constantly told that they do not have the time, nor the resources, to plan for their future while enormous problems, such as haphazard development and traffic congestion, are sidelined and allowed to develop into the resource-devouring problems of the next generation.

'Endowed Public Spaces' as a Slum Rehabilitation Strategy. Slum upgrading strategies relying prevalently on shelter might be missing the point. In most informal settlements, housing is a highly individual solution, whether it consists of gradual additions and improvements on one's own plot or of an informal rental contract for places of abode that neither the renter nor the owner has any interest in upgrading. Therefore, improving the lives of slum dwellers can best be achieved by making public spaces available and endowing them with those facilities and services that most slum dwellers cannot create, manage and enjoy on an individual basis: water and sanitation, sports areas and playgrounds, health centres, schools, civic centres and places of worship.

Public Spaces for Rapidly Growing, Economically Vibrant Cities

Urbanization presents the frequent combination of rapidly-growing cities in expanding economies. In most of Asia for instance, economic growth is in fact driven by urbanization. Huge numbers of migrants from rural areas fuel the expansion of manufacturing and export-oriented activities. In these cities, increased demand for housing, services and good public spaces is matched by growing resources. So, in theory, these cities are the ones where the policies recommended in this toolkit, including a systemic approach to development planning and public-space driven strategies, have the best chance of being implemented - particularly if accompanied by enabling legislation, sound planning and adequate financial programming. Rapidly-growing and economically-vibrant cities offer great historic opportunities for creating more equitable and inclusive cities.

However, this is not always the case. Often, public space interventions (parks, gardens, landscaping and generous street networks)

tend to perform the function of embellishing institutional sites and high-exposure developments such as new business districts, new towns or experimental cities that are also conceived as high-income, high-yield investment ventures. Much less attention is devoted to lower-income new neighbourhoods. It is important for these cities to prevent disparities and use their wealth to attenuate inequalities by providing for good public space everywhere.

Another policy option that should be pursued when the resource base is good is the advance public purchase of land, which remains one of the most important resources available to municipalities; it is the currency on which a sustainable urban future can be built.

An additional policy option that aims to accommodate and guide urban population changes and rapid growth rather than constrain or fragment them is orderly densification, revitalization, transformation and expansion processes which are needed to define a coherent public realm through fine-grained block patterns, arterial and street grids and other forms of public spaces. Densification will reduce public service costs, reduce car dependency, increase energy efficiency, increase support for public transport and better support public open space.

Public Spaces for Consolidated Cities

A third category of cities can be found in the regions of the world characterized by mature urbanization, such as Europe and North America whose cities, particularly large agglomerations, generally show negligible variations in population. Most of these consolidated cities present a sharp contrast between a compact, dense and stabilized urban fabric and a rapid change of the economic base, with manufacturing either being abandoned or transferred to other locations and other

countries, and being replaced in part by service activities. This phenomenon emerged first in North America, where cities started hollowing out several decades ago, leaving behind desolate neighbourhoods and an impoverished tax base. Today, many urban centres in the same region are witnessing a return to the city. This is due to a number of factors, such as the disaffection with suburban life, a decreasing propensity to spend a good part of the day commuting, a desire to lead more environmentally-friendly lives, a growing taste for the cultural and educational opportunities and variety of choice cities have to offer, the stimulus of a form of urban pioneering where neglected areas can be regenerated and turned into attractive living environments and, last but not least, the quality and potential of existing public spaces.

Many, however, point out that this back-to-the-city movement has been accompanied by the well-known phenomenon of gentrification. This process leads to the expulsion of those urban survivors, descendants of the residents originally left behind in the race of more

affluent households to the suburbs, who had managed to stay on by taking advantage of lower housing prices and of the income-generation opportunities typical of densely-built neighbourhoods: newsstands, convenience stores, small bookshops, small cafés and restaurants, niche shops, repair shops, small discount stores and so on – the very quaint features that contribute to making cities attractive in the first place and that, incidentally, make streets enjoyable urban features.

This generates a related question. Given that regenerated and gentrified urban neighbourhoods provide good quality urban life and public spaces to the ones who can afford to settle in them, what happens to the previous inhabitants? It is safe to assume that many of them retreat to more affordable neighbourhoods and suburbs thus becoming the new commuters. In terms of public space, the trade-off may not be advantageous. Therefore, we may be confronted with the radicalization of a familiar situation whereby the quality of public space is high in choice central

Artists and bohemians have gentrified Bedford-Stuyvesant, New York City, traditionally the largest black community in the US © Wikipedia / Newyork10r

neighbourhoods and mediocre or outright lacking in peripheral urban locations: a state whereby the goal we set ourselves of equitable distribution of urban public space might actually be jeopardized.

Gentrification can hardly be opposed, particularly if we consider it infuses resources, regeneration and new demands for new services in the consolidated city. However, something can be done to use its economic advantages for the benefit of the rest of the city. One way is to adopt redistributive policies. The extra municipal resources generated by choice-site gentrification can be employed to spearhead the regeneration of less centrally located sites that have outlived their original use but can be redeveloped also to the advantage of municipal revenue and income. In turn, part of this revenue can be used to improve the supply, quantity and distribution of public space in less fortunate areas and neighbourhoods.

These redistributive policies can also trigger a virtuous cycle to attract new urban pioneers who are unable to settle in the most sought after neighbourhoods. New additional income can, in turn, generate more municipal and private-sector development in newer urban areas.

Public Spaces and Shrinking Cities.

An extreme and growing phenomenon, found mainly, but not exclusively, in regions of mature urbanization, is that of shrinking cities, those characterized by a sharp decline both in terms of population and resource base. A worldwide estimate suggests that, over the past 50 years, 370 cities with population of more than 100,000 have shrunk by at least ten per cent.

There is uncertainty over why cities shrink, and even more so about what should be done in cities showing persistent signs of decreasing population and economic output. A traditional reaction, suggested by growth-oriented development models, is that efforts should be made to invert decline trends. But this recipe can also be challenged. Recent research, for example, suggests that "shrinking cities might offer a paradigm shift from growth-centered planning to a more careful and place-based approach towards more liveable cities, and that shrinkage offers planners the opportunity to reimagine cities and their development"[22].

Certainly, the abandonment of whole sections and neighbourhoods in shrinking cities create voids that can be used creatively. One option is to let emptied areas revert to something similar to their natural state, through urban reforestation policies. Another is to encourage a productive use of abandoned properties through urban agriculture. Another still is to augment the public space stock and combine it with ecological services of educational value. One translation of these adaptive approaches to the city-wide scale is the urban archipelago concept, whereby strategic areas in a shrinking city are selected for densification and concentration, assigning to remaining ones the task of natural reserve and open space reservoir. In the 1970's, Berlin as a shrinking city was being proposed as an urban archipelago, consisting of a network of built up areas of high urban intensity like urban-islands that coexisted with areas of natural importance.

More generally, shrinking cites offer an opportunity to recreate those functional and ecological connections advocated in our image of public space as a facilitator of environmental sustainability.

Venice waterfront promenade, Italy © Greta Gabaglio / Shutterstock.com

Turning good principles into action

This final part of the toolkit builds on the principles of the Charter on Public Space and highlights relevant paragraphs in the Charter with good and promising practices drawn from many different countries. It focuses on the creation, the design, the management and the enjoyment of public space.

Principles are never borne out of a vacuum: they descend from a sense of ethical values (what is 'just'), as well as from practices and norms that we consider fair and equitable.

This fifth part of the toolkit aims at validating the universality of a number of principles from the Charter of Public Space and other normative documents by connecting them to actual experiences and good practices drawn from a variety of situations and countries. The principles and case studies in this section will focus on:

• General principles
• The creation of public space
• The design of public space
• The management of public space
• Enjoyment of public space

Each practice case contains the principle, a brief explanation of why that particular practice was chosen, a summary of the experience and the sources of the information.

Creating, managing, and enjoying public spaces are often conceived separately, but should be considered jointly if public spaces are to be a success. The creation, design, regeneration and upgrading of public spaces have to keep in mind the needs and aspirations of present and future users, as well as the ease of maintenance and repair. Maintenance also relies on good design and respectful use. The enjoyment and use of public space is not only a good indicator of success, but also an effective means for improving design and management practices.

Figure 2: Creating, managing, and enjoying public spaces: a circular process
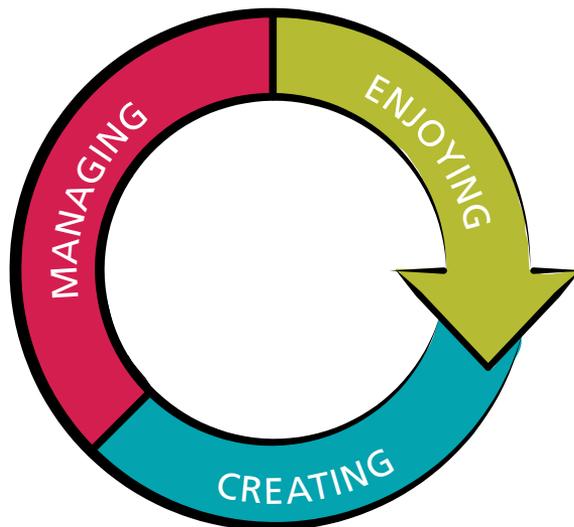
General Principles

> **Public space must be the place where citizenship rights are guaranteed for everybody and differences are respected and appreciated.**

(Charter of Public Space, para. 3).

> **The Charter of Public Space is based on a wide and inclusive concept of citizenship that goes beyond its legal definition. All, in their capacity as users, are "citizens" and have the same rights and duties with regard to public space.**

(Charter of Public Space, para. 4)

Diverse social interaction is key to creating spaces where groups can celebrate and seek out peers. When people do not see their values and preferences reflected in a place, they feel unwelcome. Some people argue that a melting pot is the highest form of multiculturalism; others maintain that fostering safe spaces where particular communities can come together and celebrate their unique culture is equally important in achieving diversity. Studies conclude that the most successful multicultural spaces are those that combine both elements.

The most meaningful public space plans and programs incorporate many different kinds of activities while simultaneously remaining flexible enough to accommodate values and preferences of different cultural groupings as they evolve over time. Locating public spaces in areas where they can serve multiple communities (such as markets, playgrounds and parks) on sites where they border different communities is a proven way to increase the social diversity of public places.

Case Study 1
WARWICK JUNCTION RENEWAL PROJECT - DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

The first experience chosen to embody the principles on citizenship rights is not a square or a park but a city market and terminus.

The Warwick Junction Urban Renewal Project is a multi-agency holistic redevelopment project that turned a problematic area into a vibrant business centre and a popular tourist attraction.

The Warwick Junction Renewal Project is appropriately labeled 'Including street traders in urban plans'. Located in the city's primary transport hub, Warwick Junction housed informal markets set up by street vendors and traders. Unsanitary and unsafe conditions gave rise to high amounts of criminal activity and violence, making Warwick Junction a site of concern to city officials. Rather than clearing the informal traders out of the area however, the city administration recognised the importance

Warwick Junction Market, Durban, South Africa
© Richard Dobson/Caroline Skinner

of the informal economy and decided to work with street traders and other key stakeholders by negotiating to improve their conditions in a participatory way. The Traders' Association, an umbrella traders street committee, was established to enable them to discuss their needs and space requirements. The city identified a section of elevated city highway that had never been utilized and it was agreed upon to construct a bridge and pedestrian access way along with a functional Herb Traders Market. Multipurpose centres were also created for street traders to carry out their business activities and each trader was given a formal rental arrangement and individual kiosk. Organizations such as Traders Against Crime were also established to resolve disputes using conflict resolution.

Since the implementation of the Warwick Junction Renewal Project, there has been a marked improvement in trading, commuter safety and living conditions. Crime rates have declined (from 50 violent deaths reported in 1997 to 6 violent deaths reported in 2002) and the annual turnover of the Herb Traders Market has increased enormously. In addition to becoming a major tourist attraction, an employment chain of an estimated 14,000 jobs in Durban has been created.

However, the significance of the project goes beyond creating a secure and legal environment for informal traders. If we interpret respect for diversity as embracing equality but also understanding that equality does not mean sameness, we learn from Warwick that this success story started when the Durban authorities first recognized that street trading was not a reproachable activity per se, and that all that was needed was a more secure and legal space for carrying out a low-investment, consumer-attractive commercial activity.

Source: http://wiego.org/wiego/working-in-warwick-street-traders

Case Study 2
THE NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL - LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

This second example is quite different but it embodies the same principle: a festive use of public space through which a long-established ethnic group celebrates both its heritage and its identification with the city where it established its new roots.

The Notting Hill Carnival is the largest street festival in Europe. It originated in 1964 as a way for Afro-Caribbean communities to celebrate their own cultures and traditions. Taking place every August Bank Holiday weekend in the streets of London W11, the Notting Hill Carnival is an amazing array of sounds, colourful sights and social solidarity.

At the roots of the Notting Hill Carnival are the Caribbean carnivals of the early 19th century – a particularly strong tradition in Trinidad – which were all about celebrating the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. The very first carnival was an attempt to showcase the steel band musicians who played in the Earl's Court district of London every weekend, and attracted about 500 people. The Carnival has grown in popularity over the years and is now a celebration of London's diversity. It is currently estimated to attract more than 1 million people from diverse backgrounds during the course of the three-day event, with about 50,000 performers, more than 30 sound systems and a myriad of food stalls and bars.

Source: www.nottinghillcarnaval.com
http://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/event/9023471-notting-hill-carnival-2014

The inhabitants have the right to be involved through participatory processes in the creation and management of public space.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 5)

Ensuring good public spaces requires that they are designed in a way that considers the people who will use them. It is important to tap into the collective wisdom of those who know the community best – its citizens/inhabitants. By engaging those with a historical perspective, insights into how the area functions and an understanding of what is meaningful for locals, will help to create a sense of ownership and better ensure the success of public space projects. Public space must also be given the flexibility to evolve and change over time along with the community to ensure it continues to function as a great destination.

Community members participate in the renovation of Lotus Garden, Mumbai, India @ UN-Habitat

Case Study 3
SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLYARDS - KOSOVO

The Municipal Spatial Planning Support Programme in Kosovo (MuSPP) funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and implemented by UN-Habitat supports Kosovo municipalities in the consolidation of urban and spatial planning through a participatory and gender-equal process and in the implementation of plans as instruments guiding local development.The improvement of schoolyards has been selected as a development priority identified by different MuSPP partner municipalities through the municipal participatory planning process.

The Sustainable Schoolyard approach provides students with a place to learn and socialize, thus promoting inclusiveness and a sense of place. Sustainable schoolyards also provide opportunities to learn about nature, while improving the school conditions by creating outdoor classrooms, spaces for physical activities, play, sport and recreation, also taking into consideration the low maintenance of public spaces. It is intended that the schoolyard should serve the neighbourhood as a community space for several activities to take place, such as public meetings, cultural activities, gardening and recreational facilities. The *overall objective* is to deliver a tangible model project, through a series of interventions aimed at creating pleasant learning conditions for pupils and providing an opportunity for a variety of other uses for the community.

The project has also proved to be successful in addressing scarcity of municipal resources, namely limited land available for public spaces and mechanisms to address maintenance of public spaces. The sustainable schoolyard project was developed in Gracanica, Hani i Elezit, Junik, Mamusha and Rahovec and included different innovative participatory processes. The

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participatory process has fostered community engagement and inclusiveness, considering minority groups, helping to promote gender balance through the engagement of teachers, women and girls in the design process and, in particular, promoting child and youth participation. Apart from creating a sustainable schoolyard, the project seeks to engage the school community in teamwork, to enhance pupils' imagination on urban matters and to raise environmental awareness.

A range of activities were undertaken by the partner municipalities in the participatory process, including:

- Competition of Schools
- Technical workshops to analyze the proposals
- Weekly working group meetings
- Discussion with representatives of schools
- Public meeting to discuss the design drawing
- Project implementation
- Post implementation surveys to gauge the usability and functionality of the improved space

Source: UN-Habitat (undated). Turning Spaces into Places. Municipal Spatial Planning Programme (MuSPP)

[...] Each public space has its own spatial, historic, environmental, social and economic features.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 6)

Public spaces, which allow the interaction of various groups having different activities, behavior, socio-cultural and life style characteristics, have special importance as areas that meet the differing social and physical needs of people. Apart from taking into consideration social features, we also need to enhance the historic, environmental and economic features of public space.

Case Study 4
CONSTITUTION HILL - JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

In Johannesburg, many places tell us about the history of apartheid. In transforming those sites, it is important to preserve the history and cultural heritage and retain the memory of their origins and former uses. These public spaces have become the open-air museum of apartheid and South Africa. Constitution Hill in Johannesburg is one of the most poignant

Children enjoy their new recreational area developed by the Sustainable Schoolyard project, Kosovo © UN-Habitat

Constitution Court, Johannesburg, South Africa
© Alice Siragusa

examples of how a place that has a strong meaning in the history of a city or country can be transformed and become a public space with a great sense of history and heritage.

A multi-purpose, multi-faceted heritage precinct in the heart of the city, Constitution Hill was built in 1994 on the 100-acre site of a century-old prison complex where the leaders of every major South African liberation group – Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi among them – were once detained.

Some of the old buildings were preserved and converted into a system of museums. New buildings such as the Constitutional Court and the open spaces around them offer visitors and citizens an opportunity to learn about the history of the apartheid era and the process of democratization that followed.

Source: www.constitutionhill.org.za/

Case Study 5
SUGAR BEACH - TORONTO, CANADA

The reuse of industrial sites offers great opportunities for giving strong and symbolic character to new public spaces. The challenge is to transform them in places with their own unique identity and make them enjoyable for all.

Canada's Sugar Beach is a whimsical new park that transformed a surface parking lot in a former industrial area into Toronto's second urban beach. Located at the foot of Lower Jarvis Street adjacent to the Redpath Sugar Factory, the 8,500 square metre (2-acre) park is the first public space visitors see as they travel along Queens Quay from the central waterfront. The park's brightly-coloured pink beach umbrellas and iconic candy-striped rock outcroppings welcome visitors to the new waterfront neighbourhood of East Bayfront. The design for Canada's Sugar Beach draws upon the industrial heritage of the area and its relationship

to the neighbouring Redpath Sugar factory. The park features three distinct components: an urban beach, a plaza space and a tree-lined promenade running diagonally.

The beach reminds us that Toronto's waterfront is a playful destination - it allows visitors to while away the afternoon as they read, play in the sand or watch boats on the lake. A dynamic water feature embedded in a granite maple leaf beside the beach makes cooling off fun for adults and children. The park's plaza offers a dynamic space for public events. A large candy-striped granite rock outcropping and three grass mounds give the public unique vantage points for larger events and the spaces between the mounds result in a natural performance space for smaller events. Between the plaza and the beach, people stroll through the park along a promenade featuring granite and tumbled concrete cobblestones in a maple leaf mosaic pattern. Lined with mature maple trees, the promenade offers a shaded route to the water's edge providing the public with many opportunities along the way to sit and enjoy views to the lake, beach or plaza.

Source :http://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/explore_projects2/ east_bayfront/canadas_sugar_beach

View of Sugar Beach, Toronto, Canada
© Alice Siragusa

Public spaces are a key element of individual and social well-being, the places of a community's collective life, expressions of the diversity of their common natural and cultural richness and a foundation of their identity, as expressed by the European Landscape Convention. The community recognizes itself in its public places and pursues the improvement of their spatial quality.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 7)

Public spaces should be open to all, regardless of ethnic origin, age or gender and, as such, represent a democratic forum for citizens and society. When properly designed and cared for, they bring communities together, provide meeting places and foster social ties of a kind that have been disappearing in many urban areas. These spaces shape the cultural identity of an area, are part of its unique character and provide a sense of place for local communities.

The increasing trend of urbanization, along with the influence of modern culture, has, however, brought a considerable change in the pattern of usage of public spaces. Those that were well taken care of by different community arrangements in the past have slowly started to collapse and, with the municipalities' inefficiency in maintaining them, these spaces are rapidly deteriorating and haphazard parking and other activities are increasingly encroaching upon them.

Case Study 6
LOTUS GARDEN - MUMBAI, INDIA

The condition of public spaces in Mumbai is generally poor. Malpractices are common in the new public space developments, maintenance of public spaces is costly and community engagement is rather low. People often lack a sense of ownership because they are not involved by the local government, during development or in the maintenance of public spaces. Further, they see public spaces as a "public good" and lack the incentive to take any initiative to maintain them.

Although there is a strong sense of community, the importance of open spaces has been neglected and these spaces are in dire need of revitalization. Against this background a pilot project was initiated with the support from UN-Habitat in M ward which is the most neglected and poorest area in the city of Mumbai. This is a very densely populated area with almost no public spaces. It is located near the city dumping ground with a marginalized community that suffers from major solid waste management issues. The few public spaces that exist are abused, not maintained
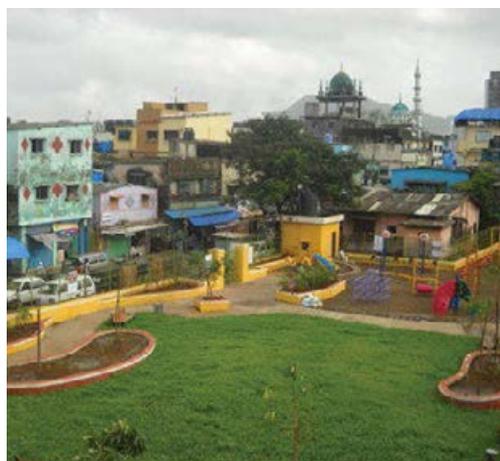
Renovated Lotus Garden, Mumbai, India
© UN-Habitat

and under constant threat of encroachment. UN-Habitat and its implementing partner, the Mumbai Environmental Social Network (MESN), selected a site that is critical to the community of M Ward, even if it is a challenging area for implementation due to the very complex political situation.

In 2012, MESN had raised preliminary funding and started mobilizing the community in the neighbourhood called Lotus Nagar. The site selected is a garden space of 1,300 m² servicing a population of more than 200,000 people. This Municipal Corporation-owned space was reserved for a garden in the area development plan and the Corporation agreed to maintain the site after rehabilitation. The participatory design phase was conducted with the community being engaged through public workshops and design charrettes. The community and the municipality then worked together in implementing the design.

The garden up-grading has included levelling, construction of a walkway, flower beds and seating. Play equipment for children and fitness equipment for adults have also been installed, as well as a water tank with the necessary plumbing and water pump. Painting of all the equipment as well as the fencing of the garden has been completed. There was also a demand for high mast lighting in the garden and hiring of security guards by the residents to ensure that the space was adequately lighted and safe and thus accessible to all.

The space is now completed and there is such pressure from the community living around the space that they have to limit the number of people using it at any one time.

Source: UN-Habitat (2014). Public Space Annual Report. Unpublished.

Public spaces... when they possess a clear identity, can be defined as 'places'. The objective is that all public spaces should become such 'places'.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 8)

A space becomes a place when it has significance to the people who experience it. A space should allow people to do more than just the essential things that are the minimum functional requirements, such as allowing people to move through it. A place can meet the basic functional requirements and, in addition, offer other qualities and opportunities, which contribute more to the quality of life of the people who experience it. By turning 'spaces' into 'places' we can take a step towards providing inhabitants with access to interesting, equitable and attractive settings to meet various needs and facilitate more interaction in the urban life.

Case Study 7
GYRUMI SQUARE - GYRUMI, ARMENIA

The following is the story of how a place that had lost its identity and uses because of a catastrophic event was recovered and became a 'place' again.

In 1998, the city of Gyrumi, Armenia, was struck by an earthquake that left 25,000 people dead and a further 100,000 without homes. In 2001, Aram Khachadurian, formerly Chief Operating Officer for the Project for Public Spaces, joined the Urban Institute of Armenia to help build thousands of housing units for displaced families who were still living in temporary shelters in public spaces all over the city. With the success of this rehousing programme, the central square was again available to the public, opening the way to planning its revitalization.

In July 2003, a grant from the Academy for Educational Development brought the Project for Public Spaces to Gyrumi to work with local project partners such as the Urban Institute and a local steering committee of architects, planners, NGOs and city officials to facilitate the first effort to recapture some of the civic life that had characterized this cultural centre. More than 70 people attended the first day long Placemaking workshop. The enthusiasm sparked cross-sector collaboration in the city, resulting in the New Gyrumi Festival and Placemaking EXPO just two months later. Among the lengthy list of events and improvements were a flower market, a roller skating rink, seven cafés, night lighting, road marking to direct traffic correctly, new street furniture, an art fair, performances, dances, wrestling matches, gymnastics, children's programmes, flower gardens planted by the church, new banners and street signage and daily TV news broadcasts. This catalytic event has been followed by other events on the square and is part of a larger civic resurgence.

Source: www.pps.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/PPS-Placemaking-and-the-Future-of-Cities.pdf

Gyrumi, general view from the central square, Armenia
© Wikipedia/Alexandrapoltsi

> **Views differ on whether public spaces should or should not be publicly owned. However, all public spaces that are also publicly owned offer more stable guarantees of access and enjoyment over time because they are less subject to those legitimate changes of use typical of private ownership.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 9)

In many countries, public spaces – squares or parks – can be privately owned. This arrangement can be useful in adding to the supply and quality of a city's public space endowment but poses questions of free access and rules of use. The privatization of public spaces, through the growth of private-public space, can sometimes produce over-controlled, sterile places which lack connection to the reality and diversity of the local environment with the result that they all tend to look the same. They also raise questions about democracy and accountability but perhaps most worrying of all are the effects on cohesion.

Case Study 8
PUBLIC USE OF A PRIVATE PARK: ZUCCOTTI PARK - NEW YORK CITY, USA

In many cities it is common for planning authorities to open up much-needed public space in exchange for extra square footage in a private development venture.

This is the case of Zuccotti Park, formerly called Liberty Plaza Park, a public square in the heart of the New York financial district owned by the Brookfield Office Properties. The square was created in exchange for additional buildable surface granted to the original developers. In 2011, the civil movement Occupy Wall Street

began its protest against the global financial system and chose to occupy the park, camping there for several weeks. After a while, as the protest achieved worldwide notoriety, the company managed to have the protesters evicted. The official motivation for the forced removal was the private owners' obligation to keep the park clean and prevent public health problems.

In this case, the public use of a privately-owned park continued after the eviction. However, it is reasonable to assume that its tenure status was an additional factor in accelerating an end to the occupation.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zuccotti_Park

Zuccotti Park occupancy, New York, USA
© Flickr/TerryBallard

> **Public spaces, whenever safeguards of natural or historical value allow, must be made accessible without barriers to the motorial, sensorially and intellectively challenged.**
> (Charter of Public Space, para.10)

Competitions can help cities and local authorities to be better informed and more competent on specific issues, including the accessibility and elimination of physical barriers in public spaces.

Around 80 million people living in the European Union have some kind of disability that impacts on their daily lives. Europe, in common with much of the developed world, also has an ageing population. There is a strong correlation between age and disability. Some-two thirds of people with disabilities are over retirement age. These trends mean that there is both an economic and a social imperative to create societies within which older and disabled people can live without barriers and can enjoy the same opportunities as every other citizen. These imperatives are clearly set out both in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in the European Union's Disability Strategy 2010–2020. Accessibility and inclusion must be at the heart of all aspects of city life, from barrier-free streets, buildings and public transport to accessible websites and online information.

Case Study 9
AN AWARD FOR ACCESSIBLE CITIES - EUROPEAN UNION

The EU created the annual Access City Awards in 2010 to recognize and celebrate cities that have worked to achieve accessible environments in all areas of life. One of the key goals of the

Access City Award is to promote best practices in cities across Europe by highlighting innovative and inspiring projects and programmes to meet the needs of disabled and otherwise handicapped people. Stockholm, which was one of the 2013 Access City Award finalists, produced a Handbook for the design of an accessible and useable environment. The Handbook is the third version of design programmes developed by Stockholm and the compilation of the two earlier versions entailed extensive dialogues with disability organizations. A major goal has been to clarify the building legislation and to supplement it with Stockholm's design principles. An example of resolving conflict taken from the Handbook is the so-called Stockholm Model for pedestrian crossings, with one part of the crossing containing a ramp and the rest constructed with kerbstones and contrast markings thus suiting everyone.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/access-city-award-2014/files/access-city-award-2013-brochure_en.pdf

Public space is the gymnasium of democracy, an opportunity for creating and maintaining over time the sentiment of citizenship and the awareness of the roles that each of us has and can have with regard to one's daily lifestyle and to one's living environment.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 17)

Citizens need a place to voice their views, otherwise they become passive. Public spaces are where citizens rally to voice their discontent, celebrate victory, show their power and ultimately articulate a new vision for their cities and countries. The exercise of democracy depends upon having a space where people can gather as citizens — a square, main street, park or other public space that is open to all.

Although the internet has replaced part of the physical space for political expression, it complements rather than replaces interactions and democracy as expressed in public spaces.

Pavement designed to ensure easy accessibility for all persons
Rio Negro, Colombia © Thamara Fortes

School demonstration Chicago 2013, USA
© Flickr/Peoples World

Case Study 10
TAHRIR SQUARE - CAIRO, EGYPT

The recent revolution in Cairo has made Tahrir Square a household name. No one would have imagined that this public space would nurture a spark that would set the entire Middle East ablaze. Tahrir, which means liberation in Arabic, is one of the oldest squares in modern Cairo.

During the early part of the 20th century, the modern downtown Cairo emerged in this square region which was, at that time, called Ismailia Square in Ismailia District. The Square had to be replanned to facilitate the newly-introduced vehicular traffic in Cairo, brought by the British. The roundabout in the southern part of the square was consequently built and the Square witnessed its first serious demonstrations during the same era. Opposition to the British presence in Egypt sparked protests and skirmishes, with police killing two lots of Egyptians in 1946. Dissatisfaction with King Farouk's government brought about another set of protests that resulted in the Great Fire of Cairo in 1952, when many buildings around the square were casualties of the blaze. The fire was a precursor to an Army coup, led by Gamal Abdul Nasser, which transformed Egypt from a sleepy kingdom into a revolutionary republic. It was after this period that President Nasser decided to change the square name to Tahrir, celebrating the liberation from British rule.

The Egyptian people have long accepted the 1952 fire as their day of revolution but they never recognized Tahrir square as the symbol of their liberation. That all changed in January 2011. It is too soon to comprehend the full impact of what happened in the square during the 18 days of revolution. However, Egypt and the Arab world will never be the same again. Social media has given a new life to the city and has reminded us that public space will always remain a vibrant arena for public discourse and revolutionary change.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tahrir_Square

Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt
© Flickr/Mona

Tahrir Square at night, Cairo, Egypt
© Flickr/Ramy Raoof

It is advisable for decisions regarding the creation, management and enjoyment of public space to be subjected to clear and transparent participatory processes with all interested stakeholders. Such processes, be they institutionalized, regulated or spontaneous, are to be regarded as a right of urban residents and not as unilateral initiatives of government.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 18)

Participatory processes should not be limited to consultations about design criteria and features. Transparency includes the rights of citizens to be informed about the project's progress, its expected termination and how public funds are being used. This encourages the accountability of decision makers and partners especially in long and complex public space revitalization processes.

Case Study 11
THE DOMUS AUREA RESTORATION PROJECT - ROME, ITALY

In 63 AD Emperor Nero seized a huge tract of public land to build a sumptuous imperial palace, the Domus Aurea (the "Golden Palace"). His successors, anxious to build political capital on Nero's unpopularity, gave the land back to the Romans and built public baths and a huge amphitheatre. In a gesture of supreme scorn, Emperor Trajan decided to use the Domus Aurea as a foundation for his new grand public baths. From then on, the Domus disappeared from public view. Centuries later, Raphael and other Renaissance painters rediscovered it, by penetrating the Domus from the baths' ruins, to sketch its beautifully preserved frescoes and decorations. Much later, the grounds of the baths were converted into a public park.

The ongoing Domus Aurea Restoration Project aims to reinforce the Domus structure and restore and preserve its frescoes so that it is permanently accessible to the public for the first time in history. To protect the fragility of

Citizen participation in Place de la Paix, Le Cayes, Haiti
© UN-Habitat

Restoration of Domus Aurea, Rome, Italy
© Flickr/Arienne McCracken

the Domus, complex studies and tests have been done to create optimal conditions for public access. Because of this, it is has been necessary to restrict access to a considerable portion of the Colle Oppio Park where it is located. This upset many residents and regular park visitors, and the project team started a blog titled "The Domus Aurea Building Site" (Il cantiere della Domus Aurea) to address the issue. The blog, which provides total transparency about ongoing work, is updated on a daily basis. It is a diary of scientific analyses, of restoration works on structures and decorations, of experiments under way, and also of research and documentation activities. The blog makes up in part for the temporary inaccessibility of the monument, and is a means of conferring visibility to a common good that would otherwise be invisible to the city and the rest of the world.

Source: http://archeoroma.beniculturali.it/

cantieredomusaurea/en

A Statue in the excavated Domus Aurea
© Wikipedia/Howard Hudson

Creation of Public Space

... all areas even if publicly owned or unfenced, which by their characteristics are substantially unusable by the public - inaccessible slopes, abandoned areas, or cut-outs - cannot be considered a public space and cannot be counted as a service or public infrastructure.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 11)

Conversely, public spaces which are not yet accessible and/or usable must be considered as "potential public spaces", and therefore as a precious resource for the strengthening and renovation of the existing system of public space, and thus of urban quality as a whole.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 12)

Spaces which are not controlled or considered 'official' public spaces are frequently overlooked and are often relegated as 'wastelands', 'derelict areas' and 'urban voids'. These spaces are often appropriated by 'marginal groups' especially in developing countries. Such spaces should not be considered valueless, but there is a need to rethink these informal spaces as social breathing spaces. They enable a diverse range of activities and question the limited relationship between public and private space and planned and non-planned spaces.

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The provision of public space in urban contexts must be supported and entrenched by some fundamental anchors. One anchor is the political commitment of public administration authorities to public space. This involves building an understanding for, and, an appreciation of, the social, cultural, economic and environmental value of public space.

The second anchor is the role of legislation, regulation and enforcement as mechanisms to secure the provision, vitality and utility of public space for the long term. Indeed these two 'anchors' go together because public administrators – Mayors of Cities, Presidents, Ministers of Planning – are the ones who initiate and influence the necessary policies and legal frameworks required to secure public

space provision and the types of activities and functions of public space.

A third anchor that should be considered when discussing legal frameworks for public space is regulation and enforcement. The capacity to enforce a law and regulation is vital in protecting and managing public space and ensuring people are law abiding, and also in building understanding and confidence in the broader public about the value and role of public space.

Case Study 12
LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SPACE - NAIROBI, KENYA

Following a legal study carried out on planning legislation in Nairobi, Kenya in 2014, UN-

Map 2: Typology of public spaces in Nairobi, 2014

Legend

- Bus terminus
- Cemetery
- Communal open space
- Derelict land
- Forest
- Incidental spaces
- Open air market
- Others
- Parking lot
- Parks and garden
- Pedestrian- priority street
- Play ground
- Right of way
- Square
- Vacant land
- Water frontage

- Building footprint
- River
- County boundary
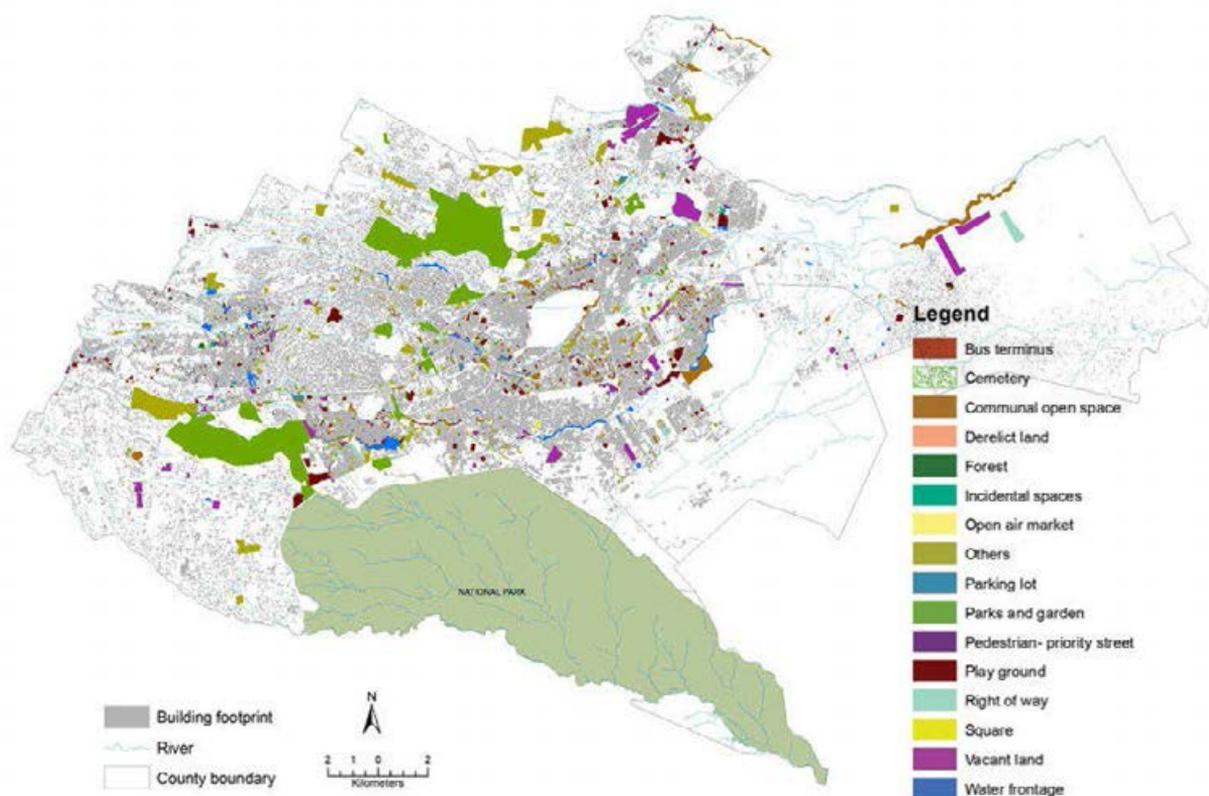
Habitat proposed that the following legal mechanisms should be considered in order to strengthen and protect public space:

1. Secure public space.
2. Regulate the use of the public space.
3. Protect and maintain the public space from misuse.

To contribute to the proposed development control policy and planning legislation for public space in Nairobi, in 2015 the County undertook a city-wide inventory and assessment of public spaces. This helped the county understand the spatial location, distribution, accessibility, quantity and quality of public space in the city (see Map 2). The county is now working on identifying the gaps and challenges which need to be addressed to secure public space, which will be followed by setting-up a framework to regulate and manage the use of the spaces. Finally, legislation and by-laws to protect and prevent misuse and maintain the public space will be prepared.

Case Study 13
TRANSFORMING WASTE SPACE INTO PUBLIC SPACE - BANGALORE, INDIA

Bangalore, once a provincial town known for its gardens, has emerged in the last decades as the Silicon Valley of India. In recent years countless flyovers, bridges, and elevated motorways have transformed the city. While public spaces and parks have woefully diminished, Bangalore has acquired vast amounts of nondescript, underutilized, and unfriendly 'wasted' spaces beneath the new concrete infrastructure. In recent months the city has also been battling a solid-waste management crisis.

The Greater Bangalore Municipal Body (BBMP), installed a demonstration at Anand Rao Circle in Bangalore. The project explored ways that the unused spaces below and around flyovers could be reused to create positive urban spaces that contribute to communities and neighbourhoods. This was also an opportunity to consider creative solutions to Bangalore's waste by constructing with recycled materials as much as possible.

The project converted the space into a public one that provided respite at a busy intersection. It used scrap from billboards to fabricate a series of metal frames and benches and reused discarded pavers and gravel created seating areas. Existing signage boards and fences were incorporated into the design. The concrete pillars were cleaned and painted in cheerful colours. Research on plants that grow in shade with less water was undertaken along with the Greater Bangalore Municipal Body Horticulture Department. The idea was that creepers would wrap around the pillars and the plants would provide much needed relief and counter pollution in the city. The entire demonstration project was carried out in two-and-a-half weeks with the support of Greater Bangalore Municipal Body; Columbia University, New York; Srishti School of Art, Design, and Technology, Bangalore. The space has been constructed and the Greater Bangalore Municipal Body has declared that several other intersections in Bangalore will be similarly developed to have public spaces beneath highways.

Source: http://home.sustainurban.org/events/studio-work/ design-alternatives-for-solid-waste-in-bangalore/

Case Study 14
ALTERNATIVE USES OF TRAFFIC ISLANDS - LUANDA, ANGOLA

This detailed example from Angola combines a description of a complex urban environment with the surprisingly successful use of a 'lost urban space' in the middle of Angola's capital city.

Angola's post-war economic boom has been fuelled by natural resources and is spurring

large-scale urban development including the implementation of various sorely-needed infrastructure systems in this overcrowded city.

New or refurbished public spaces in Luanda are typically either public-private partnerships in 'formal' and highly-desirable parts of the city or the creation of spaces that are integrated into larger infrastructure-upgrading projects – principally the upgrade and expansion of various arterial roads in and out of the city. Two examples of this are located at Samba and Rocha Pinto, both of which utilize land which is essentially a traffic island on a major road, and are characterised by hard surfaces, little vegetation or other shading and the inclusion of exercise or sport equipment.

These two spaces certainly don't epitomise 'best practice' public space projects, and present a various range of problems. These include lack of shading in a hot tropical climate; a location immediately abutting major roads, with related issues of respiratory health and pedestrian safety and limited inclusion of differently-abled people. Despite this, by late afternoon, these places are full of people socialising, exercising, 'promenading', buying, selling, roller-skating, playing basketball, flirting, babysitting younger siblings, performing to music or personal training sessions. This unlikely intense social activation of such public spaces could be attributed to the lack of other public spaces available or to the characteristic spirit of the Luandan population but there are other (largely unintended) characteristics of these places that contribute to their popularity.

These public spaces are open and visually accessible, due to the inherent narrowness of the site – a traffic island. Their popularity, especially after dark, is perhaps due to the sense of safety provided by 'passive surveillance' – there are no hidden corners or 'nooks and crannies' along the perimeter – in fact, the perimeter of the space is a road with near constant vehicle traffic, especially

during the infernal peak hours traffic jams that extend into late evening. The inclusion of basic and robust sports equipment are a major drawing card for a certain youth demographic. In a chaotic and overpopulated city characterised by visible social inequality, such public spaces arguably come to act as a release valve for the energy of many urban youths.

The location of these public spaces on main arterial roads situates them as 'nodes' on a larger 'network' of informal activities. Informal trading is commonplace: both people using the public space as well as commuters in passing traffic are 'customers'. Ironically, the fact that these spaces don't occupy 'premium' land (as compared with other public spaces located in 'desirable' areas such as the waterfront esplanade) means that these informal activities are at less risk of being forced out or discouraged. This is of particular importance as the legal status of many of these informal activities is increasingly uncertain, yet provides the livelihood for a vast number of Luanda's population.

Source: Author

A city view of Luanda, Angola
© Flickr/maxbrotto

It is vital to regard urban public spaces as a continuous, articulated and integrated system, to be developed from the scale of neighbourhoods relationships to vast environmental spaces, to facilitate the diffusion of its enjoyment within the whole community and to raise urban quality.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 19)

A network of well-designed and well-managed spaces adds to the character of places where people want to live, work and visit. Public spaces should be planned and designed as a systematic network, as elements of a larger system where they establish relations of complementarity and inter-dependency. The urban network can be understood in two dimensions: physical form and functionality. A network of public spaces is not composed only of each isolated space, but also by the links between the different spaces. It is these linkages that influence how people experience the spaces and how they move within the city and promote urban cohesion.

Source: www.isocarp.net/data/case_studies/1798.pdf

Case Study 15
A PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK IN ARANYA - INDORE, INDIA

In 1983, The Vastu-Shilpa foundation was entrusted with the preparation of a master for the development of a new township in Aranya. The new township was an effort at providing access to serviced land for low income families. It was divided into six residential sectors that converge into a central spine comprising commercial and institutional areas. Each residential sector comprised several neighbourhood units. The units comprised several plots, arranged in rows that accommodated single family housing. The row houses were interrupted by service courtyards that were also used as small gathering spaces. Using a Sites and Services approach, each family was provided with a small plot and some level of service depending on their ability to pay. Public spaces in the neighbourhood units were specially designed to encourage social interaction. They were organized hierarchically and interconnected to form a pedestrian network that tied the whole settlement. The smallest public spaces were the services courtyards shared between 10 houses. These were interconnected via pedestrian pathways that run along the center of each neighbourhood unit and connect it to the sector green axes. The sector green axes run along the center of each sector and link it to the main business district, resulting in a well-connected network of public spaces. This network of public spaces spanning from the neighbourhood unit to the township scale has resulted in a neighbourhood life characterized by cooperation among the residents, tolerance and a cohesive social network.

Source: UN-Habitat (2014). Planned City Extensions: Analysis of Historical Examples

A network of green public spaces in Aranya
© UN-Habitat

Case Study 16

PLANNING PUBLIC SPACE AS A SYSTEM: VISION FOR PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACE - MIAMI, US

The following action is a good example of planning the public space system for a big city.

Miami's Vision for the 21st century envisages "a connected system of new and renewed parks and public spaces to meet the needs of its diverse citizenry, with more ways to experience water, more places to play, greener and safer routes for pedestrians and bikers, and more nature in the city. Every resident will be able to walk safely and comfortably to a park. An array of recreational programs and facilities will serve people of all ages and abilities. Public spaces will incorporate celebration of Miami's tropical and international identity. Design excellence, sustainable management, effective partnerships, and a high level of service to the community will be the hallmarks of Miami's parks and public spaces".

The nine principles adopted to accompany Miami's Vision are also worth noting:
- Recognize that access is more important than acreage

A sketch of the future park system
© MiamiDDA

- Preserve and enhance existing parks and open spaces
- Expand resources without acquiring more land
- Acquire land in priority and underserved areas
- Make access real through strong connections
- Make Miami's park system the country's greenest and most sustainable
- Design counts — for beauty, function and durability
- Make lots of friends: enhance community participation and partnerships
- Fine-tune management and diversify funding

Source: www.miamidda.com/pdf/parks_public_spaces.pdf

Case Study 17

LINEAR PARK - AGUAS CALIENTES, MEXICO

La Línea Verde — The Green Line — is a 12-kilometre long linear park that is one of Latin America's most extraordinary urban green spaces. It is the brainchild of Lorena Martínez, Mayor of Aguascalientes from 2011 to 2013, whose vision was to restructure the tattered social fabric of the area by focusing on crime reduction. Originally a long piece of land running through a crowded corner of the city of 1.3 million people, the strip followed the narrow path of an underground oil pipeline. Before restoration, the strip was strewn with garbage and was a haven for criminals; now, the city has reclaimed almost all of this passage for the 300,000 people who live near it. It is a favourite city park with facilities such as a low-cost gym, two state-of-the-art boxing rooms, a swimming pool, children's playground and other spots where people exercise outdoors, and a social programme that organises cultural and sports activities. This innovative public space renewal project was implemented with the participation of the community, through community meetings to approve the various elements of the plan, and

was funded by several federal agencies, Pemex, the national oil company that owns the pipelines crossing through all those neighbourhoods, and the city.

Source: Ana Arana, Citiscope. http://www.citiscope.org/story/2014/mexico-city%E2%80%99s-scar-becomes-its-most-prized-park-la-l%C3%ADnea-verde

Case Study 18
PUBLIC SPACE AS A SYSTEM: HOW A CITY ON WATER WORKS - VENICE, ITALY

The planning of public space systems is not a brand new concept. Venice is a good example of the overlapping of different networks that has been working for centuries.

Venice is a shrinking city. It has been losing population steadily over the last 50 years or so. This phenomenon is due to a combination of factors, paramount among them the fact that it has few jobs to offer and that housing is expensive. However, those who choose to

remain, old and young, appreciate its unique features. Among them is the fact that Venice works as an efficient public space system. This system is based on the overlay of two mobility grids. The first, used for the transport of passengers and goods, is made up of the city's pervasive network of waterways. The second is a pedestrian web of lanes, bridges and piazzas (*campi*), none of them very far from a waterbus stop on the Grand Canal.

Many old cities were established as pedestrian cities and some continue to have that role where the topography has made car traffic impossible, or where the economy and social networks are still based on foot traffic. Venice enjoys an entirely special status among the old pedestrian cities for, with its narrow streets and many canal bridges, cars have been prevented from gaining access. Venice has everything: dense structure, short walking distances, beautiful courses of space, high degree of mixed use, active ground floors and all in a human scale.
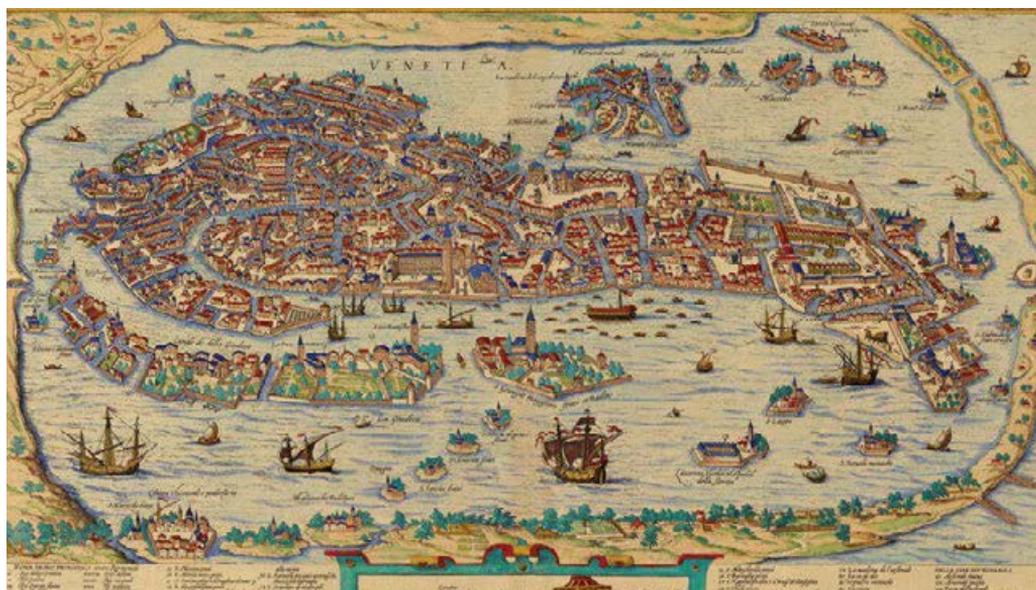
Venice in Braun and Hogenberg Civitates Orbis Terrarium (Atlas of Cities of the World)
© Historic Cities

> ## The urban public-space system requires a unitary view. […] It is therefore advisable for local governments to adopt a specific strategy for public-space networks.
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 21)

To be able to achieve the holistic view of public space as a connective matrix local governments need to develop and adopt an integrated, holistic strategy to guide urban development. Good public spaces can play a decisive role in this regard by:

- Allowing for orderly and rational development (street grids).
- Allowing for efficient circulation systems (streets, metros, bus lanes, cycling paths and walking paths).
- Attracting investment, uses and activities thus enhancing safety.
- Providing vital opportunities for recreation thus improving general good health and wellbeing.
- Increasing property values thus generating additional municipal revenue.
- Providing opportunities for economic interaction and consequent enhanced-livelihood opportunities.
- Contributing value added to a city's cultural, historical and architectural endowment thus enhancing urban attractiveness and promoting tourism.

Case Study 19
INSTITUTE OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (IDU) - BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

The Municipality of Bogotá recognizes the importance and strategic role of transportation and public space systems. With this in mind, Bogotá created the *Instituto de Desarollo Urbano* (IDU) in 1972.

The IDU's mission is to develop sustainable projects to improve mobility in terms of equity, integration, safety and access for the inhabitants of Bogotá.

The strategic objectives are to:

- Implement projects established in the Development Plan *Bogotá Humana* to improve and preserve transportation and public space systems respecting all forms of life, water, environment and the dignity of human beings as central elements of development.
- Guarantee the sustainability and maintenance of the system.
- Strengthen the know how for the implementation of sustainable projects.
- Reinforce the role of institutional management in generating more confidence in citizens and public officials.
- Strengthen the institution's efficiency and transparency.

The IDU has built and maintained bike paths, pavements, pedestrian bridges, areas under bridges, curbs, alleys, squares and plazas. It has also carried out maintenance on monuments and other cultural assets. All this has been done to create a more democratic and egalitarian city, and has had a positive impact on living standards and the pride the residents feel for their city.

Source: Martha Fajardo (2005). The Transformation of Public Space in Bogotà: Time as a Catalyst

Design of Public Space

Every public space should be designed with full consideration for diversity.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 16)

Many approaches can be used to involve communities and specific groups of users in the creation, design and management of public space. New technologies and media can allow designers and promoters to stimulate creative practices.

Case Study 20
STREET KIDS LIBERATION FRONT - SASSARI, ITALY

In the case presented below, the creative tools adopted were storytelling and making children the centrepiece of the project.

The project was run by an interdisciplinary group composed of four women researchers from the University of Sassari, called *TaMaLaCà - tuttamialacittà* (the city's all mine). The project involves the historical neighbourhood of San Donato, one of the most disadvantaged urban districts in the old core of the city of Sassari, Sardinia.

The project's main goal was to free streets and public spaces from cars, and create more space for pedestrian activities. A joyful, ironic and vigorous communication campaign was developed using several media and involving primary school children. They accepted the challenge to improve their urban environment for the benefit of their grandchildren of 2046.

Storytelling was an extremely useful tool for showing children that their actions today could really make a difference in the future.
The inhabitants – together with municipal administrators, teachers, architects and urban planners – have been 'infected' by the enthusiasm of the children and have been encouraged to reconquer the forgotten and neglected public spaces of their neighbourhood through colour, play and self-building. The project received first prize at the 2013 Biennial of European Towns and Town Planners.

Source: http://www.tamalaca.uniss.it

Children in Sassari Italy participate in recreating public space
© Tamalacà

> **Eliminating and/or overcoming the physical barriers that impede or limit access to certain categories of users is [therefore] a priority goal to pursue both in the design of new public spaces and in the adaptation of existing ones.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 23)

City governments should be fully committed to an inclusive society in which nobody is disadvantaged. An important part of delivering this commitment is breaking down unnecessary physical barriers and exclusions imposed on physically-challenged people by poor design of places and spaces. Local authorities need to consider access for physically-challenged persons and need to stress the importance of early consultations when formulating or preparing designs. Local planning authorities can put in place appropriate policies and control processes and suggest ways in which these can be implemented, making good economic sense as well as being socially responsible.

Case Study 21
A DESIGN MANUAL FOR A BARRIER FREE ENVIRONMENT - LEBANON

Designers should pay attention to public space accessibility on the part of users impaired by physical limitations and manuals can be a useful tool to improve this skill.

The design manual was prepared by the Urban Management Department of the Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District (SOLIDERE) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and with the approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Committee for the Disabled.

It is an attempt to provide for the first time in Lebanon a design manual on accessibility for the disabled. It is a design guidebook made with the purpose of providing architects and designers with the basic information and data necessary for a barrier-free environment. Its intent is to establish standards and recommendations that will not only influence the development and reconstruction of the Beirut Central District but also assume national importance. The manual is expected to be a stimulus that will lead, in the long term, to the establishment of national building and planning legislation covering access for disabled people.

The manual deals with the technical considerations and design provisions or measures to be taken into account in the planning of the built-up environment. This includes issues related to the design of several complementary domains: open spaces and recreational areas, local roads and pathways, the immediate vicinity of buildings, building entrances and the interiors of buildings.

Currently about 50 to 60 per cent of the buildings in the Beirut Central District are judged to meet the accessibility code: renovated and rehabilitated buildings are internally accessible but are not always accessible on the exterior. To promote awareness among the civil society and the NGO community regarding the accessibility codes, an award was launched to recognize examples of good practice in the country. The example of SOLIDERE was cited as a relevant precedent in the Handicap Friendly Building award of the Republic of Singapore.

Source: www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/designm/index.html

Designing public spaces also means taking into account alternative and creative practices based on new techniques of communication and urban usage.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 20)

New technology can be used to create more equitable communities. New social technology is making democratic governance more of a social process. A city is the physical point at which thousands or millions of individual social networks overlap. The interaction between people is what flavours public spaces and makes one place feel distinct from the next. Technology is making it easier for people to connect to the places that they inhabit by levelling the social playing field. The tools that are being created are the means for bringing people together: to connect, to learn, to innovate and to feel welcome to do so. New techniques and media can be used as tools to involve communities and specific groups of users in the creation, design and management of public space. New tools can allow designers and promoters to stimulate creative practices,

Crowdsourcing public space design in Mexico City, Mexico
© UN-Habitat

such as planning and designing their streets and public spaces.

Case Study 22
MINECRAFT – A TOOL FOR PARTICIPATORY DESIGN WITH YOUNG PEOPLE - KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

Using a game as a participatory design tool to engage children and youth whose voices are seldom heard in planning processes.

Kirtipur is an old settlement in Kathmandu Valley which has maintained its traditional life style and culture. Like other urban settlements in the Kathamndu Valley, Kirtipur developed excellent systems for water and urban space management. Public water bodies such as ponds, stone spouts and wells are surrounded by public spaces used for relaxation, recreation and rituals. However, in the recent past, these spaces have suffered encroachment by inappropriate and inconsistent uses. The space for elderly to sunbathe, women to socialize and children to play is shrinking due to pressures from rapid urbanisation and there is, therefore, a strong need to conserve public spaces and water bodies, revitalizing the public spaces and returning the vibrancy of the cities in the modern context.

The main aim of UN-Habitat's project in Kirtipur is to contribute towards revitalizing it through a people-centred pond and public space management. The first phase of the project was implemented in the *Dey Pukhu* area of Kirtipur. *Dey Pukhu* (literally meaning state pond) is located at the east front of the most dominant temple of Kirtipur - the Bagh Bhairav Temple. This pond is surrounded by public spaces and houses, several temples, *Patis* (rest places) and monuments. As the central place of Kirtipur, this is a location for festivals or *Jatras* (carnivals) on special occasions; while on a daily basis it is utilised as a venue for socialization, recreation and a fresh vegetable market.

Since November 2013, UN-Habitat and its local implementing partner, the Centre for Integrated Urban Development (CIUD), have been working to conserve and enhance Dey Pukhu and surrounding areas through community participation and preparing plans for public space management with active participation from all stakeholders. The Minecraft game was used as a tool for participatory project planning and workshops organized to build the capacity of the local community and local government in public space management. After the public space around Dey Pukhu was improved, a plan for Revitalizing Kirtipur's Open Spaces was prepared with the active participation of the municipality and the local people; and at least 30 people and community leaders were trained on various aspects of public space

management. The experience from Dey Pukhu will be replicated in other sites within Kirtipur and the Kathmandu Metropolitan area.

Source: http://blockbyblock.org.

Case Study 23
MAP KIBERA - NAIROBI, KENYA

Mapping what exists in the community is a critical first step in understanding what is required to improve living conditions. Map Kibera is a crowd-sourced community-mapping project. Using tools from the volunteer global mapping project OpenStreetMap, the GroundTruth Initiative partnered with community organizations and local youth to create Health, Education, Water/Sanitation, and Safety/Security layers by pinpointing every water and sanitation location,

Minecraft design of a new public space in Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal
© UN-Habitat

security problem, school, church, mosque and health clinic. The information is uploaded directly onto an online map or gathered in workshops by marking and tracing over aerial imagery for the most current and reliable information. As part of the project, Voice of Kibera allows residents to share community information via news, videos, and SMS messages, which are added to the map using the Ushahidi platform.

Map Kibera has grown into a complete interactive community information project, serving the most marginalized communities as a local information and media source on an ongoing basis. In its advocacy, Map Kibera uses multiple types of information and technologies, forming local networks, building relationships among disparate groups within and across the slums.

The key steps include:
- Mobilization of community members
- Collection of data and development of materials, analysis
- Reporting back to the community and developing action plans
- Lobbying and advocacy
- Negotiation between consortium and government representatives

The mappers are all young community members, residents of the places they work in – primarily, the slums of Nairobi. They collect data with GPS devices, work with computers to edit and upload the map information and are also learning to do more complex cartography and GIS. Mapping may include surveys of the general features of the slum or other community such as pathways, clinics, water points and markets or might get into a great deal of detail in a specific subject such as health mapping. Map Kibera focuses its maps on public information because it wants to publish and share as much as possible in the community.

Source: http://mapkibera.org/

Within public-space networks it is also advisable to identify polarities and aggregative phenomena, with a view to prevent psychological obstacles from reinforcing physical ones.

The interconnection and improvement of public space as a strategy for upgrading peripheries and suburban areas should include improving connections, the enhancement of multi-functionality and access, and the reduction of phenomena of privatization and exclusion.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 22)

Many cities are poorly integrated with the peripheries and suburban areas and public transport, as a rule, does not encourage travel to destinations other than the inner city. What is required is a long-term strategy to physically link together the different parts of a city to form a more integrated urban environment. This would increase the opportunities for people from different neighbourhoods to meet and travel to work, education and leisure activities in a sustainable way.

Case Study 24
JIN-GU-YUAN MIXED-USE COMPLEX - KUNSHAN, CHINA

This China example shows the multifunctional use of public space, especially in a densely populated city.

The urban renewals brought by the Economic Reform since 1978 have changed Chinese cities

completely. However, the renewals have focused on improving the cities' economic infrastructure. Consequently, the 'non-productive' public space, especially the part serving average residents, has not received proportional attention. So Chinese cities today need more public space quantitatively.

Located west of Shanghai, the historical city of Kunshan has rapidly transformed into a major manufacturing center in the Yangtze River delta. With an area of 118 square kilometres and a population of 180,000, the central city is undergoing major urban renewals. The Jin-gu-yuan mixed-use complex site sits in one of the renewal zones, between a newly-completed gated residential development to its north and the Loujiang River to its south. The low-rise houses occupying the other areas surrounding the site will be all replaced by high-density developments, similar to the high-rise Jin-gu-yuan that has 155 apartments per hectare.

The problems in public space can be partially attributed to the conventional design approach that blindly imitates the urban form of European and US cities and ignores the unique conditions of Chinese cities. These conditions include the larger size of a city, the limited existing public space (especially the shortage of the nodal types), the hotter and longer summer, the poorer majority of the urbanities and the need to preserve arable land.

Many small public spaces are better than a few huge 'window-dressing' projects in a dense city. To carve out more public space, spaces have to be piled up, and one has to abandon the traditional 'horizontal' zoning that dictates a singular use for each parcel, either among different functions or between open space and a building site. In this project, the footprint of the building in the conventional design is shrunk and divided into five portions, creating five

gardens between the buildings. The need for a kindergarten has created the idea of a vertical space in the image of a hilltop village. The new layout not only makes the kindergarten more secure, which is a big issue in China, but also affords the children a better view of the river which would have been blocked by a wall under the conventional scheme. The five gardens have plenty of benches with many arranged in a centripetal form to provide settings for quiet social activities. There are small plazas for self-expression. The project also transformed the roofs of buildings into one volleyball and two badminton courts, satisfying the teenagers' needs which are often overlooked by planners. In this way, the largely-paved gardens will accommodate many residents' activities which might not be possible in their small apartments. In festival seasons, it can be transformed into a stage or playground.

Source: http://www.pumiao.net/Pu-Miao-designs/jin-gu-yuan

Case Study 25
METROCABLE - MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA

Medellín is a tale of two cities: a formal, consolidated one built along a river valley and a densely-populated informal one that developed in the surrounding hillsides. In 1991, Colombia's second-largest city was the most violent in the world. By connecting marginalized parts of the city to its safer, more established areas, Medellín's government has transformed it into an inclusive metropolis. Public transportation, entwined with social and physical interventions, has brought the homicide rate down from a high of 381 per 100,000 residents to just 26 in 2007.

Running 20 hours a day, elevated cable cars link remote informal settlements to the central metro system. What could take up to two hours on a crowded minibus now only takes seven minutes. Integral Urban Projects (*Proyectos Urbanos*

Integrales or PUI) focused the city's resources on specific locations characterized by poverty and social unrest with a grand vision of providing the best public buildings and transportation system for the poorest parts of the city.

The first of four PUI, the project consolidated efforts for 11 Northeast neighbourhoods and the construction of a 2-kilometre (1.2-mile) long Metrocable Line K reaching 170,000 residents. Barrio centres were redefined with the location of the cable pylons, adjacent public libraries and parks and improved streetscapes. The first, Santo Domingo Library and Park, supports library services and created space for recreation and community events. Ten new public schools were built and another 130 were renovated. New pedestrian walkways and bridges unite neighbourhoods previously ruled by rival gangs. There is now a greater sense of participation and residents from the rest of the city visit Santo Domingo and other reclaimed neighbourhoods for social outings.

Before the implementation of the Metrocable, residents of the Santo Domingo barrio spent upwards of 2½ hours commuting to work each way. At the centre of the strategy to reclaim the slums is a transportation system that now includes subways, the cable car, hillside escalators and even public libraries at metro stations. It creates a sense of belonging and people of the hillside slums now feel part of the city. To change the dynamic local governments have employed a kind of 'urban acupuncture' bringing to bear a welter of programmes designed to reach long-neglected shanty towns. With a USD88 million budget in 2014, the plan provides transportation at critical points and promotes education, culture, health and the deployment of security forces. The Metrocable opened in 2004 and the subway system has also added a bicycle rental service. But the most striking initiative is a system of outdoor escalators that has served Comuna 13, one of the poorest and most violent areas in Medellin, since December 2011. Instead of trudging up 350 concrete steps, residents now take escalators. Projects such as the Metrocable, the metro, the escalators and the libraries imply the presence of the state in places in the city that had been abandoned.

The metrocable in Medellin, Colombia
© Michaelpuche/Shutterstock.com

The metrocable approaching a station, Medellin,Colombia
© Flickr/Dairo Correa

In extension plans of newly urbanizing cities, whose population will double over the next 10-20 years, it is very important to guarantee sufficient amounts of well-connected and adequately proportioned public spaces.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 24)

Conventional planning and management are often not adapted to the dynamics of urban growth. This has resulted in growth of slums and gated communities which, in turn, make cities ineffective in supporting adequate living conditions, inclusion and economic progress. Adopting a proactive planning approach and a clear and credible plan which prioritizes an adequate quantity of public space and an efficient layout and definition of streets will support effective urban systems and access to public services, enhancing connectivity and social cohesion/capital.

Case Study 26
VILLA EL SALVADOR - LIMA, PERU

This experience is a real-life, successful example of how correct planning sequences starting from the organization of public space can lead to successful and sustainable urban living environments.

The urbanization of Villa el Salvador took place in a relatively short period (1971-1990). The settlement began when 80 families invaded the area of Pamplona in Lima. Following some days of tension, the families were relocated to an alternative site. Plans for the new settlement were drawn by a local architect. The original settlement limited itself to marking street and plot limits and assigning building lots. There were no services or facilities and, initially, water was distributed daily by government trucks. Services such as electricity or running water and facilities came later as a result of the demands of the population. Housing was meant to be incremental and self-built; the first shelters were simple – in 1971 they were

1. Huascar zonal park SW-NE avenues with central open spaces:
2. Av 1 de Mayo
3. Av el Sol
4. Av Juan Velasco Alvarado
5. Av Cesa Vallejo
6. Av Jose Carlos Mariategui
7. Av 200 millas

Facilities
Open spaces
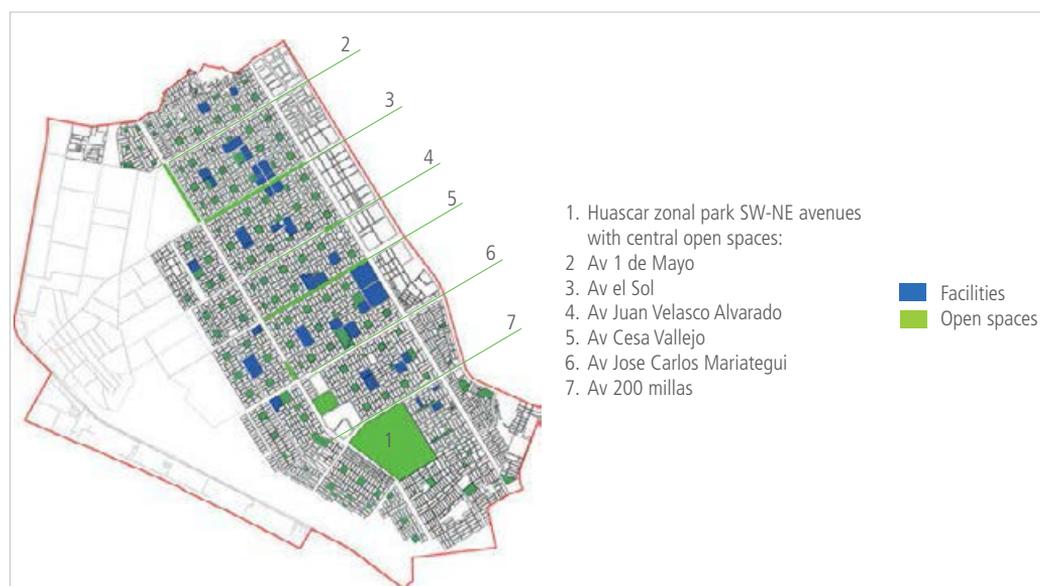
Plan of Villa el Salvador, Lima, Peru
© UN-Habitat/Ana Coello

made with straw mats. Currently, most houses are built with tin or timber walls and frames.

The Villa el Salvador master plan put in place a grid and defined and assigned housing lots according to this general organization. The grid served as a basic structure for the spatial layout of the city. The settlement was laid out in modules – each module consisting of 16 identical blocks grouped around a common space. These neighbourhood open spaces were provided with basic recreational facilities (sports and playgrounds). At the district level, larger open spaces such as the Huascar zonal park and the linear promenades in the main SW-NE avenues were provided. Facilities were also organized hierarchically. In the core of each module there was a neighbourhood facility (basic educational centre and/or women's association) and/or an open recreational area. Larger facilities (such as primary and secondary schools, churches, health centres and markets), were shared by several modules.

Source: UN-Habitat (2014). Planned City Extensions: Analysis of Historical Examples. Nairobi. UN-HABITAT.

Design must pay full attention to maintenance and management costs by using simple solutions and materials that are durable, simple, easily replaceable and climatically adequate.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 25)

Planning for the maintenance of new public spaces is absolutely fundamental and should be considered in the design process. There is no point in investing scarce resources in revitalizing public spaces if there are no plans in place or the resources to look after them afterwards. The challenge is to keep going with less money, while safeguarding the service and quality expected by local people. Therefore, using simple solutions and materials that are durable, simple and easily replaced is absolutely key for sustainability. There are many ways to apply creative design to the need to keep construction and maintenance costs within acceptable limits.

Here we present two examples. The one in Plóvdiv relied on recycling and the one in Djenne employed traditional materials.

An aerial view of Villa el Salvador, Lima, Peru
© Flickr/David Almeida

Santa Ifigenia viaduct, Sao Paulo, Brazil is marred by lack of maintenance © Frazao Production/Shutterstock.com

Case Study 27
A MOBILE LIBRARY - PLÓVDIV, BULGARIA

This example of the mobile library is an innovative way of reusing and recycling.

The idea of this project was to create a mobile library inside a disused trolley bus. Salvaged from the municipal bus depot, the trolley bus was installed in Otets Paisiy Street where it was transformed thanks to the voluntary efforts of some 20 people who worked on it day and night for two weeks. A good number of the seats were removed to provide space for three study tables, several reading corners and eight bookshelves housing some 600 volumes. In the back section of the bus, an area was reserved for young children and used for playing, storytelling and activities with colouring books. The bus was equipped with lighting, Internet and piped music. The floor was renovated and the doors were covered with historic photographs of the city, while the exterior of the trolley bus was painted in bright colours and decorated with designs conveying festive and positive messages.

Source: www.publicspace.org, http://studio812.eu/

Inside the mobile library, Bulgaria
© Studio 8 ½

Case Study 28
GREAT MOSQUE - DJENNÉ, MALI

The great mosque in Djenne is a good example of using local materials which suit the climate.

Built in 1907 in the flood plains of the Bani River in Mali, the Great Mosque of Djenne is one of the architectural wonders of Africa and was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1988. Djenné became a market centre and an important link in the trans-Saharan gold trade. In the 15th and 16th centuries, it was one of the centres for the propagation of Islam. The building is an ensemble that over many years has symbolised the typical African city. It is also particularly representative of Islamic architecture in sub-Saharan Africa.

Overlooking the market place, the mosque is constructed of sun-baked earth bricks that are held together with a sand and earth mortar, and plastered with mud to give a smooth finish. The walls of the building are embedded with palm rods that stick out 60cm: these are not only decorative, but also practical as they serve as scaffolding for the annual repairs. The building is raised on a platform three metres

Great mosque of Djenné, Mali
© Flickr/Ramel Jocinto

above the marketplace which protects it when the Bani River floods. The roof is constructed of palm-covered mud with ceramic gutters that direct rain water from the walls. The thick mud walls insulate the building from the heat and small covered vents in the roof – when opened - release hot air from the interior; this allows for a cool interior in a region that has an average temperature of 40°C during the hottest months. During the night, the thick walls have absorbed enough heat and keep the interior of the mosque warm. Though the roof and walls are exposed to erosion, the repair and maintenance of the temple is a participatory effort celebrated in an annual festival with food and music. All members of the community are involved and designated with distinct roles: men, women, children, the elderly and the community masons.

Source: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/116

Women walk on the roof of the Great Mosque of Djenné, Mali
© Flickr/United Nations Photo

The upgrading of unused public sites is a great opportunity for enhancing the supply and quality of urban public space. In designing the re-use of privately owned derelict sites, the extension and design of new public spaces must take into account both environmental considerations (and eventual shortcomings to compensate) and the socio-economic interrelations within the entire urban sector they are to be part of.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 26)

Unused public sites, especially in informal settlements, are a great opportunity for increasing supply and quality of public space. Many informal settlements lack areas for communal activities and re-designing and reusing these unused spaces can only foster reducing crime and violence and build social cohesion. Such spaces should be used productively for playgrounds and meetings areas.

Case Study 29
OPERA DE ARAME - CURITIBA, BRAZIL

With urban recycling coming into the picture, the example of Curitiba could not be ignored. Here is the brief account of how a derelict former quarry became a remarkable piece of sustainable architecture and inventive urban landscape.

In his book "Acupuntura Urbana" Jaime Lerner, former mayor of Curitiba, Governor of the State of Paraná and past President of the International Union of Architects, tells this story about recycling a derelict site in his city: "The Opera de Arame, built on the site of an old quarry, was constructed in 60 days.

The idea was not to beat records. But certain works, for particular reasons, have to be quick. In the case of the Opera de Arame, the reason was not to miss the opportunity of holding an international theatre festival. A political squabble between the promoters and the state governor had ruled out the use of the Guaira, the most important theatre in the city. Therefore it was necessary to complete the Opera de Arame in time for the festival to be held there. We started on 15 January. Two months later, on 18 March, we inaugurated the new theatre. In order to beat the deadline we worked with one material alone, steel pipes, and we used a bid only for the construction contract. It was an odyssey".

Odyssey it was but decades later the Opera de Arame still stands and is the venue for a variety of cultural events. An abandoned quarry became a permanent and remarkable public space on the strength of urgency, which can often lead to timeless works, and became a landmark of what was to become one of Curitiba's landmarks - recycling.

Source: Lerner, Jaime (2005).Urban Acupuncture. Barcelona: IAAC (Institut d'Architecture Avançada de Catalunya)

Case Study 30
PLATFORM OF HOPE - DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Dhaka is the fastest-growing megacity in the world. Karail, its largest slum with a population of 120,000, has little open public space. An architect in collaboration with a family from Karail initiated a new public space called the Platform of Hope. Over a three-year period starting in 2008, the architect and the family, with help from a local carpenter and bamboo worker, designed and built the 5.5 x 11 metre platform extending over Gulshan Lake. A bamboo bridge connects it to a lush community garden.

Designed for children living in the settlement, it is a clean, new space in which they can play, sing, dance, interact and read books from a small library. In the evening, families gather for relaxation and enjoy the view over the water. The Platform of Hope stands in stark contrast to the constant threat of eviction with which the Karail residents live, without security of tenure, on land that is becoming ever more valuable.

Source: Smithsonian Institution (2011). Design with the other 90%: Cities. New York: Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum.

Opera de Arame, Curitiba, Brazil
© Flickr/Ana Paula Hirama

Platform of hope, Dhaka, Bangladesh
© designother90

The role of urban public spaces for environmental regulation (drainage, microclimate...), the environmental protection of ecologically valuable areas (river banks, wetlands, biodiversity) and the reduction of urban environmental risks must be taken into account both in the design and management phases.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 27)

Urban green space includes everything in cities that has vegetation. Collectively it is sometimes referred to as 'green infrastructure', encompassing the entire working landscape in cities that serve roles such as improving air quality, flood protection and pollution control. Grey space is defined as the built environment and incorporates buildings, pavements and roads. These were traditionally seen as being of limited benefit to the protection of ecology and biodiversity and were rarely, if ever, designed with biodiversity considerations in mind. Incorporating features which combine environmental improvement with the creation of attractive public spaces can reduce environmental risks.

The example chosen to illustrate this principle has relied on participatory techniques to help combine environmental improvement with the creation of attractive public space.

Case Study 31
INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND PUBLIC SPACE - CONNECTICUT, USA

In 2008, the Connecticut State Water Pollution Control Authority began to evaluate the condition of the Rippowam/Mill River, which runs through the entire length of the city of Stanford. Concerned about water quality and outflow, the Authority hired environmental engineer CDM to study existing conditions and help restore the river to its natural flood plain downtown. CDM enlisted Project for Public Spaces (PPS) to improve public access to the river, as well as develop public spaces along the water that better integrate the waterway into the community.

PPS worked to determine existing points of access along the river, and conducted public workshops at five points along the water, including the site of a new waterfront park under development by the city. Workshops were used to elicit ideas for appropriate uses and activities along the river, helping the community envision the riverside's potential.

Source: https://www.pps.org/projects/rippowam-mill-river-watershed-restoration/

Rippowam Mill River Watershed Restoration
© PPS

In areas destroyed by catastrophic events, public spaces must be the starting point of the reconstruction process.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 28)

After devastating catastrophic events, many communities remain extremely vulnerable to natural hazards. Helping reconstruct communities and build resilience against future disasters starts with the revitalization of public spaces, which is a crucial part of building socially-integrated and resilient environments.

Public spaces are seldom prioritized when communities are rehabilitated in the aftermath of disasters. This example has been chosen to show how participatory approaches to post-disaster planning can achieve results even in particularly difficult circumstances.

Case Study 32
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING PROJECT (URBANISME PARTICIPATIF) - PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI

One of UN-Habitat's post-earthquake tasks in Haiti was a Participatory Planning Project (Urbanisme Participatif) in the informal settlement of Carrefourfeuilles on a hill overlooking the Old Town. One of the thrusts of the project was to create conditions favourable to community life through public spaces and social and cultural facilities. The protection and development of public spaces, so rare in informal settlements, was a priority - particularly in this post-disaster situation where open spaces were occupied immediately by haphazard construction or temporary shelters, which were rapidly becoming permanent.

The planning strategy focused on two aspects:
- Creating public spaces capable of offering opportunities for convivial living, communal activities and leisure through a 'living core' in each neighbourhood, integrating pleasant and well-lit public spaces capable of promoting social life in satisfactory conditions.
- Creating facilities for hosting social and cultural activities for the benefit of local organizations engaged in animating and improving neighbourhood life.

Source: www.unhabitat.org
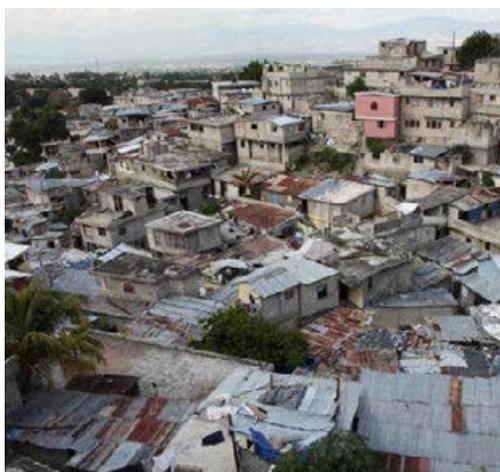
An over view of informal settlement in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
© UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

The creation, improvement and management of public spaces can provide an opportunity for new job creation and private investment […]

(Charter of Public Space, para. 29)

Making great public spaces and street connections has to do with creating an environment that will be attractive for business (both formal and informal). Cities need great places to provide the settings for busy, vibrant places to exchange goods and ideas, places where connections can happen, where productivity and creativity increase and where networks foster collaboration and innovation. This principle corresponds to one of the points elaborated in the 'Case for Public Space' narration in the first part of this toolkit. While the merits of public space for job creation and attracting private investment are self-evident in 'normal' contexts, the challenge has been to provide an example of how the same principle can work in an informal urban settlement.

Case Study 33
KIBERA PUBLIC SPACE PROJECT - NAIROBI, KENYA

Since 2006, the Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI) has worked in Kibera—the largest slum in Nairobi, Kenya — to transform the polluted waterway that weaves through the settlement into a lively spine of 'Productive Public Spaces' that provide community amenities, economic opportunities, and social life. In Kibera, open space is rare. The Kibera Public Space Project is a network of seven (and growing) productive public spaces that improve the physical, economic, and social quality of life in the slum. Each Productive Public Space is a waste space identified and transformed in partnership with a Kibera Community Group.

Through an intensely collaborative process facilitated by the Kounkuey Design Initiative, residents first identify their needs and typically cite water and sanitation infrastructure and income generation as their greatest priorities. Next, the residents design a physical space and programming to meet their expressed needs, raise a portion of the required funding and build and organize the management of the Productive Public Space.

A typical Productive Public Space may start as a hazardous neighbourhood dumping site but, over the course of one year, becomes a welcoming public space that provides basic amenities such as clean water, toilets, schools, and playgrounds; offers income-generating assets such as community gardens and small-business kiosks and delivers educational and social development opportunities which include entrepreneurship and technology training, leadership learning, primary education and a multitude of recreational opportunities. The small businesses divert a portion of their profit into a site maintenance fund managed by the community, making the space. financially and operationally self-sufficient.

Source: www.kounkuey.org

Kibera Public Space Project, Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat

> **Interdisciplinary and participatory approaches to public-space design are an exciting opportunity for planners, landscape professionals, architects, technicians and designers to express fully their social roles.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 30)

This principle is illustrated by three examples. The first is creativity and originality at their best: a soccer pitch is reinvented into unpredictable surfaces for the joy of all. The second and the third one are, respectively, an award and an event, both designed to elicit and disseminate good design practices.

Case Study 34
PUCKELBOLL PARK - MALMÖ, SWEDEN

Puckelboll, a new sport, was created by a Swedish artist and established in Kroksbäck housing estate in Malmo as an initiative aimed at social integration in a neighbourhood with a diverse cultural population. The name Puckelboll is derived from the Swedish word puckel, which

Children at the Puckeboll field
© David Puig Serinya

means hump, as the game is played on a bumpy football field. The bumpy field means the game is not governed by players' skills, but by mere chance. This means that age and gender differences have little influence in the outcome of the games and, instead of the games being competitive, they are more like a shared experience, full of fun and surprises, inviting more imaginative forms of play. Since it was opened to the public, Puckelboll has become a major attraction for the young people and children of the neighbourhood as well as from further afield, and it provides a meeting point and place of interaction among different kinds of people. The fact that the residents and youth associations of the zone actively participated in the explanatory sessions of the initiative – during design and construction phases – has created a sense of ownership and pride for the public space in the neighbourhood.

Source: www.publicspace.org/en/works/g285-puckelboll-i-kroksbaecksparken

Case Study 35
THE EUROPEAN PRIZE ON URBAN SPACE

The European Prize for Urban Public Space is a biennial competition that aims to recognize and encourage the creation, recovery and improvement of public space in the understanding that the state of public space is a clear indicator of the civic and collective health of our cities.

The prize-winning works, the finalists and a selection made by the Jury are published in the European Archive of Urban Public Space, which brings together and makes available to the public the best projects that have been presented in the competition since its inception. The criteria that govern selection of the prize-winning projects are concerned with the quality of the work from a strictly architectural point of view, and also with other aspects such as the

effects of the urban transformation that has taken place in the specific setting and its impact on collective life:

- The explicitly urban nature of the intervention. The size of the city or town is not a limiting factor although priority will be given to medium-sized or large municipalities and those with a more general urban significance;
- The public ownership and/or clearly public-spirited vocation of the project;
- Appropriateness of interventions to the functions required of public space, from those directly linked with citizens' occupation of a space, through to those pertaining to the collective imaginary;
- Capacity of the interventions to reduce social fractures within the city and eliminate physical and/ or symbolic barriers in order to enhance quality of life for the inhabitants;
- Contribution of the projects in the domain of environmental improvement, in promoting public transport and innovation in the treatment of public installations, energy resources and urban waste;
- The degree of citizen participation and engagement in the conception, production and/or subsequent maintenance of the space. Degree of acceptance of the project by users;
- Transversal character of the planning concepts and/or objectives that have guided the project (sociology, demography, history, architecture, economy, engineering, landscaping, anthropology).

Source: www.publicspace.org/e

Case Study 36
THE BIENNIAL OF PUBLIC SPACE - ROME, ITALY

Interdisciplinary and participatory approaches can be greatly facilitated by regular events where different issues, different disciplines, and different actors can maintain a permanent dialogue on the creation, management and enjoyment of public space. One such event is the Biennial of Public Space, a gathering held in Rome every two years in the former municipal abattoir now converted into a vast public space, and hosted by the Faculty of Architecture of Rome's Third University.

The Bienniale functions as a virtual public space. It requires no formal registration, opens its doors free of charge, and encourages the participation of all, regardless of their background or affiliation: associations and committees, scholars, students, professionals, performers, entrepreneurs, citizens.

The Bienniale's 2013 edition gave the floor to 700 national and international speakers in plenary sessions, seminars and workshops.

Source: www.biennalespaziopubblico.it

Discussions during the 2011 Biennial of Public Space
© Eugenio Monti

Perceived or real insecurity in public spaces, with consequent effects of limited use, abandonment and decline.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 31)

Being able to walk safely is a prerequisite for creating inviting well-functioning cities for people. Experienced as well as perceived feelings of insecurity is detrimental for life in the city. Creating an open society in which people from all socioeconomic groups can move about side-by-side in the common areas of the city as they go about their daily business is the key to safety. Life on the street has an impact on safety but life along the street also plays a significant role. Urban areas promoting mixed use, providing activities around the clock and encouraging a social mix reinforce safety.

Case Study 37
VERTICAL GYM - CARACAS, VENEZUELA

Limited land and high crime rates in the dense informal settlements and slums of Caracas made it unsafe for children to play and

practice sports. In the *Chacao's Barrio La Cruz* neighbourhood a rundown sports field was transformed into a vertical gym: a four-story sports, recreation and cultural event facility. Through a participatory process the architects built up on the 1,000m² site without displacing any families. The popular, new public space, with about 15,000 users a month, has helped to reduce crime in the neighbourhood by more than 30 per cent by offering a safe, open space that nurtures fair play, tolerance and civic community through sports.

The project consists of a prefabricated bolted-steel construction system erected onsite. A ramp provides access to all the levels, eliminating the expense of a lift. The final design incorporates recycled materials, wind towers, solar panels and rainwater collection to reduce environmental impact and operational costs. The structure is conceived as a kit of parts, to allow flexible design and construction so that the structure can be built in different sites with great adaptability.

The city's government is constructing four additional vertical gyms: one in Baruta with an outdoor market, another in Los Teques with an aquatic centre, a third in Ceiba with a library and a metrocable station and the final one in El Dorado which will include space for street vendors.

Source: Smithsonian Institution (2011). Design with the other 90%: Cities. New York: Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum.

Chacao's vertical gym
© UTT/Daniel Schwatz

Case Study 38
BETTER LIGHTING, WIDER PAVEMENTS: STEPS TOWARDS PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE - NEW DELHI, INDIA

Safety audits were conducted in five municipal areas of Delhi, as part of the 'Safer Cities Free of Violence against Women and Girls Initiative' by UN Women in partnership with UN-Habitat, the Government of Delhi and Jagori (an NGO). The findings were analysed in January 2013 and some recommendations were included in the ground-breaking Justice Verma Committee report of February 2013. The Government of India appointed the Committee to review the existing laws and provisions on violence against women after the brutal gang rape and subsequent death of a 23-year-old in Delhi in December 2012. A Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013 was passed by the Indian Parliament and subsequently approved by the President on 3 April of that year.

The audits have been conducted in low-income neighbourhoods as well as markets, bus terminals, metro stations and along the route that girls take to school. The findings concluded that poor lighting near bus stops, lack of well-maintained public toilets and the absence of pavements make women feel unsafe. Women are also most likely to need access to services such as telephone booths, police and 24-hour hospitals, especially in markets and bus terminals. Never before was violence against women considered an urban planning problem. But now more urban planners and policymakers are reviewing urban design and management of public spaces.

The Ministry of Urban Development used the recommendations to expand the street lighting infrastructure in Delhi. The Delhi Government has adopted the safety audit methodology, giving women a voice and incorporating their concerns into planning.

Source: www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/5/better-lighting-wider-pavements-steps-towards-preventing-sexual-violence-in-new-delhi#sthash.BDsiV8aV.dpuf

Lighting makes streets safer for women in Old Delhi, India
© Flickr/Alan Morgan

A busy street in New Delhi, India
© UN-Habitat/Cecilia Andersson

Management of Public Space

> **The management of public space is a prevalent responsibility of local authorities. In order to be discharged successfully, this role requires the active collaboration of citizens, civil society and the private sector.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 32)

Well-designed and well-managed public spaces bring communities together. With the right knowledge and resources, community groups can become more actively involved, particularly in underused or neglected spaces, either by managing the space themselves or by licensing or leasing the space from the local authority and taking ownership of it for the benefit of the community.

Structured partnerships can take different forms and are supported by legal instruments, city improvement districts, land use and community contracts. Local governments can adopt laws to transfer land where it promotes social, economic and environmental well-being for less than the market value. Many benefits of transferring land to community groups exist because people who live closest to the space care for it the most. Transfers can therefore generate better quality public spaces which respond to local demand. They can also boost local employment and improve skills and generate more effective working partnerships between local authorities, communities and the private sector.

Case Study 39
CITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (CIDs) - JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

In Johannesburg, City Improvement Districts (CIDs) enjoy the support of the public authorities and have become part and parcel of urban regeneration policies. The City of Johannesburg started implementing City Improvement Districts in reaction to the general shabbiness and decay in the inner city and the high level of violence. The first one stretched over a few blocks in the Central Business District and focused on security, cleaning and maintenance and the upgrading of facilities for informal traders. It is said to have been successful in its impact on crime levels.

Johannesburg's model of a City Improvement District was not restricted to the inner city and rapidly spread to other parts of the city under the leadership of the Partnership for Urban Renewal and the Kagiso Urban Management, two organisations set up by the city. CIDs embody new forms of public private partnership in the delivery of services. The services provided by them are supplementary to those provided by the local authority and operate exclusively within the boundaries of each CID. They usually include security, cleaning and maintenance of public spaces, marketing, physical improvements and special programmes to address aspects such as transportation, access and parking. Some CIDs also include social programmes such as the creation of a Homeless Association, development of income-generating activities and a car guard scheme employing the homeless.

CIDs developed in retail, commercial, industrial and mixed use nodes and are also active in the fields of urban design. They have developed a wide range of activities through branding and landscaping that are

intimately connected to the various practices of placemaking and place promoting. In the inner cities, urban design activities include the transformation and upgrading of public space through capital improvement, landscaping and pedestrianisation.

However, the implementation of CIDs also raises issues with regard to the goals of redistribution and the fight against inequalities. CIDs risk accentuating intra-urban inequalities and social polarisation through interventions targeted to improve land and housing values and projects prioritising economic objectives over social issues.

Source: Pütz Robert (2008). Business Improvement Districts. Geographische Handelsforschung, Vol 14.

Case Study 40
CITY PARK - BONDO, KENYA

The creation and upkeep of a small city park with the active collaboration of citizens can happen in a town not especially endowed with resources, simply on the strength of civic pride and a love for good public space.

Marking out the new city park in Bondo, Kenya.
© UN-Habitat/Valerio Audisio

In Bondo, a small town in western Kenya, the need to upgrade the old municipal market had triggered a public debate among citizens and shop owners. The final decision was to relocate the market to a nearby site and to convert the original site into the first park in the town's history.

In 2011, the construction of the new market was completed, the market stalls moved to the new site and the construction of the park began. Now the small park is there to be enjoyed by all for a variety of uses, including meetings, relaxation and, one day, shelter from the heat under of the shade of the new trees.

Source: Sapienza Millenium University, Studio in Bondo.

Case Study 41
ADOPT A PLOT, NEWCASTLE, UNITED KINGDOM

Newcastle was facing challenges in its parks, public places and green open spaces. In response to this the city developed a strategy to make the city spaces cleaner, safer and greener. This is part of the City's Going for Growth regeneration vision and is helping to create a Newcastle where people want to live. One of the strategies launched to engage communities in managing public spaces was the 'Adopt a plot' which is a citywide scheme allowing individuals or groups of neighbours to manage and maintain a piece of council-owned land. The plots can be any size from a few square meters to a large open space. Participants in the scheme can improve the plot with bulb and shrub planting and so on. The plot is identified by address and indicated on a location map, which is provided by Newcastle City Council. All participants are made aware that a license does not entitle legal ownership over the plot but protects the Council's position and gives the licensee appropriate rights and protection.

Source: www.newcastle.gov.uk

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> **The participation of citizens and in particular of communities of residents is of crucial importance for the maintenance and management of public spaces, particularly in situations of poverty and limited public resources, such as those in the developing countries. Partnership arrangements between citizens, local governments and private concerns are of relevant importance in all circumstances.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 44)

Well-designed and well-managed public spaces bring communities together. Many neighbourhood groups, such as residents' associations or friends' groups, already influence how their local spaces are managed, providing hands-on, practical support through volunteering. With the right knowledge and resources, community groups can become even more actively involved, particularly in underused or neglected spaces, either by managing the space themselves or by licensing or leasing the space from the local authority and taking ownership of it for the benefit of the community. This kind of asset transfer of public spaces from public bodies to community groups is on the rise.

Case Study 42
RESCUING PUBLIC SPACES - MEXICO

This national programme from Mexico is one of the most notable examples of a national government assuming a positive and substantive role in promoting the creation, management and enjoyment of public space at the national scale.

In Mexico, the Mexican Ministry of Social Development, has 'rescued' 4,500 public spaces across the country in the past five years. Rescue of Public Spaces is a programme that promotes the realization of social actions and the execution of physical works to restore community meeting places, social interaction and everyday recreation in insecure and marginalized neighbourhoods. The goals are to help improve the quality of life and safety through the revitalization of public spaces in cities and metropolitan areas, thereby promoting healthy living. Furthermore, the initiative is intended to link urban development to social development; promote community organization and participation; increase community safety and prevent antisocial activity and help strengthen the sense of community belonging, social cohesion, and equitable relationships among genders.

The selection process is led by local community members through their active participation. With the guidance of local authorities, the process of physical upgrading and selection of representative members leads to the delivery of the spaces to the community and the group of citizens will be entitled to manage and maintain the rescued public space in the future.

During the last few years, hundreds of public spaces all over the country have been upgraded and well maintained. Central government provides simple and practical guidelines available online to the local authorities.

Source: www.pps.org/reference/ten-strategies-for-transforming-cities-through-placemaking-public-spaces/

> **Reducing private automobile traffic in cities is a primary condition for improving environmental conditions, enhancing public spaces and making them more liveable. Favouring zero-energy consumption mobility, like walking and cycling, improves the environment and enhances the quality of public spaces and urban living.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 33)

Increased walking and cycling helps improve safety, physical fitness and social interaction. Walkable and cycling communities are thriving, liveable and sustainable places that give their residents an improved quality of life. Density is an important factor in encouraging more walking and cycling but whether a person chooses to walk or cycle depends on many factors such as the availability of good public transport, safety, pleasant and beautiful environments and integration between public transport systems and the built environment. High population density, with disincentives to vehicle ownership and use, increases ridership, while public transport provides opportunities for dense yet accessible, mixed-use urban environments with a network of streets and public spaces.

Case Study 43
BICYCLE NETWORK - COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

The city of Copenhagen has been restructuring its street network for several decades, removing driving lanes and parking places in a cautious process to create better and safer conditions for bicycle traffic. The entire city is now served by an effective and convenient system of bike paths, separated by kerbs from pavements and driving lanes. City intersections have bicycle crossings painted in blue and, together with special traffic lights for bicycles, it is now considerably safer to cycle around the city.

As conditions for bicyclists improve, a new culture is emerging. Children and seniors, business people and students, parents with young children, mayors and royalty all ride bicycles. Bicycling in the city has become the way to get around. It is faster and cheaper than other transport options and also good for the environment and personal health. The city has promoted its cycling system for many years, and now bicycles are the most used transport to go to and from work and educational institutions; the plan is to keep promoting and getting more citizens to adapt to the system and make the most of its benefits.

Source: Jan Gehl (2010). Cities for people. Washington DC: Island Press.

Cycling is a way of life in Copenhagen, Denmark
© William Perugini/Shutterstock.com

Case Study 44
CITI BIKE - NEW YORK, USA

This example is, indeed, one of many. What makes this particular example attractive is its success in a city like New York, not famous for its biking traditions.

Citi Bike, named after its primary sponsor, Citibank, was first announced by the City of New York's Department of Transportation in 2010, and it has been running since the end of May 2013. Using a system of bike sharing common in other cities in the world, a Citi Bike can be used for up to forty-five minutes before it must be relocked. Using live data provided by the Citi Bike web site, it is possible to see how many bikes are checked into each station at any particular moment. Other Citi Bike-trackers have used these data to develop insightful live views of the program, or to follow it closely for a single day. As more New Yorkers joined the program, commuting and recreational riding patterns appeared. Citi Bike is already influencing how people get to and from work.

Source: www.citibikenyc.com

Bike sharing in New York, USA
© Flickr/New York City Department of Transport

In terms of the area they cover, streets, squares and sidewalks constitute the overwhelming portion of the urban space used by the public. It is therefore important for their use to be disciplined to reconcile the different functions they are to perform, granting priority to pedestrian and non-motorized mobility.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 39)

A good city landscape and good public transportation system are two sides of the same coin. The quality of journeys to and from stops and stations has a direct bearing on the efficiency and quality of public transportation systems. The total journey from home to destination and back must be seen in its entirety. Good walking and bicycle routes and good amenities at stations are important elements – by day as well as by night – for ensuring comfort and a feeling of security.

One fundamental function of public space is that it allows us to move around – on foot or by bicycle. A key objective of public space design and management is therefore to reconcile the needs of the often conflicting modes of transport. "Share the Street" initiatives are facilitating walking and biking in the city without banning motorized transport. The implementation of auto restriction measures along with improving conditions for public transport, pedestrians and bicycles has proven to be an efficient measure to reduce pollution levels.

Case Study 45
**ON THE SIDE OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS -
BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA**

After decades of special attention given to
automobile traffic, priorities changed in Bogotá
in 1998 to improving mobility and living
conditions for the 80 per cent of the population
that did not own a car. A programme was
implemented to improve pedestrian and bicycle
mobility. Blocked by parked cars for years,
pavements were cleared and renovated and 330
km of new bicycle paths were built. In building
new neighbourhoods, good pedestrian and
bicycle paths were planned before roads for
vehicular traffic as a matter of course.

A key element in overall planning in Bogotá
was the introduction of an extensive Bus
Rapid Transit system with dedicated bus lanes
throughout the city. The Transmillenio bus
system has radically reduced the time it takes
to cross town. The overall planning objective
was to support the economic and social
development of the city by providing better
conditions and mobility to the least privileged
inhabitants. If it is easier to walk and bicycle
and faster to use public transport, then it is also

Dedicated bicycle lanes in Bogotá, Colombia
© Flickr/adrimcm

considerably simpler to get to work. On average
each passenger gains 300 hours annually which
used to be spent in traffic, but which can now
be utilised more effectively. Overall planning
did not neglect recreational options for, in only
a few years, 900 new parks and squares have
been built, particularly in densely-populated
areas where dwellings are small and there was a
great need for public space.

*Source: Jan Gehl (2010). Cities for people. Washington DC:
Island Press.*

Case Study 46
THE WALKABLE CITY - STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

With the decision on a new City Plan,
Stockholm launched its vision of a walkable
city as the structure within which it can grow.
The main idea was that the city of the future
would develop at the same pace as the people
themselves, focusing on the human scale, safe
and environmentally-friendly. The strategy to
achieve this is to continue strengthening the
central part of Stockholm, to invest in attractive
strategic nodes, to connect the different
parts of the city and to promote an attractive,
vibrant and safe environment across the whole
of Stockholm resulting in a walkable city of
interconnected neighbourhoods. The city plan
identified nine focus areas:
- The city on the water – create attractive
  spaces and better opportunities for recrea-
  tion on the city's waterfront and ensure a
  high level of water-based public transport
- Promote a strong business community – a
  diversity of industries and business
- A socially-cohesive and vibrant city –
  strengthen the social perspective of
  planning, create safe and diverse meeting
  places and spaces across the city
- Sports, recreation and attractive green
  spaces – ensure good access to attractive
  parks and green spaces, ensure a broad
  range of recreational spaces across the city.

- A modern and sustainable transport system – plan for increased mobility for pedestrians and cyclists, ensure an efficient public transport system
- Housing provision – vary the range of housing across the city
- Promote new energy solutions
- Culture and history – incorporate historical assets in the planning process, increase the variety of public venues for culture and experiences.
- Health, safety and environment in a dense city – develop a risk and safety perspective in the planning process

Source : www.international.stockholm.se/globalassets/ovriga-bilder-och-filer/the-walkable-city---stockholm-city-plan.pdf

Case Study 47
INTEGRATED MOBILITY SYSTEM - AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam is one of the most bicycle-friendly cities in the world. With nearly 400 kilometres of bicycle paths leading to just about everywhere in town, it is no wonder that Amsterdam is considered to be a true cycling city. The narrow, winding streets of Amsterdam's historic 17th century city centre are not ideally suited to travelling by car. Pedestrians and cyclists definitely have the upper hand in Amsterdam and most locals swear by their bikes as the best – and often their only – means of transport and nearly every resident of Amsterdam owns a bicycle. There are an estimated 881,000 bicycles in a city of 780,000 residents (January 2011 figures from the Amsterdam Department for Research and Statistics). From couriers to police officers, everyone is on two wheels — and many visitors marvel at the multi-storey bike racks.

Source: www.iamsterdam.com/en-GB/Media-Centre/ city-hall/ dossier-cycling

Sidewalk cafes in the historic neighborhood of Gamla Stan, Stockholm, Sweden. © cdrin/Shutterstock.com

Multiple level bicycle parking, Amsterdam, Netherlands
© Shutterstock/S-F

> **Education in a responsible use of public spaces is the least expensive of all forms of maintenance and management.**
>
> **It is useful to conduct awareness campaigns in schools, through the media, on the web to educate citizens to a virtuous use of public spaces.**

(Charter of Public Space, para. 34)

This principle has been expanded and taken up at the national level in Australia, with a special emphasis on synergies between young people and the opportunities public space offers for combining good fun with good civic behaviour.

Case Study 48
A GUIDE ON PUBLIC SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE - AUSTRALIA

The Foundation for Young Australians (previously the Australian Youth Foundation) is a dynamic not-for-profit organization funding innovative initiatives that support and empower the lives of young Australians aged 12 to 25. Particular focus is on initiatives that encourage youth participation and assist young people to reach their full potential and enable them to make a positive contribution to the community. Experience has shown that very often the best approach to youth-related issues is one which is holistic, community-based and which involves young people directly in the process. Accordingly, if there are conflicts over how public space is used, experienced and regulated, then attention should be given to those measures which attempt to deal with the issues in a creative and positive manner. This is the intention of the Guide on Public Space for the Young

People of Australia. The Guide provides brief descriptions of a wide range of public space projects which have been undertaken across Australia in recent years. The aim is to provide an outline of the key elements of a broad, youth-friendly public space strategy and then to describe the basic features of various grassroots initiatives and specific community-based projects.

The projects and initiatives documented in the guide cover a number of relevant topics such as research and consultation, creative use of existing places, art and drama in public spaces, commercial site management, new development projects, local council integrated planning, state-wide initiatives and national initiatives. One of the initiatives funded by the Australian Youth Foundation is the Girls in Space Programme, which is being undertaken by a consortium composed of Contact Youth Theatre, Backbone Youth Arts, Digitarts Young Women on-line, The Brisbane City Council and Queensland and Northern Territory Multimedia Youth Works.

Young women tend to be less visible than other people in public spaces, parks and recreational

Darling Harbour walkway, Sydney, Australia
© CoolR/Shutterstock.com

facilities. Issues of safety, harassment, support and stereotyping all affect their uses of public space. It would appear that the only spaces owned, controlled or managed by young women for any substantial period of time are private and designated as being exclusive to young women.

The aim of this project was to:
- Provide a variety of programmes for young women accessing public space
- Generate information relating to young women and public space
- Develop strategies to enhance young women's access to public space
- Trial and refine identified strategies
- Allow public policy makers to access and use the information

Key factors which seem to impact upon young women's leisure practices and use of public space include the importance of social networks and social events; personal safety issues; issues relating to activity types and design of public space which took into account the specific needs of young women, such as indoor venues and non-competitive environments; different modes of transport; the ways in which social background influence the experiences of different groups of young women in public spaces and the influence that parents/custodians have on girls' perceptions of and access to public space. Arising from this information was a series of recommendations and action proposals for the local government.

Source: www.crimeprevention.gov.au/Publications/ PublicSafety/Documents/ Public_Spaces_for_Young_People.pdf

Public space improvements determine significant value increments. Consequently, at least part of them must be recaptured for the benefit of the community.
(Charter of Public Space, para. 35)

Land value sharing may be considered one of the most important driving forces for public bodies to recover the costs of public infrastructure through the increase in land value. These resources should be secured for the maintenance of the space, such as the 'neighbourhood improvement district' (see case study 39 on Johannesburg) where the district would assess a nominal fee for commercial and residential property owners in close proximity to the space.

Land-value gain resulting from infrastructure projects can be taxed. 'Betterment levies' are a one-time tax on the estimated land-value increase associated with transport and road construction and improvements projects, a rise typically of between 30 and 60 per cent. These levies are difficult to administer, however, increases can be estimated on a plot-by-plot basis and are better calculated by area or city-wide, depending on the investment programme.

The public sector is increasingly having problems in funding operating and maintenance costs for public space projects. More and more this is being pushed to organizing events to raise revenue. Land value capture is one of the most untapped resources for funding public space projects. By considering planning, design and economics, public space projects can be funded in new ways, creating utility for end users and boosting the value of surrounding properties.

Case Study 49
LAND VALUE SHARING - COLOMBIA

The notable example of Colombia emphasizes the importance of sound national legislation in order to enable much-needed public infrastructure investment at the local level.

The 1991Constitution of the Republic of Colombia (art. 82) states: "It is the duty of the State to protect the integrity of public space and its assignment to common use, which has priority over the individual interest. Public entities will share the surplus values generated by their urban planning activities and will regulate land and urban air space uses in order to protect the common interest."

In Colombia, the *Contribución por Valorización* (a form of betterment levy) is a mechanism to finance public infrastructure and public spaces. It is not a tax but a contribution that has a specific objective: raise funds to build a public space or street or other kind of infrastructure by charging property owners whose assets will increase in value as a result of public investment. The contribution is calculated as a proportion of the assessed increase of land

A street in Bogotá Colombia
© Ivan_Sabo/Shutterstock.com

value and can be contributed in cash, in kind or through a variety of other means.

In Bogotá, this instrument has been used since 2005 with good results, but also with strong opposition by many landowners. It has financed more than USD 1 billion of public works, including 217 street, bridge and drainage improvements. It takes into account ability to pay, is payable over five years and is citywide, all of which have reduced public resistance. The *Instituto de Desarrollo Urbano* is in charge of the collection, management and accounting of the contribution (See case study 19).

In Medellín, UN-Habitat has supported the implementation of land value sharing in the context of the planned Participatory and Inclusive Land Readjustment (PILaR) effort with a view to informing the land use management plans (*Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial, POT*) that Medellín is expected to launch. Developer exactions (*Obligaciones urbanísticas*) have proven very useful in Medellín in recent years. The exaction system requires developers to transfer land to the city for public purposes in proportion to the size of their development. Each zone of the city has potentially different transfer requirements. Between 2006 and 2011, Medellín collected approximately US$58 .7 million in cash payments from this source.

In La Candelaria, a neighbourhood in Medellin, there is great potential to successfully implement a land value sharing approach that employs a combination of various tools. In particular, four tools seem most appropriate: (1) Using the existing developer exactions (*Obligaciones urbanísticas*) to generate the resources necessary to pay for improvements in public spaces and public facilities. (2) Using the proceeds from the sale of city property in the La Candelaria site to shield existing residents from any price increases associated with the new development. Such new development

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will result in increased land values and the city should capture the increases on currently owned property. (3) Using capital gain sharing (*Participación en Plusvalías*) to provide the resources for a trust fund to partially fund the maintenance of public space and public infrastructure in the area. The challenge will be to craft the package of developer exactions and capital gain sharing in such a manner as to provide the resources needed for public improvements without overburdening existing residents or discouraging private investment. (4) Use the increment in the annual property tax (*Predial*) resulting from the new development and the privatization of public lands to fund the balance of maintenance needs in La Candelaria.

La Candelaria has the potential to realize significant gains from the sale of city owned land following approval of a new development strategy that allows greater residential density and additional commercial development.

Source: UN-Habitat, Pilar
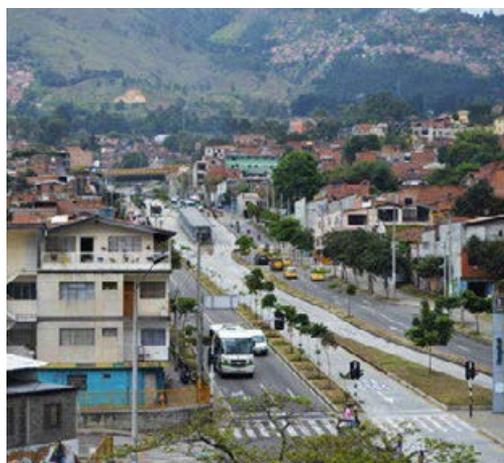
A street in Medelin, Colombia
© UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

Insufficient integration between interventions and management weakens civic awareness in the use of common goods and is a factor in the deterioration of public spaces after their realization or upgrading. Interventions consisting in the creation or upgrading of public spaces must be accompanied by measures and provisions for the maintenance of spaces and infrastructure.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 36)

Management and maintenance is often seen as unrelated to public space projects and simply added on at the end. On the contrary, management and maintenance should be taken into consideration from the planning stage. This will prevent planners from designing spaces that are difficult to manage. At the design stage it is important to organise the management partnership and clarify the role of each partner.

Case Study 50
THE PEACE SQUARES PROJECT - SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

The project is a collaborative intervention initiative in partnership with the Sul America Insurance Company to revitalize public spaces in neighbourhoods on the outskirts of São Paulo with intensive community participation. It invites community members to enter into discussions and debates about the public space. During this process, community members become engaged in the conception, implementation, control and management of the space. The aim is that the public space becomes a safe area in which community activities can take place and where community solidarity is strengthened. The project

also provides community members, especially young people, with alternative outlooks and goals and helps build leadership skills.

The first phase of the project includes the identification of an area that is abandoned or used by drug lords, and is essentially a space of fear and neglect. Educators from the NGO Sou Da Paz (I am Peace) engage with community members to gain information on the level of desire and willingness to transform the space. The construction of the space marks the second phase of the project. The final phase of the project is the sustainability phase. At this stage, a group of young leaders have completed training and gained experience in managing the space, developing good community relations and relationships with public and local authorities.

To guarantee the sustainability of these projects it is important to invest in the management groups that will later administrate the space, including being part of their forum and meetings. This creates a close relationship with all members, supports the relationship with the regional government and supports the youth groups in their sport and art activities and in the maintenance and use of the squares.

The transformed space is not only a physical area but also aims to break a cycle of fear and isolation in disadvantaged communities that experience high levels of violence and crime. The initiative has successfully acted as a medium for young people to actively participate and become leaders in developments to improve the quality of their lives and the community.

Groups of government technical staff have been trained by Sou da Paz in the methodology of the project, which is now used by the City of São Paulo, Ministry of Housing.

The results include:
- Five squares redone on the outskirts of the city.
- Maintenance of the squares in the long run.
- Use of the space by the community for various recreational activities.
- Improved links between the borough and community members regarding the organization of sports and cultural activities in squares.
- Increased sense of security surrounding the squares.

Source: www.soudapaz.org

A youth friendly public space, Sao Paulo, Brazil
© Flickr/Dylan Passmore

Densely built residential homes in São Paulo city, Brazil
© SNEHIT/Shutterstock.com

After the realization and/or renewal of spaces has taken place, public administrations should make it possible for citizens and their associations to organize events and whatever may contribute to stabilize the permanent use of such spaces.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 37)

The adoption of management strategies based on dialogue and participation when programming and designing, is decisive for gaining the "appropriation" of spaces on the part of local communities, keeping maintenance costs under control and encouraging forms of co-management.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 38)

Donations can be a very attractive way of securing precious public spaces in cities and stimulating the involvement of enlightened members of the business community.

Where public spaces are looked after by the private sector there is no doubt that this can create high-quality and well-maintained environments. However, these public spaces can feel less accessible to all and are often tightly monitored and controlled for perceived anti-social behaviour, which may deter people from using them.

The example given below shows that this option is not restricted to wealthier countries and cities. The vicissitudes documented in the Nairobi case, however, show that public spaces are under greater threat where speculative interests can overwhelm citizen opposition.

Case Study 51
JEEVANJEE GARDENS - NAIROBI, KENYA

Donated to Nairobi in 1906 by Alibhai Mullah Jeevanjee, this five-acre recreational park is one of the few green spaces gracing Nairobi City. The park was faced with extinction when the Nairobi City Council planned in 1991 and 2007 to develop it by constructing a multi-story parking lot, bus terminus, markets, theatres and shopping malls. These plans were shelved each time following objections raised by Zarina Patel (Jeevanjee's grand-daughter), Wangari Maathai's Green Belt Movement and other activists.

In 2013, participatory design workshops were conducted with the City Council and communities for the upgrading and revitalization of Jeevanjee Gardens. Over the years a number of illegal structures and businesses had been constructed on the site. Following the intervention of the new Governor of Nairobi City County in November 2013, the City County resumed the upgrading and reconstruction. Meanwhile, the community members are fully engaged, and a joint management committee of Jeevanjee Gardens is being established.

Source: http://www.jambonairobi.co.ke/ activities/picnics-nairobi/jeevanjee-gardens

Residents relax at Jeevanjee Gardens, Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat/Nayoka Martinez-Backstrom

> **Both temporal and physical limitations to the use of public open space due to safety reasons should not unreasonably restrict the enjoyment by the public.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 40)

Public parks and gardens are usually accessible only during daylight hours, as a rule for safety reasons. However, access restrictions in cities are not limited to unguarded and unlit urban green spaces. Often, exaggerated security off limits restrictions around important public buildings and offices and residences of public officials can create symbolic separations between institutions and the public they are meant to serve.

Case Study 52
MERLION PARK - SINGAPORE

Merlion Park takes its name from a mythical creature borne out of the the city's symbols and traditions: singa (=lion) and "mer" (sea). The "Merlion", a statue erupting water in the middle of this small park, is its best-known feature. Access to the park is free at all times of day and night. In fact, visitors prefer after susnset hours, when the view and the lights are particularly attractive. Merlion Park is partly located on reclaimed land and partly on a suspended deck structure. The suspended viewing deck doubles as an outdoor performance venue that can accommodate 200 people and a 120 member orchestra.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merlion_Park

This temporal restriction linits access to traffic but not to pedestrians. Buenos Aires, Argentina © Flickr/Chris

Merlion Park in Singapore is a popular tourist site
© Flickr/Tony Lin

The privatization or concession of public spaces to private actors is a phenomenon which involves cities all over the world, where important public space resources are systematically alienated or turned over exclusively to private concerns for a number of reasons: generating budgetary resources, increasing private investment, yielding to lobbies or interest groups, corruption practices, lack of management capacity. Public authorities on the one hand, and citizens on the other, must arm themselves with means to control and evaluate such policies.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 41)

Decreasing municipal resources in the face of conflicting needs and priorities pose a serious challenge to the goal of improving the quantity, quality and distribution of public space. Recourse to concessions for private commercial use of public space is a commonly-sought solution. However, it can also determine problems. Pavement concessions for restaurants, for example, can add vivacity to street life but also subtract from public space and impede passage to pedestrians, public transport and service vehicles. Demand for private use of public space also tends to occur in attractive urban areas, while the income thus generated is not always used to improve public space quality in less fortunate parts of the city. Outright privatization can take much less civilized forms. In many cities, the practice of illegal building of a speculative character on public land is still a recurrent phenomenon.

The ability of cities to administer wisely income-generating instruments such as concessions and the discouragement of illegal practices is, of course, a function of their overall governance capacity, which in turn can be affected by a vicious circle of scarce resources, political weakness, vulnerability to corruption and so on. In such cases the protection of public space may rest primarily in the hands of individual citizens and responsible citizen groups. The power of this kind of action should not be underestimated.

Case Study 53
SAVING UHURU PARK - NAIROBI, KENYA

The example below of how the most-loved and frequented public park in the city of Nairobi was saved from commercial redevelopment is also meant as a homage to a champion of green space and civic rights – the late Wangari Maathai.

One of the most famous examples of the power of peaceful protest against public space abuse is that of Professor Wangari Maathai, later to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize.

A view of Uhuru Park, Nairobi, Kenya
© UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

In October 1989, Wangari Maathai learned of a plan to construct a 60-story complex in Uhuru Park. The complex was intended to house offices, a trading centre, an auditorium, galleries, shopping malls and parking space for 2,000 cars. Maathai wrote many letters in protest but the government refused to respond to her inquiries and protests, instead responding through the media that Maathai was 'a crazy woman', denying the project in Uhuru Park would take more than a small portion of public park land and proclaiming the project as a 'fine and magnificent work of architecture' opposed by only the 'ignorant few.' Despite Maathai's protests, as well as popular protest growing throughout the city, ground was broken at Uhuru Park for construction of the complex. Maathai sought an injunction but the case was thrown out. She was forced by the government to vacate her office and the government then audited her Green Belt Movement in an apparent attempt to shut it down. Despite all this, her protests, the government's response – and the media coverage it garnered – led foreign investors to cancel the project in January 1990.

Source: http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/node/456

A view of the artificial lake at Uhuru Park, Nairobi, Kenya
© Flickr/Alejandro Caceres

It is important to adopt policies that encourage the permanence of artisans and neighbourhood shops, which contribute to the quality of life, to the animation and vivacity of daily-use public spaces.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 42)

Street vendors and artisans provide access to a wide range of goods and services in public spaces. In many countries, they represent a significant share of urban informal employment. Urban planning and local economic development strategies should explicitly recognize street vendors as workers for the role they play in generating economic activity, providing jobs and bringing retail goods to consumers. While it may be impossible to accommodate all street vendors in organized market areas, urban planning authorities should study the carrying capacity of such areas and the size of the city's street vending population and accommodate an appropriate number of them through licenses or permits that grant authority to work in public space. Cities should develop rules and regulations for street vendors and should work with street vendors and their organizations to identify regulations that appropriately address the practical reality of the work process and the role of vendors in the urban economy.

CASE STUDY 54
REVERSING THE DECLINE OF A HISTORIC DISTRICT: DARB AL-AHMAR - CAIRO, EGYPT

This celebrated example has been chosen to demonstrate the positive synergies that can be created between the creation of a new open public space, historic restoration and the preservation of a low-income urban community threatened by economic and environmental decline and gentrification.

One of the strengths of this highly successful Aga Khan Trust for Culture project was linking the creation of a 30-hectare park on a dumping site and the restoration of ancient walls to the rehabilitation of an adjacent low-income neighbourhood of Darb al-Ahmar. The core goal of this latter component of the project was to retain the existing population and its social fabric through housing improvements and finely-tailored support programmes for traditional income-generation activities, many of which took place in the streets and in open spaces of Darb al-Ahmar. The risk was that, unless held in check and properly channeled through a conscious planning effort, speculative pressure might result in a pattern of

uncontrolled development in the area, leading to the expulsion of both the current residents and the existing activities, and thus paving the way for a total substitution of the traditional urban fabric.

An extensive survey conducted in Darb al-Ahmar revealed that the district suffered from a series of weaknesses commonly found throughout Cairo, including low family incomes and an economic base that often lagged behind development in newer parts of the city; a deteriorating housing situation resulting from unrealistic planning constraints and pending demolition orders; limited access to credit and widespread insecurity of tenure; continued deterioration of monuments and historic structures; lack of public investment and regular upkeep of city infrastructure and the absence of essential community facilities and services. The district, however, also presented a number of strengths such as a highly-cohesive urban environment, an established community, a dense residential core with people helping and depending on one another, an important pool of skilled workers and small enterprises and a neighbourly sense of security.

The project included enhancing small entrepreneurship through micro-credit, providing new community services, restoring decayed housing (with advantages for owner-occupiers and landlords and security safeguards for tenants) and improving existing public spaces through physical improvements and the enhancement of social interaction and street life. In fact, the key to historic preservation became socio-economic preservation, namely creating the conditions for the present population to stay while simultaneously improving their living and working conditions. This approach proved successful and , as of

Darb al-Ahmar, Cairo, Egypt
© Flickr/Christopher Rose

2012, cases of the existing inhabitants leaving the neighbourhood were negligible, gentrification pressures were contained and residents were on the whole very satisfied with the project, also in consideration of their direct involvement and of the public consultations occurred during the various stages of project development.

Sources: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, http://www.akdn.org/ publications/2007_aktc_egypt.pdf; "Cairo", interview with F. Siravo, Domus 904, June 2007

Case Study 55
VENDING IN PUBLIC SPACE - BANGKOK, THAILAND

One of the first things that strikes visitors to Bangkok is the sheer number and diversity of vendors on the streets, lanes (*soi*), and remaining waterways. The city is possibly one of the world's centres when it comes to selling goods and services in public spaces both day and night.

In 2011, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) started a campaign known as 'Street Vending: Charms of the City' to regulate vendors. The BMA started to enforce

Bangkok street vending, Thailand
© Flickr/David Berkowitz

a regulation regarding the collection of fees for cleaning footpaths used by street vendors. Officers from the Department of Sanitation and Environment of each district were assigned to collect the cleaning fee.

There have been both positive and negative developments associated with attempts to balance the policies regarding the environment of the city and poverty alleviation. On the positive side, cleaning fees were reduced from 150 to 100 baht (USD 4.50 to USD 3) per square metre. Cleaning days were reduced to two days per month. Furthermore, the number of areas officially designated for vending increased from 494 in 2004 to 667 in 2008.

Compared to street vending in other cities, Bangkok's experience might be seen as rather exemplary – one that marries culture, creativity, cleanliness and entrepreneurship with selling modes of every possible type and location and the offering of a great variety of goods and services. However, these gains have been hard won and have involved negotiating with local authorities, disconnection between policy and implementation and competing views on the function and value-added of street vending in a growing yet fragile urban context.

It would be inaccurate to depict street vending as exclusively the purview of the urban poor. Middle-class vendors have clearly made their mark in Bangkok over the decades, particularly in recent years. In addition, vendors from neighbouring countries are becoming part of the scene. This may well call for a different regulatory approach going forward that touches on sensitive issues such as taxation, sanitation, hygiene and environmental issues.

Sources: http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/ publications/files/Yasmeen-Vending-Public-Space-Bangkok-WIEGO-PB16.pdf

Enjoyment of Public Space

> **All citizens, regardless of their role, are users of public space. All of them have the right to access and enjoy it in complete freedom, within the rules of civic coexistence. In cities ever more complex and diverse, this requires democratic processes, dialogue and regard for diversity.**
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 43)

Tensions between native citizens and migrant workers exist virtually everywhere. One of the problems is that while migrants have to assimilate the customs and language of the country and city where they work, 'native citizens' have no such obligation or incentive. But there are ways to go about this and Public spaces are an important asset for integration and dialogue.

A child enjoys the children's play area in Male Park, Maldives
© Flickr/mustharshld

Case Study 56
FREE LANGUAGE CLASSES IN MUZEON PARK - MOSCOW, RUSSIA

In the summer, the state-funded Muzeon Park in Moscow offers free Central Asian language classes. Organisers say they founded the School of Migrants' Languages to build cultural bridges between the millions of migrant labourers in Russia, mostly from Central Asia, and their hosts, who can often be hostile toward guest workers

The school offers three Central Asian languages – Tajik, Uzbek and Kazakh - as well as Moldovan, which is similar to Romanian. Native speakers from various university linguistics departments around Moscow teach the languages – one class each per week – in a special pavilion in the park. Teachers upload scanned teaching materials and textbooks, which students can download to view on tablets or print before class.

"It's a goal for us that people can learn about other nationalities and become familiar with their culture, learn the essentials, visit their countries and speak their native languages. This is to create understanding between nations, not just linguistic but human," says Veronica Sergeeva, director of the School of Migrants' Languages.

Source: EurasiaNet.org

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The enjoyment of public space involves rights and duties. The right to enjoy adequate public spaces involves the duty to contribute to this goal through freely chosen modalities that can vary from the mere adoption of responsible individual or collective behaviour to involvement in initiatives of active citizenry.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 45)

The standard problem of the commons is to decide how their use should be allocated. Enjoying public space comes with the responsibility to also ensure that it is not misused, vandalized and that people behave correctly taking into consideration other users of the space. Many cities have by-laws which regulate the use of public spaces and clearly define the rights and obligations of the public in relation to public open spaces.

Case Study 57
CITIZENS' PARK - BREMEN, GERMANY

The Bremen Citizens' Park is a remarkable example of a historic park created one and a half centuries ago by residents of that city and maintained by successive generations to this day.

Parks and green spaces are a public good, a key service for citizens. However, the challenge to maintain parks is a role not only for the municipalities but for the citizens and communities, too.

The motto of the Bremen Citizens' Park founders in 1865 was 'for masters and employed, for men, women and children, to use and enjoy forever'. Extending 37 hectares in the centre of metropolitan Bremen, the Citizens'

Park is one of the few completely-preserved park designs of the 19th century and one the most important landscape parks in Europe. The architect William Benque, influenced by American city parks, designed it in 1865. Since its creation in 1866, the Bremen Citizens' Park has been almost entirely privately financed.

This Hanseatic tradition connects generations of Bremen citizens with their park. Names of bridges, benches and monuments reflect the numerous larger donations but each year the citizens donate money or trees, plants, or time to participate in maintenance activities. The yearly budget of Euro 2 million (USD 2.23m) is financed through a membership fee (Euro 15 per year), fundraising activities and donations.

Source: http://www.buergerpark.de/

Residents tend to Bremen's Citizen Park, Bremen, Germany
© Der BurgerPark

The enjoyment of public spaces is a fundamental ingredient for determining and applying indicators of their quality, to be employed throughout the entire creation - management - enjoyment cycle.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 46)

The quality of a public space can be measured by how lively and vibrant it is. A place would appear lively if there were large numbers of people for short durations or there were fewer people staying for longer. The number of people and duration of their stay are equally important and the overall social activity or liveliness of an environment is a product of the number of people and the duration of their stay (Gehl, 1987). Similarly, the use of the space over the duration of the day is equally important as an indicator of the usefulness of the space. Men, women, children and the elderly have different perceptions of public space that affects their use of public space. The variety of activities and the diversity in age and gender of the users indicate how responsive the space is for different users and purposes.

Source: Jan Gehl (1987) Life between Buildings: Using Public Space. Washington DC: Island Press

The peaceful use of public spaces for rallies, marches and demonstrations is an integral expression of democracy. Therefore, such use cannot be denied without valid and justified motivations.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 47)

Whilst the freedom to hold events, to march and to demonstrate is important, so too is the freedom of people to go about their normal daily business with a minimum of disruption. Accordingly, every effort must be made to ensure that a balance is struck between the rights and freedoms of those taking part in an event and those living and working close by.

Case Study 58
BALANCING RIGHTS AND FREEDOM - DRESDEN, GERMANY

In Dresden, Germany, the first demonstration of Pegida (or the "Patriotic Europeans against Islamisation of the Occident") on 20 October 2014 drew only a handful of people. In the following months, the movement began drawing public attention and subsequently its weekly Monday demonstrations started to attract larger numbers of people. Facing growing opposition by anti-Pegida protesters, both in Dresden and Leipzig, the police did not permit continuation of the Monday demonstrations.

Events and interventions defined as temporary, including the so-called "urban public art", particularly if linked to an overall strategy, are a form of enjoyment of public space that can become a "good practice" to confer meaning and urban quality to "waiting spaces" rapidly, at low cost and with a strong involvement of the community.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 48)

Creating more room for public art — especially in parks — transforms them into great multi-use public destinations. A good public space is not only inviting but also builds a place for the community around an artwork or cultural venue, by growing and attracting activities that make it a multi-use destination. Such spaces arise from collaboration with the users of the place who articulate what they value about it and assist the artist in understanding its complexity.

Ancient Aztec folklore gathering at the Zocalo Square in Mexico City, Mexico © ChameleonsEye / Shutterstock.com

Case Study 59
28 MILLIMETRES: WOMEN ARE HEROES - RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

The self-described 'photograffeur' (part graffiti artist, part photographer) and 'urban activist' JR brought to informal settlements around the world a new way of thinking and discussing polemic subjects such as women empowerment through art and photograph. Through this exhibition the slums' citizens are able to "look into each other eyes".

In most informal settlements around the world, women are often central community members, yet they remain the most invisible. JR has drawn attention to the persistent strength of women in these communities with his 'Women Are Heroes' series, part of his broader '28 Millimetres' project. Using a wide-angle 28mm lens, he captured extreme close-ups of women's faces and covers informal settlements with large-scale reproductions of the images. The women actively participate by telling their stories and taking part in the artistic process. The images are printed on water-resistant vinyl that protects the homes underneath.

In the *Morro da Providência* slum in Rio de Janeiro, the artist paid tribute to those who play an essential role in society but are the primary victims of war, crime, rape and political or religious fanaticism, pasting miscellaneous photos of ten women onto the sides of houses and public stairways along a steep slope, positioned to look toward the city centre. A number of them are relatives of three young men who were killed in the *favela*, caught in the turf wars between corrupt military police and drug traffickers. The photographs reveal not grief or despair but identity and humanity. Such intimate portraits pasted in these urban landscapes allow passersby to encounter these women as large, central figures in their communities.

Source: Smithsonian Institution (2011). Design with the other 90%: Cities. New York: Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum.

Case Study 60
THE PRACTICE OF FREEDOM II - POZNAN, POLAND

This is a very attractive example of how good taste, design and creativity can combine in creating highly enjoyable urban public spaces.

Artist Adam Kalinowski created an interactive space filled with coloured sand and sculptures for the H. Dabrowski Park in Poland. Titled *The Practice of Freedom II*, the installation encourages community members to use their creativity and play with the materials to recreate the environment around them. It is a combination of colourful sculptures and multi-coloured sections of sand of varying texture and is designed to capture the imagination of the participants and encourage them to play with form and colour.

The participants interact with a colourful expanse of sand which constantly evolves (entropy process), and can rest on the layered sculptural elements resembling fragments of rock or outlines of clouds. It is an invitation to explore a variety of weights, sand, colours and patterns that may arise during walking barefoot through the project.

Source: http://www.adamkalinowski.com/

The enjoyment of public space is intimately linked to its civil, respectful and responsible use. The quality of public-space enjoyment is therefore tied not only to the availability, quality, mutability, adaptability and maintenance level of public spaces, but also to the behaviour of individual citizens.

(Charter of Public Space, para. 49)

Human behaviour, experiences and social interactions in public spaces are influenced by the different features of public spaces. These features may be physical, social, cultural or sensory but what they share in common is the power to affect people's behaviour in, and experience of the public realm. Public authorities such as local councils, law enforcers and other decision makers have an important role in how public spaces are perceived, what public spaces will look like, where they will be located, how they will be enclosed, and in effect, how they will be experienced by the

"Practice of freedom II" Children enjoying the colourful sand © Adam Kalinowski

The podium at Uhuru Park, Nairobi, Kenya provides a challenging surface for a skateboarder © Flickr/Alejandro Caceres

users. At the same time, the users of these spaces are also capable of influencing their form and feel, by introducing social characteristics and elements such as culture, gender, ethnicity and age. These elements together have a profound effect on the way people behave, experience and interact in public spaces.

Case Study 61
YELLOW, RED CARD - BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

The former Mayor of Bogotá, Antanus Mockus, defined the culture of citizenship as "the sum of habits, behaviours, actions and minimum common rules that generate a sense of belonging, facilitate harmony among citizens, and lead to respect for shared property and heritage and the recognition of citizens' rights and duties." This theme was the main focus of his administration, which sought to bring about a new urban culture based on mutual respect between citizens through educational programmes. These programmes used symbolic, provocative and humorous actions to teach citizens to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour in urban life.

Mockus used educational group games as the main tool to establish a culture of self-regulation, consideration and urban citizenship. These included:

- Cards, red on one side and white on the other, distributed among citizens and used as in football (soccer) games to show approval or disapproval of actions
- Mimes in the streets that taught drivers to respect pedestrian crossings, to use seatbelts and to minimize the honking of horns
- Actors dressed as monks encouraging people to reflect on noise pollution

His unusual governance style aimed to tackle corruption, violence and social disorder by changing people's mindsets. The city made dramatic improvements, the homicide rate fell from 88 to 22 per 100,000 inhabitants and traffic fatalities dropped from 1,300 to about 600 per year.

Source: www.15min.lt/en/article/culture-society/former-mayor-of-Bogotá-antanas-mockus-man-who-curbed-traffic-accidents-with-mimes-528-343384#ixzz3DmwLe1wb

A street in Bogota, Colombia
© Flickr/Dominic Chavez/World Bank

> ## The good use of public space is closely linked to their mutability and adaptability in relation to the changing needs of citizens.
>
> (Charter of Public Space, para. 50)

As the use of public space changes over time, public spaces need to be flexible to be able to accommodate the changing needs of the citizens, especially for the urban poor. This, in turn requires public spaces to be multi-functional so that different users feel comfortable in that space.

Case Study 62
MUTABILITY AND ADAPTABILITY OF PUBLIC SPACES - CHINA

China is second to none in its tradition of combining highly-busy urban environments with infinite combinations of activities, conducted in the open and with a high sense of civility and mutual respect.

Nowhere more than in China are cities changing and adapting at a rapid pace. The photographs below are but two of the dozens of different images one could use to illustrate this phenomenon: among them shining new malls, elaborate modern gardens, huge new city parks, busy shopping streets, traditional gardens, and public buildings devoted, as it were, to the city itself.

The images below depict two such examples: an old Nanjing street converted into an elegant shopping street and a Nanjing pavement where informal traders sell their wares.

Again, a demonstration of the most adaptable and versatile of all public spaces – streets and pavements.

A modern shopping street in Nanjing, Shanghai
© Flickr/Sergio Tittarini

A street vendor in Nanjing, Shanghai
© Flickr/NekaPearl

An over view of Mathare slum in Nairobi, Kenya © UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

Indians in traditional peruvian dresses dancing in the square Plaza de Armas, Lima, Peru © Ksenia Ragozina / Shutterstock.com

Conclusions

Public space is all around us, a vital part of everyday urban life: the streets we pass through on the way to school or work, the places where children play, the local parks in which we enjoy sports and sit at lunchtime. Public space is our open-air living room. Where public space is absent, inadequate, poorly designed, or privatized, the city becomes increasingly segregated. Lines are drawn based on religion, ethnicity, and economic status. The result can be a dangerously polarized city where social tensions are more likely to flare up and where social mobility and economic opportunity are stifled.

A new paradigm is evolving, which recognizes the failure of market-led development to create or protect public and private open spaces. Enabling components of the new urban agenda which are mutually reinforcing and vital in ensuring prosperous cities with vibrant streets and inclusive public spaces are:
• rules and legislation for protecting access to public spaces;
• urban planning and design for providing adequate quantity and good quality public space, and;
• urban finance and economy for sharing values, promoting income, investment, wealth creation and providing employment.

Good public spaces can play a decisive role in this regard by:
• allowing for orderly and rational development (i.e. street grids).
• attracting investment, uses and activities, thus enhancing safety.
• increasing property values, thus generating additional municipal revenue.
• providing opportunities for economic interaction and consequent enhanced livelihood opportunities.
• contributing value added to a city's cultural, historical and architectural endowment, thus enhancing urban attractiveness and promoting tourism.

Given the number of variables within the urban environment and the complexity of the city, it cannot be claimed that the application of these policies and principles and their techniques will guarantee sustainable urban development, but they will go a long way in minimizing the chances of formulating a bad design and help to set an agenda for public space that will give the people the best possible chance of enjoying their surroundings as individuals and as members of the community.

We hope this toolkit achieved its objective: to offer good arguments, good principles and good examples to all those who, like us, believe that public space should be at the center of the urban agenda, and want to translate this conviction into reality. The arguments offered highlight public spaces as banners of urban civility; promoters of equity; embodiment of our urban commons; makers of great cities; generators of citizens' involvement, enhancers of environmental sustainability; and creators of income, investment and wealth.

In particular, the function of public spaces as promoters of equity should go a long way in generating enthusiasm, commitment, unity of purpose and robust delivery. Unfortunately, what is good is not necessarily easy. The toolkit lists, for example, the many constraints that cities encounter in pursuing the goal of improving the quantity, quality and distribution of public spaces in our cities and towns. Some of these constraints can be removed by investing in public space creation, management and use. Others, like the ever present threat to take over public spaces for private gain, persistent errors in design and management, frequent resistance to invest in participatory practices, or the increasing commercialization and de-materialization of social interaction, require our constant vigilance.

It is hoped that this publication has opened up a much-needed public space, as it were, on the meaning and role of the object of this toolkit. When we think of public spaces our minds go to parks, gardens, playgrounds. Much as these great features of our daily urban life are veritable and important public spaces, this toolkit goes beyond the dimension of individual urban elements and positions public spaces in the role of protagonists of urban development. This is why, in the core part of this toolkit, the notions of "public space-led urban development", of planning public space as a system, of the circular relationship between creating, maintaining and enjoying public space, of conceiving participation itself as a "virtual public space" where all can interact on an equal footing, and of the importance of public space strategies for resource-poor and rapidly growing cities are presented. The notion of public spaces as a system is reinforced by simple suggestions for elementary city-wide surveys and indicators to assess the quality of public spaces and gauge progress in this area.

One special mention with regard to our claim for a broader, less conventional view of public space is the role of the street. The street is defined in this study as the public space par excellence, because it is the most pervasive, versatile and adaptable public space of all. One important aspect, in addition to this, is the role of the street as the ordaining element of physical urban development. Ideally, streets are planned and built before buildings are, and therefore constitute a vital tool in the hands of planners and local governments to envision and promote sustainable and orderly urban growth.

Another strong claim of this toolkit is that policies, strategies and plans are only as good as the concepts and principles they stand on. This is why we offer a definition and a simple classification of public spaces. On the other hand, principles divorced from reality are of limited use, and so the final part of this toolkit links principles – drawn from the most recent, synthetic and comprehensive statement of principles on this topic, the Charter of Public Space – to recent experiences and good practices in a variety of different regions and urban contexts. We hope this toolkit will provide for interesting and inspiring reading and strengthen the feeling that we can be at least as good as those who have done it before us.

Good public spaces play a role in attracting investment, uses and activities, thus enhancing safety; increasing property values, generating municipal revenue; providing opportunities for economic interaction and enhancing livelihood opportunities. Public space creation, protection, management and enjoyment require capable local authorities and collaboration with inhabitants and other actors. Public Space requires cities and local governments to take a trans-disciplinary approach by working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and organizations, which should include civil society, academia and the private sector to ensure inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces for all.

Kejetia Market in Ghana © Flickr/Adam Jones

Annexes

Annex 1:
Charter of Public Space

The following document constitutes the contribution of the Biennial of Public Space to a process of further definition on the same subject that will be conducted at the global level in collaboration with the United Nations Programme on Human Settlements (UN-Habitat), in order to make a significant contribution to the preparatory process of the Third Conference of the United Nations on Human Settlements to be held in 2016.

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PREAMBLE

1. In addition to the need to exhibit good projects and exemplary realizations, the Biennial of Public Space is also born out of a strong need to support the desire, shared by many citizens and long-sighted and efficient public administrators, to make public space the banner of urban civility.

2. The main criteria this document is based on are that it is useful to formulate a clear and comprehensive definition of public space; that public space should be regarded as a public good; that the Charter should contain reasonable and shared principles with regard to the conception, the design, the realization, the management, the transformability and the enjoyment of public space and, finally, that it must be a concise document and, just like public space, accessible to all.

3. The Charter of Public Space aims at serving all those who believe in the city and in its extraordinary ability for hospitality, solidarity, conviviality and sharing; in its inimitable virtue in encouraging social interaction, encounters, togetherness, freedom and democracy and in its calling for giving life to these values through public space. At the same time, cities show off the worsening of economic, social, ethnic, cultural and generational inequalities. Public space must be the place where citizenship rights are guaranteed and differences are respected and appreciated.

4. The charter is based on a wide and inclusive concept of citizenship that goes beyond its legal definition. All in their capacity, as users, are 'citizens' and have the same rights and duties with regard to the public space.

5. When citizens coincide with the inhabitants they have the right to be involved through participatory processes in the creation and management of public space.

I. DEFINITION OF PUBLIC SPACE

6. Public spaces are all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive. Each public space has its own spatial, historic, environmental, social and economic features.

7. Public spaces are a key element of individual and social well-being, the places of a community's collective life, expressions of the diversity of their common natural and cultural richness and a foundation of their identity, as expressed by the European Landscape Convention. The community recognizes itself in its public places and pursues the improvement of their spatial quality.

8. Public spaces consist of open environments such as streets, pavements, squares, gardens and parks and in sheltered spaces created without a profit motive and for

everyone's enjoyment such as public libraries and museums. Both, when they possess a clear identity, can be defined as 'places'. The objective is that all public spaces should become 'places'.

9. Views differ on whether public spaces should or should not be publicly owned. However, all public spaces that are also publicly owned offer more stable guarantees of access and enjoyment over time because they are less subject to those legitimate changes of use typical of private ownership.

10. Public spaces, whenever safeguards of natural or historical value allow, must be made accessible without barriers to the motorial, sensorially and intellectually disabled.

11. Areas (even if publicly owned or unfenced) which, by their characteristics, are substantially unusable by the public such as inaccessible slopes, abandoned areas or cut-outs, cannot be considered a public space and cannot be counted as a service or public infrastructure.

12. Conversely, public spaces which are not yet accessible and/or usable must be considered as 'potential public spaces', and therefore as a precious resource for the strengthening and renovation of the existing system of public space and, thus, of urban quality as a whole.

II. TYPOLOGIES OF PUBLIC SPACE

13. Public spaces can be distinguished as spaces that have an exclusive or prevalent functional character; spaces that presuppose or favour individual uses or spaces that, by mix of functions, form, meanings and by connecting the built with the non-built, have the prevalent role of aggregation and social condensation. In the web of these latter functions is the essence of the city.

14. Public spaces:
    a. Are the physical web and support for the movement and the stationing of people and means of transport, from which the vitality of the city depends

    b. Host market and accessible commercial activities in fixed premises, public venues and other services (collective and not, public and private), in which the socioeconomic dimension of the city is always expressed

    c. Offer precious opportunities for recreation, physical exercise and regeneration for all such as parks, gardens and public sports facilities

    d. Help promote education and culture such as museums and public libraries

    e. Are places of individual and collective memory, in which the identity of the people is mirrored and finds sustenance, growing in the knowledge that they are a community

    f. Promote conviviality, encounter, and freedom of expression

    g. Are an integral and meaningful part of the urban architecture and landscape, with a determinant role in the overall image of the city.

15. For the above characteristics, they represent the principal resource available to public administration on which to build integrated policies and to a broad range of urban planning, of morphological and functional upgrading of the urban fabric and of social and economic regeneration.

III. CREATION OF PUBLIC SPACE

16. Every public space should be designed with full consideration for diversity.

17. Public space is the gymnasium of democracy, an opportunity for creating and maintaining over time the sentiment of citizenship and the awareness of the roles that each of us has and can have with regard to one's daily lifestyle and to one's living environment.

18. It is advisable for decisions regarding the creation, the management and the enjoyment of public space to be subjected to clear and transparent participatory processes with all interested stakeholders.

Such processes, be they institutionalized, regulated or spontaneous, are to be regarded as a right of urban residents and not as unilateral initiatives of government.

19. It is vital to regard urban public spaces as a continuous, articulated and integrated system to be developed from the scale of neighbourhoods' relationships to vast environmental spaces, to facilitate the diffusion of its enjoyment within the whole community and to raise urban quality.

20. Designing public spaces also means taking into account alternative and creative practices based on new techniques of communication and urban usage.

21. The urban public-space system requires a unitary view capable of bringing out the features to maintain, enhance and communicate. It is therefore advisable for local governments to adopt a specific strategy for public space networks.

22. Within public space networks it is also advisable to identify polarities and aggregative phenomena, with a view to prevent psychological obstacles from reinforcing physical ones. The interconnection and improvement of public space as a strategy for upgrading peripheries and suburban areas should include improving connections, the enhancement of multi-functionality and access and the reduction of phenomena of privatization and exclusion.

23. Eliminating and/or overcoming the physical barriers that impede or limit access to certain categories of users is therefore a priority goal to pursue both in the design of new public spaces and in the adaptation of existing ones.

24. In extension plans of newly-urbanizing cities, whose population will double over the next ten-20 years (namely those in Africa and Asia), it is very important to guarantee sufficient amounts of well-connected and adequately proportioned public spaces.

25. Design must pay full attention to maintenance and management costs by using simple solutions and materials that are durable, simple, easily replaceable and climatically adequate.

26. The upgrading of unused public sites is a great opportunity for enhancing the supply and quality of urban public space. In designing the reuse of privately-owned derelict sites, the extension and design of new public spaces must take into account both environmental considerations (and eventual shortcomings to compensate) and the socioeconomic interrelations within the entire urban sector they are to be part of.

27. The role of urban public spaces for environmental regulation (drainage, microclimate and so on), the environmental protection of ecologically valuable areas (river banks, wetlands and biodiversity) and the reduction of urban environmental risks must be taken into account, both in the design and the management phases.

28. In areas destroyed by catastrophic events public spaces must be the starting point of the reconstruction process.

29. The creation, improvement and management of public spaces can provide an opportunity for new job creation and private investment in harmony with the provisions of the European Landscape Convention.

30. Interdisciplinary and participatory approaches to public-space design are an exciting opportunity for planners, landscape professionals, architects, technicians and designers to express fully their social roles.

IV. CONSTRAINTS ON THE CREATION, MANAGEMENT AND ENJOYMENT OF GOOD PUBLIC SPACES

31. The following can be considered constraints on the creation, management and enjoyment of good public spaces:

a. The commoditisation of urban sociality such as the proliferation of specialized facilities

for shopping and leisure, private sports facilities, and so on

b. Decreasing resources for the creation and maintenance of public spaces due to weakened fiscal revenues and the frequent inefficiency of public spending

c. The declining inclination of citizens to affirm their rights

d. The weakening of social cohesion, the little regard for public goods on the part of large portions of the citizenry and the increasing frequency of acts of vandalism

e. The pressures exercised by speculative real estate interests

f. Design choices that ignore multi-functional criteria and structural connections

g. The difficulties encountered by many local authorities in exercising a role of effective public leadership

h. The sectoralization of administrative structures and the frequent lack of communication between various departments

i. The vulnerability of many public spaces to improper uses such as the transformation of public squares into parking lots, the vehicular occupation of spaces reserved for pedestrians, the encroachment on public spaces by restaurant and commercial activities outside permitted areas

j Perceived or real insecurity in public spaces, with consequent effects of limited use, abandonment and decline

k The conviction that the Web and social networks have become 'the new public spaces', to the extent that the traditional ones are regarded as irrelevant or, at the very least, outmoded.

l. The absence of directions and references, which may cause a condition of deep disorientation in users of urban space.

V. MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE

32. The management of public space is a prevalent responsibility of local authorities. In order to be discharged successfully, this role requires the active collaboration of citizens, civil society and the private sector.

33. Reducing private automobile traffic in cities is a primary condition for improving environmental conditions, enhancing public spaces and making them more liveable. Favouring zero-energy consumption mobility, such as walking and cycling, improves the environment and enhances the quality of public spaces and urban living.

34. Education in the responsible use of public spaces is the least expensive of all forms of maintenance and management. It is useful to conduct awareness campaigns in schools, through the media and on the web to educate citizens to a virtuous use of public spaces.

35. Public space improvements produce significant value increments. Consequently, at least part of them must be recaptured for the benefit of the community.

36. Insufficient integration between interventions and management weakens civic awareness in the use of common goods and is a factor in the deterioration of public spaces after their realization or upgrading. Interventions consisting in the creation or upgrading of public spaces must be accompanied by measures and provisions for the maintenance of spaces and infrastructure.

37. After the realization and/or renewal of spaces has taken place, public administrations should make it possible for citizens and their associations to organize events and whatever may contribute to stabilize the permanent use of such spaces

38. The adoption of management strategies based on dialogue and participation when programming and designing is decisive for gaining the 'appropriation' of spaces on the part of local communities, keeping maintenance costs under control and encouraging forms of co-management.

39. In terms of the area they cover, streets, squares and pavements constitute the overwhelming portion of the urban space used by the public. It is therefore important for their use to be disciplined to reconcile the different functions they are to perform, granting priority to pedestrian and non-motorized mobility.

40. Both temporal and physical limitations to the use of public open space due to safety reasons should not unreasonably restrict the enjoyment by the public.

41. The privatization or concession of public spaces to private actors is a phenomenon which involves cities all over the world, where important public space resources are systematically alienated or turned over exclusively to private concerns for a number of reasons: generating budgetary resources, increasing private investment, yielding to lobbies or interest groups, corruption practices or a lack of management capacity. Public authorities on the one hand and citizens on the other must arm themselves with means to control and evaluate such policies.

42. It is important to adopt policies that encourage the permanence of artisans and neighbourhood shops, which contribute to the quality of life and to the animation and vivacity of daily-use public spaces.

VI. ENJOYMENT OF PUBLIC SPACES

43. All citizens, regardless of their role, are users of public space. All of them have the right to access and enjoy it in complete freedom, within the rules of civic coexistence. In cities ever more complex and diverse, this requires democratic processes, dialogue and regard for diversity.

44. The participation of citizens and in particular of communities of residents is of crucial importance for the maintenance and management of public spaces, particularly in situations of poverty and limited public resources, such as those in developing countries. Partnership arrangements between citizens, local governments and private concerns are all relevant and important in all circumstances.

45. The enjoyment of public space involves rights and duties. The right to enjoy adequate public spaces involves the duty to contribute to this goal through freely-chosen modalities that can vary from the mere adoption of responsible individual or collective behaviours to involvement in initiatives of active citizenry.

46. The enjoyment of public spaces is a fundamental ingredient for determining and applying indicators of their quality, to be employed throughout the entire creation-management-enjoyment cycle.

47. The peaceful use of public spaces for rallies, marches and demonstrations is an integral expression of democracy. Therefore, such use cannot be denied without valid and justified motivations.

48. Events and interventions defined as temporary, included the so-called 'urban public art', particularly if linked to an overall strategy, are a form of enjoyment of public space that can become a 'good practice' to confer meaning and urban quality to 'waiting spaces' rapidly, at low cost and with a strong involvement of the community.

49. The enjoyment of public space is intimately linked to its civil, respectful and responsible use. The quality of public-space enjoyment is therefore tied not only to the availability, quality, mutability, adaptability and maintenance level of public spaces but also to the behaviour of individual citizens.

50. The good use of public spaces is closely linked to their mutability and adaptability in relation to the changing needs of citizens.

Adopted in Rome, final session of the II Biennial of Public Space, 18th May 2013.

Source: www.biennalespaziopubblico.it/international/outputs/the-charter-of-public-space/. Available in English, Spanish and Italian.

Annex 2:
The Sustainable Development Goals

(adopted on 25 September 2015)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and aim to finish the job of ending extreme poverty in all its forms. The SDGs reaffirm the need to achieve sustainable development by promoting economic development, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and good governance including peace and security

Goals to be attained by 2030 are:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
    11.7 "by 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities".
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize global partnership for sustainable development

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics

Annex 3:
What Makes a Great Place

Index of Case Studies

Index of Case Studies

End Notes

1. UN-Habitat (2011). *Governing Council Resolution 23/4 on Sustainable Urban Development through Access to Public Spaces*.

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Despite its importance in promoting sustainable urban development, public space has not been given the attention it deserves in literature and, more importantly, in the global policy arena. Yet there is a growing body of principles and sound policies for improving access to good public space in our cities, as well as a growing patrimony of good practices from different urban settings around the world. What has been missing was a compendium of some of the most relevant principles, policies and practices. For this reason, the toolkit was developed to provide cities, and particularly those with high rates of demographic growth and limited financial resources, with actionable ideas on how to improve the availability, quality and distribution of good public spaces.

The toolkit is a practical reference for local governments to frame and implement principles, policy recommendations and development initiatives on public space and for central governments to aid their efforts with material support and enabling legislation. It will also serve the purpose of demonstrating the value of the involvement of the citizenry and civil society in securing, developing and managing public space in the city.

There is now a broad 'public space community' comprising international organizations such as UN-Habitat, professional organizations, local governments, central governments, permanent public-space fora, foundations, citizens groups, researchers and dedicated individuals who are all committed to work together to make our cities better places to live in through inclusive, safe and accessible public space. If anything, this toolkit intends to broaden this global partnership further. As the partnership grows and continues to research and work, new and additional tools, issues and aspects will be highlighted. UN-Habitat remains committed to continue to document and support such developments.

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