Approaches around city planning, urban design and Placemaking

NOTE: This document excerpt was extracted from a larger document (unpublished), which was prepared for a capacity building workshop on Safe Urban Environments for Children and Young People, organized by Fondation Botnar and BUUR in November 2020. It has been adapted to provide further information on Placemaking in the context of the Safe and Sound City Program.
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The act of city planning and urban design

There are various types of strategies, methods and instruments to use, in order to create a sustainable city and community. These tools explain the qualities of city planning and urban design.

- **Place based** - Instruments to plan, design and manage urban space on different scales for children and the community

- **Process oriented** - Strategies to design the process to strengthen local capacities of children and other stakeholders

- **Data driven** - Methods for evidence-based and people-centred decision-making through data, in particular supported by GIS.

*Figure urban planning qualities (source: UNICEF Handbook on child-responsive urban planning, 2018)*
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Public space for and with young people

There are several schools of thought that have been focusing on public space in cities, as places of change, where communities thrive and shape the city.

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)

Learning from Medellin

Once known as one of the most violent cities in the world, Medellin in Colombia achieved an astonishing reduction in violence and crime over the past ten years through urban upgrading.

Figure: Escalators assisting those living up the hills of Medellin to have easy access to the city (source: https://www.safespaces.org.za/)

Placemaking - the power of 10

Learning from Nairobi

Located in one of the world’s largest slums, the Kibera Public Space project offers a healthy, safe and playful environment for children, raising environmental awareness, decisionmaking and civic management.

Figure: Communities create public spaces, bridge and sewage plant along cleaned river bank (source: picture Kounkey Design Initiative)
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Public space for and with young people

Both schools focus on strategies to use public space as a strategic asset in community building and urban innovation, to foster processes of community building, empowerment of stakeholders, enhance new collaborations, show that change is possible.

- Co-assess
- Co-design
- Co-create
- Co-manage

Co-assess
Street view Mapping Buenos Aires, Argentina

Co-create
Street for Kids

Co-design
Reimagining the Ningbo community, China

Co-manage
Participatory budgeting Koka Kita, Indonesia
Approaches around digital placemaking

"Digital placemaking offers myriad new opportunities for children to participate in and shape their environments." (Jo Morrison, Calvium)

The inclusive practice of digital placemaking is about the integration of people, place, technology and data. Data and technology are attractive tools which can support and foster the dialogue between young people and urban planners. Active engagement of young people in local city planning allows them to relate and interact with their city and get a sense of belonging and of being heard on topics important for their and our future.

"A virtual reality experience, through which thought leaders and decision-makers can experience urban life from the perspective of a 3-year-old."

Block by Block, Queretaro, Mexico
Approaches around urban culture and art

Intersecting public safety, creativity and tactical urbanism

Aesthetic appreciation of the built and natural environment play an important role when considering its implications for urban design. Visual and auditory impressions impact how people feel and ultimately connect with a place. Hence, (street-)art as cultural testimony influences people’s sense of connectedness and belonging. Engaging a community in creative placemaking projects has the potential to promote relationships between people and places. Furthermore, creative placemaking objectives align well with public safety objectives that are associated with road safety and reductions in violence and criminal activity.

Playful art and creativity through Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading, Cape Town

“Helping cities use art and community engagement to improve street safety and revitalize public space.”

Asphalt Art Initiative, Bloomberg Philanthropies
A framework to support further design of the program

Based on a series of conceptual inputs, we made a first attempt to describe different drivers of the new program in a conceptual framework.

The four main drivers aim to reflect well the key ingredients of the program and resonate the relational approach to well-being. Components and sub-components are all interrelated in a system approach:

1. **Safety** - Cities that are fit for young people are places that offer urban security, healthy and safe neighborhoods, livelihoods and entrepreneurship.

2. **Participation and belonging** - Cities that are fit for young people empower them, spur their creativity in co-creating urban culture and engage in promoting citizenship.

3. **Placemaking** - Cities that are fit for young people work with them in the making of social infrastructure and public space, and in the daily management of uses and activities.

4. **Strategy & Evidence** - Cities that are fit for young people seek sustainability of impact for the future generation, developing better planning and financing, investing in broad stakeholder engagement and in the use of open, secure data and technology.

This framework can be used in the design and development phase in various ways:
- to identify specific stakeholders and experts to work with in the design and development process
- to develop assessment monitoring and evaluation tools
- to define specific areas of work that need attention and support (research, tools, ...)

Conceptual thinking